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Imaging the Embodied Soul: Exploring the Transformative Potential of Images in Plato's

Philosophy

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Author:

Jonathan J. Galloza Cajigas

Thesis Director:

Dr. Etienne Helmer

Approved:

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Approval Sheet

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Etienne Helmer, PhD

(Thesis Supervisor)

_____

Raúl de Pablos, PhD

(Assessment Committee Member)

_____

Rocío Zambrana, PhD

(Assessment Committee Member

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Abstract

This thesis traces the concept of 'image' within ancient Greek thought, highlighting the evolution of '*eidolōn*' from its origins as a supernatural apparition in Homer, through Empedocles' and Democritus' interpretations as material and perceptual phenomena shaped by environmental and atomic interactions, respectively. These historical interpretations broaden the semantic range of 'image,' which Plato then extensively employs in his philosophy. Plato's use of 'image' encompasses material representations, mental visualizations, and metaphorical language, reflecting a comprehensive utilization within his dialogues. This investigation aims to uncover why Plato integrated such a multifaceted concept of 'image' into his philosophy, particularly emphasizing its role in educating the soul towards 'the Good.' By examining how images function in various contexts within Plato's dialogues, this thesis illustrates their transformative power as a profound force to participate within a spectators' cognitive and ethical dimensions, revealing a path toward 'the Good' within the bounds of our embodied existence.

Introduction

The reception of images within Plato's philosophy has always been the theme of rigorous debate among thinkers. Thinkers such as Friedrich Nietzsche and Karl Popper have divergently assessed Plato's legacy, yet both agree on the profound impact of his image-making. Nietzsche rebuked Plato for divorcing philosophy from its mythic poetic and Dionysian origins, reducing it to stark rationality, while Popper, for the opposite reasons, condemned Plato for using images to support a rigid, anti-democratic political vision (*i.e.*, against the "critical powers of man") during a tumultuous era. Employing their analytical perspectives, Popper's identification of "historical and evolutionary laws" (Popper et al., 2013, p. 18) and Nietzsche's critique of the "illusion" (Zuckert 1996, p. 11-12) created by Platonic dialogues illustrate how interpretations of Plato's images are deeply influential, yet contentious, within philosophical and historical discourses. These views highlight the complexity and enduring influence of Plato's use of imagery, suggesting a deep-seated ambiguity and more importantly the significant role they play when interpreting his philosophy and more generally 'the identity and trajectory of the Western philosophical tradition'. (Kim 2020, p. 23-25)

Scholars like Martha Nussbaum, Maurizio Migliori, Notomi Noburu, Julia Annas (to name a few) have each analyzed the role of images within Plato's dialogues. For instance, Nussbaum treats Plato's myths as supportive, rather than central to his philosophical arguments, mainly to re-enforce pre-established truths already elaborated. (Kim 2020, p. 250-251) For Annas the potential of Plato's images, particularly the allegory of the cave, do not support but oversimplify or even obscure the complex arguments that had already been laid out. (Annas 1981, p. 256) If the potential of images is dependent on their ability to facilitate some kind of specific argument, interpretations appear to oscillate between supportive to unnecessary.

However, Plato was already contemplating such nuances; in *the Statesman*, (*Stat*. 285d8-286b2) it is acknowledged that images (*eidola*) serve as accessible introductions to basic truths, yet it is also pointed out that they are limited in fully capturing the most 'significant and precious' truths. This limitation underscores the necessity to further engage with *logos* to attain a more comprehensive understanding of complex concepts. In Book 6 of *the Republic*, images are materially described as shadows and appearances in mirrors below what are material originals. This stance appears to be reflected in Book 10, where Plato classifies 'images' as beneath tangible objects, suggesting that while images can mirror the world (through a mirror) they, again, fall short of encapsuling some important aspect of 'truth'. In that same book however, Plato includes paintings and poetry (particularly those by Homer) under the term 'image' complicating the scope of what an 'image' is.

Herein lies the problem which I believe Plato is well aware of, considering Plato solely as a proficient user of imagery through his well-known allegories like the Allegory of the Cave, the Myth of Er, the Allegory of the Charioteer, and the story of Gyges' Ring, alongside similes such as the Divided Line and the Sun analogy: does this suggest, by his very theory of knowledge, that Plato's way of philosophizing was purposely ambiguous between supporting rationality and persuading against it? If we focus solely on the notion of images as merely lower representations in the knowledge hierarchy, we risk ignoring the powerful potential of imagery and imagination within Plato's philosophical framework. This perspective scarcely allows us to recognize the purposeful use of images as an integral aspect of his theory of knowledge. Is there a way to acknowledge both the fact that Plato was a philosopher and an image-maker within his philosophy?

To harmonize both aspects of Plato work implies suggesting that a vital aspect of his methodology and epistemology may be overlooked. Specifically, I propose that Plato's images are

not just open to being negative, persuasive, decorative, or auxiliary; they also possess the potential to challenge deep-rooted assertions about one's moral, linguistic, and epistemological worldview. This investigation rigorously examines the role of images within Plato's theory of knowledge, aiming to highlight their positive contributions while acknowledging their limitations. The central question of this thesis is: Why does Plato use images?

To address this question, the thesis undertakes a comprehensive examination of the concept of 'image' through a historical and philosophical lens. It begins by tracing the lexical evolution of the term from its earliest appearances in Homer, where it signifies a 'ghost,' through its development in the thought of Empedocles and Democritus, culminating in its polymorphous role in Plato's philosophy. This exploration is not merely lexical but extends into a practical analysis of how images shape human perception and intellectual engagement. Specifically, the study focuses on Plato's employment of images across a range of context, in some instances referring to material images in others to mental representations to allegories, similes, myths, and even philosophical arguments.

In this investigation, I argue that images within Plato's theory of knowledge attempt to establish a conceptual space, sustained by imagination, inviting individuals to reconfigure their private opinions through new perceptual and linguistic associations. This space liberates and illuminates the interplay between sensory inputs and acquired habits, revealing images as a transformative force within cognitive and ethical realms. Ultimately, this exploration suggests a pathway toward 'the Good,' achieved not by dogmatic compulsion but through playful and imaginative exploration within our embodied existence.

Investigative Approach

In my investigation of Plato's works and other ancient texts, I employ a comprehensive and rigorous methodology to ensure the accuracy and depth of my analysis. This approach involves utilizing Stephanus pagination for Plato to accurately isolate and reference specific fragments (e.g., *Rep*. 543d4-6), which ensures precise identification across different editions and translations. For the ancient Greek text, I rely on *Platonis Opera* edited by Iannes Burnet (1903). For the *Critias*, *Laws*, *Sophist*, and *Theaetetus*, I use the translations found in *Plato in Twelve Volumes* (1921-1956), while for the *Republic*, I rely on C.D.C. Reeve (2004), unless otherwise stated.

For Homer's *Odyssey*, I consult the original Greek text alongside A.T. Murray's translation (1919), and similarly for Homer's *Iliad*, using Murray's translation (1924) and the Greek text edited by Monro and Allen (1920). When referencing Pre-Socratic philosophers, I use *Early Greek Philosophy, Volume V: Western Greek Thinkers, Part 2* by André Laks and Glenn W. Most (2016) and *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* by H. Diels and W. Kranz (1960) for Empedocles, and *Early Greek Philosophy, Volume VII: Later Ionian and Athenian Thinkers, Part 2* by Laks and Most (2016) alongside Diels and Kranz's work for Democritus. I reference both paginations (e.g., B108 for Diels-Kranz, and D244b for Laks-Most, B108 = D244b) used in these sources to ensure comprehensive coverage of the fragments.

After engaging with the Greek texts, I compare multiple translations to understand interpretative nuances, ensuring a balanced and comprehensive understanding of the texts. My analysis includes examining the context, language, and philosophical implications of the passages, noting any discrepancies or significant interpretative differences among translations. I consistently cite passages using the appropriate pagination systems to maintain clarity and precision and

incorporate secondary references at the end of sentences to acknowledge authors who discuss or

support the relevant concepts, providing a broader scholarly context.

Chapter One: The Evolution of *Eidolōn*: From Homer to Democritus

1. Homer and *Eidolōn*

The role and connection between material and mental images are intimately related with all-encompassing theories dealing with the dynamics and properties of perceived objects and the perceiver's mode of apprehension. Theories concerning the word 'image' offer a general account of how and why we see what we see by building upon, but not limited to, physiological, psychological, philosophical, and sometimes theological considerations. Exploring the 'image' within the Ancient Greek context then involves theories and observations that tend to overlap between fields of study today considered separate. As we shall see in our investigation, how the ancients answered the questions 'what do I see?' and 'why do I see?' is influenced not only by observational advancements in optics, but by cultural ideas and theories about what may influence what and how one sees. To situate the image within Plato's philosophy, I will first explore the word 'image' and what is proposed to underly its perceptibility in the developments prior to Plato. To this aim I will give a brief account of Homer's use of 'image' (*eidolon*), Empedocles' theory of 'effluences', and Democritus' theory of *eidōla*. How did these poets and philosophers explain an imaging event?

**1.1 '*Eidōlon' Defined as an Apparition*

Due to advancements in Ancient Greek optics and theories of vision, the Greek word for image '*eidōlon*' became related with words such as 'image' *eikon*,[1] 'imprint' (*tupos*) 'impression' *emphasis* and 'appearance' *phantasma*. (Cassin, 2014, p. 245) As we will see later with reports on Empedocles and Democritus, the relation between *eidōlon,* 'impression', and 'imprint' is sustained

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[1] For Jean-Pierre Vernant, there is no initial opposition between these two words in Homeric literature. (Vernant, 1991, p. 187)

by the belief of an active collaboration between 'effluences' (*aporroai*) coming from the eyes ('visual rays') and those 'effluences' emanating from objects or *eidōla*. The collaboration's capacity to make 'physical impressions' (*tupos*) depends on the sun's rays as an aggregate, making vision and appearances in reflective surfaces possible, thus maintaining an intimate relationship with the material environment.

However, before the sun was considered an environmental phenomenon, Homer (likely active in the 8th cent. BCE) in his *Iliad* (14.341-345) offered a different perspective that emphasized an older notion of the sun. In the Homeric view, the sun is seen as a divine entity, portrayed as a God able to see everything by means of its 'rays'. (Darrigol, 2016, p. 3) This suggests that the relation between the sun, its rays, and sight was built upon and influenced by what the Ancient Greeks already thought seeing was. Given the importance of Homer in the development of Ancient Greek culture, our guiding question will be: what does the Homeric literature tell us about how one sees an *'eidōlon'*? I will focus on Homer's treatment of '*eidōlon*', a term that signifies an object that appears before the eyes, but, at the same time, lacks any materiality.

According to Vernant, the Homeric term *eidolon* refers to three kinds of supernatural apparitions: (i) *phasma*, a phantom created by a god in the semblance of a living person; (ii) *oneiros*, a dream image sent by the gods in the image of a real being; and (iii) *psuchai*, a phantom of the dead. (Vernant, 1991, p. 186-187) In book 23 verse 65-104 of the *Iliad*, in a bittersweet reunion between best friends, Achilles recognizes and laments the 'spirit' (*psychè*) of Patroclus through his 'phantom' (*eidōla*), an apparition that replicates all the perceptual qualities (stature, fair eyes, and voice) of the living Patroclus. What Achilles is seeing is the 'double' of Patroclus, unaware that it is an ambivalent empty thing as ungraspable as air. This fact only becomes apparent to Achilles

when his hands meet with a nothing as he attempts to embrace and empathize with the apparition. Having disfigured its form, the 'spirit' like a vapor faintly dissipated beneath the ground. It is important to emphasize what I believe are key features of *'eidōlon'* in this scene.

We note that there is a clear distinction between what is written by Homer and what Achilles is experiencing. (Rutter et al., 2000, p. 145) What Achilles is seeing is a real object external to him, (Vernant, 1991, p. 187) while what is described is a mere apparition. In this sense, only Homer and the spectators watching the scene unfold are aware that what Achilles is about to embrace is only an empty apparition. For Achilles, the necessary condition for something to count as "all things" (*pánt' auto*) like Patroclus is something's outward appearance. In other words, the condition of likeness to an original, for Achilles, is solely reliant on the visual perception of it. It is this visual fidelity that makes the *eidōlon* a poignant presence, embodying the appearance of Patroclus while lacking his materiality. As a result, the very fact that Patroclus was already dead did not inhibit but paradoxically encouraged Achilles' engagement with the '*eidōlon*'. While engaging with the '*eidōlon*', Achilles relives memories about Patroclus' life rather than affirming his death, that is, prioritizing accounts of the past via memory over the facts about the present through sight. One final thing to note is that an '*eidōlon*' may somehow retain fond memories of its past lived experiences, further complicating the event. To say that Achilles' encounter with the *eidōlon* is akin to experiencing a hallucination is not to imply a psychological hallucination, but rather to reflect on the vivid nature of *eidōlon* as an externally crafted apparition.

The same features can be appreciated in book 24 verses 1-18 of the *Odyssey*, where the god Hermes of Cyllene herded to Hades the 'shadows' (*eidōla*) of 'souls' (*psychaí*) that could labor no longer. These *eidola* were able to recognize one another via past lived experiences they retained after death. (Rutter et al., 2000, p. 148) In book 11 verses 206-224, Odysseus attempts to embrace

the 'spirit' (*psychín*) of his dead mother Anticlea in vain, flitting from his arms "like a shadow or a dream". This prompted Odysseus to angrily question if what appears before his eyes is a 'phantom' (*eídolon*) sent by the goddess Persephone. The apparition of what Odysseus had instantly recognized as his mother, answers that what appears before his eyes is no deception but "the 'appointed way' (*dikē*)[2] with mortals when one dies." [3]

All three scenes use the words *psuchè* and *eidōlon* to signify the 'apparition', terms which Ruth Bardel rightly notes "[etymologically] could not be more distinct: breath and image do not seem to cohere", (Rutter et al., 2000, p. 145) but may serve as a verbal description to elicit images in the "mind's eye" of the listeners. (Rutter et al., 2000, p. 146; Stanford, 1983, p. 110) Homer's use of *'eidōlon'* is an attempt "to assign a place in our world to entities from the other world." (Vernant, 1991, p. 153) After one's death, there remains a faint perceptual and intelligible relation with the living by somehow retaining qualities and memories that faithfully resemble their original. It is with perception and the intellectual act of recollection that the relation between 'apparition' and the living individual may be partially realized. (Rutter et al., 2000, p. 158; Vernant, 1991, p. 187) But neither perception nor recollection are enough to anticipate an *eidolōn* 's empty nature.

However, visual perception and recollection could go so far. The full awareness that the external object is an empty apparition escapes one till the very end of their interaction, albeit too late. If it were not for their active attempt to *embrace* the apparitions, Achilles and Odysseus would have remained deceived or confused. It was only after their hands met with a nothing, after the

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[2] I follow W. K. C. Guthrie's definition of '*dikē*' as holding no moral nor metaphysical obligation. It may signify 'a path' or 'normal course of nature', with no definitive commitments. Though Guthrie also notes that it would have been impossible for this word to retain its purely non-moral sense to those who read or heard it as children. (Guthrie, 2013, p. 4-5)

[3] I note that the *eidola* may appear by the direct intervention of the Gods, but they retain the same qualities elaborated in this section. Cf. Apollo's creation of Aeneas' *eidōlon* amid a battle (*Illiad*. 5.449) and Athena's creation of Penelope's *eidolon* (*Odyssey* 4.795-800).

apparition's form was disfigured, that they came to realize and affirm the original person's death in the visible world. This suggests that it is not visual perception or intellection, but rather touch that reveals the true nature of the apparition, as if awakening from a dream. Nonetheless, as Anticlea asserts, the deceptive aspect when engaging with an '*eidōlon*' is not a consequence of the individual's self-deception or inherent to the '*eidōlon*' itself. Rather, it is the byproduct of the ordinary phenomena that follows when mortals die, a process which is ultimately governed by the divine.

1.2. Implications of Homer's Definition of 'Eidōlon'

In the Homeric context, I can conclude that the invisible can become visible as a byproduct of the natural occurrence of mortal death that itself is governed by divine intervention.[4] As an external object brought forth before Achilles and Odysseus, an *eidōlon*'s relation to its material original can be visually and mentally discerned even though its essential nature as an immaterial double remains concealed. '*Eidōlon*' can be characterized in the following ways: (i) it is a faithful copy of an original in appearance; (ii) when engaging with the apparition, one can recognize its relationship to the original object via a perceptual and recollective process; (iii) its essential nature as a nothing is grasped only through active engagement via touch as opposed to visual perception and recollection; and (iv) its existence is closely linked to natural and divine intervention.

This last point is of special significance, because if one accepts that *eidola* can be created by the gods, then it gives rise to a series of epistemological problems that directly renders the human capacity to identify and differentiate external qualities of objects (such as materiality, animacy, and truthfulness) as irredeemably unreliable. The consequences of this view were later taken up by Plato in book two of the *Republic*, where he denies the idea that gods are interested or

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[4] See note 5.

capable of contriving perceptual or psychological deceptions, because they are 'good' and not 'lying poets'. (*Rep*. 379b-379d2, *Rep*. 381e1-4, *Rep*. 382e8-10, *Rep*. 382d7) Before that however, the natural philosopher Empedocles was already conceptualizing an all-encompassing theory where no such divine intervention or distortions occurred.

2. Empedocles and Images: The Materialist Alternative

Scholars of vision agree that Ancient Greek philosophers offered an intelligible account of all things without appealing to ideas involving divine forces that directly influence the environment. (Lindberg, 2010, p. 27; Squire et al., 2016, p. 38) For Empedocles, everything in the universe is made up of tiny particles or 'effluences' (*aporroai*) (DK 31 A89 = D208) emanating from animate and inanimate objects. There are four 'roots' (*rhizōma*) or material 'effluences' (air, fire, water, earth)[5] whose 'fundamental dynamics' (*archikás dynámeis*) tend towards 'Love and Strife'[6] (*Filían te kaí Neíkos*). (A33 = D56)

For humans, 'life' (*psychís*), 'thoughts' (*noísai*), and 'sense perception' (*aisthíseis*) are composed and interact by means of these material 'effluences'. (Barnes, 1982, p. 480) For example, a painter's excellence in his craft is dependent on how proportionately mixed the 'effluences' around his hands and eyes are. (A86 = D237) Empedocles seems to contend that the reason one is precise in a craft is due to the high degree of proportionality of effluences in the body parts involved. This example demonstrates that Empedocles' general thesis of 'effluences' is believed to be a common feature not just to the environment, but to all kinds of phenomena, animate or inanimate. (Barnes, 1982, p. 482)

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[5] Each element is named after a specific divinity: Fire=Zeus, air=Hera, water=Nestis and earth=Aidoneus. I will not explore possible interpretations about the relationship between the elements and the divine.
[6] The primacy of 'Love and Strife' as fundamental movements of the cosmos are a central theme to Empedocles' thesis, but he nowhere gives an account of why this is so. (Barnes, 1982, p. 311)

As an alternative to the Homeric tradition, the dynamics of 'Love and Strife' mechanically directs the behavior of 'effluences', which brings to view the objects of the environment in their distinct forms and their unwavering perceptibility, allowing the human senses to equally[7] imagine and perceive them. The primacy of the dynamics of 'effluences' underneath environmental and human action is illustrated by Empedocles in the famous painter's analogy, an all-encompassing view where the world is compared to a painting mixed by the elemental 'roots'. (B23 = D60) (Squire et al., 2016, p. 47; Barnes, 1982, p. 310)

The painter's analogy highlights how the general thesis of 'effluences', like the creative process of painting, is involved with all the objects of the environment and the whole of human experience. Again, just as the human painter experiences and replicates the colors, shapes, and shadows he sees using a limited number of pigments, so do the elemental 'roots' form all the objects of the environment in accord with the 'fundamental dynamics' of 'Love'. Human experience and existence can be generalized by the thesis of 'effluences', because vision and what we experience intellectually as colors, shapes, and shadows are in the same sense physiological processes. Empedocles' analogy suggests an important affinity between the material states of the environment and the physiological processes of perception and thought. It is interesting to note that this distinction does not imply a fundamental epistemological hurdle concerning 'effluences' and our experience of them, where what we see is only an appearance of a fuller reality. Rather Empedocles proposes a direct correspondence between them. (Barnes, 1982, p. 486; Squire et al., 2016, p. 53) Given that for Empedocles, both vision and the objects of the environment are conceptualized as material processes in accord with the general thesis of 'effluences', the skilled

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[7] Barnes entertains the idea that for Empedocles thoughts are the same as perceptions, because "…as we change physically [due to the movements of 'effluences'], so do the objects of our thoughts change". (Barnes, 1982, p. 487-488)

human painter may confidently represent the colors, shapes, and shadows from an already proportionate environment.

2.1 The Theory of Effluences and the Role of Images Within it

Empedocles' theory of vision appears to be founded on the principle of a 'mixture' that occurs through the process of the 'fitting' of 'pores' (*míxin tí symmetría*[8] *tón póron*). (Theophrastus, *Sens*. §12 = A86) The eye contains 'pores' (*póron*)[9] of a certain shape (broad or narrow) through which 'perceptibles' ('effluences' of an external object) may penetrate the interior of the eye if they 'fit' or pass straight without touching the interior of the eye if they do not. (Theophrastus, §7 = A86) 'Perceptibles' (*aisthíseis*) are successfully sensed when their 'effluences' 'mix' accordingly with the eye's 'pores'. (Aëtius 28 A47) Within this strict material account, one cannot perceive nor conceive anything beyond environmental and physiological change, thus resisting any notion of divine intervention that may interrupt human thoughts or distort the surrounding environment.

The following report further illustrates the resistance against any intrusive divine intervention. Philoponus writes that for Empedocles the 'appearances in one's dreams at night' are due to 'daytime activities'. (B108 = D244b) Images (or at least the 'look' (*eídos*) of things) be they psychologically or physiologically manifested, appear equally in accordance with the theory of 'effluences' derived from the mechanisms of Love and Strife. Although dream images are not directly vouched for by the theory of 'effluences', it is not difficult to set them within the strict material account. (Wright, 1995, p. 236) This report presents Empedoclean thought as a compelling alternative to ideas that propose any disordered interaction between the environment and the

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[8] Barnes translates συμμετρία as 'fitting' while Andre Laks and Glenn Most translate it as 'commensurability'. (Laks et al.. 2016, p. 613) I will follow Barnes' translation to emphasize Empedocles' physicalist language.
[9] The surviving fragments of Empedocles do not mention 'pores', but Alcmaeon, from whom scholars believe Empedocles borrowed his physical account of the senses, does. (Barnes, 1982, p. 638, 479)

supernatural, as it emphasizes that everything that could be perceived and experienced is explained by a material theory of the world rather than through divine intervention. (Lindberg, 2007, p. 27) Although Empedocles' ideas may seem primitive at first glance, they are rooted in empirical observations. Since all perceivable and knowable things originate from material "effluences" and both the body and mind are also of material origin, every external object can be reliably perceived by the senses. (Darrigol, 2016, p. 4; Barnes, 1982, p. 481; Kamtekar, 2009, p. 233; Squire et al., 2016, p. 53)

Our attempt to interpret an Empedoclean theme concerning images led us towards a survey of an account of his all-encompassing thesis that gives an account of both material and psychological phenomena. We can broadly see that for Empedocles, the 'look' (*eídos*) of everything we perceive, and every object of perception are determined by the four elemental and material 'effluences' which are themselves derived from the dynamics of 'Love and Strife'. Empedocles confines every psychological phenomenon under this dynamic, where images in dreams directly correspond to those that appear in waking reality. As a result, there is no room to conceptualize a distinction between a perception of material objects and a 'mental' image, because thoughts and the body are all within this domain. If we consider the equality between both kinds of perceptions more closely, then it can be said that, for Empedocles, the perception of mental images is an adequate mode of knowing.

Empedocles was also reported to be a doctor (Barnes, 1982, p. 479), making his materialist inclinations well warranted. His material account of the world proposes that the images produced by painters and experienced in dreams are equivalent to the products of "effluences" and "daytime experiences" produced by the environment and guided by "Love and Strife." This focus on materialism implies that Empedocles was more interested in the physics and physiology of

perception than in psychological matters. (Barnes, 1982, p. 483) In other words, there seemed to be no desire to question visual perception beyond material locutions, since for him the eye is the 'home' through which all 'perceptibles' are 'harmoniously' accommodated in, making not only visual perception possible, but also unequivocal and reliable[10], *i.e.*, 'what you see is what you get'. (Squire et al., 2016, p. 53).

2.2. Homer and Empedocles: Two Opposite Perspectives on Eidolōn

In our section on Homer, the word *eidolōn* referred to an external object that represents an immaterial yet faithful copy of an original, brought forth by divine or natural means. In Empedocles' theory, the manifested appearance of all phenomena is akin to an '*eidōlon*', accurately representing the appearance of its original, not by its likeness, but rather as a byproduct of fundamentally distinct material 'effluences'. Like the Homeric '*eidōlon*', the essential nature of external objects is concealed; however, this concealment is not due to divine intervention, but rather a result of one's own unharmonious state or by following an un-Empedoclean philosophy. (B110; Barnes, 1982, p. 485; cf. Curd, 2016, p. 51)

Within Empedocles' theory, there is room to gain understanding about the underlying nature of phenomena beyond the material byproduct of their appearance. An interpretation of fragment B110 suggests that for Empedocles, one must synthesize sense-data within a framework of principles acquired by (his) teaching. (*ibid*.) Following his principles, one gains an understanding that material 'effluences' are 'evidently' the source for all phenomena. (B23 = D60)

Unlike in the Homeric scenes, where misidentification of an '*eidōlon*' is due to divine intervention, for Empedocles any confusion regarding the identity or 'wisdom' (*mētis*) about an object's

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[10] On the importance of blood, see Curd, 2016, p. 52

qualities (magnitude, shape, color, etc.) is solely dependent "to that which is [perceivably] present to" the perceiver. (Aristotle, *de Anima* 427a21) This perspective stresses the role of human error and ignorance when such confusions occur. In direct contrast with Homeric '*eidōlon*', errors in identification are no longer tied to the divine, instead they become a material phenomenon. By following Empedocles' teachings and then, observing the surrounding environment, one comes to understand that beyond their '*eidōlon*'-like appearance, all physiological, psychological, and environmental phenomena such as vision, appearances in dreams, and reflections on shiny surfaces are revealed to be the movements and structures of four elemental and material 'effluences'.

2.3. *'Eidolōn' Reconceptualized as a Material Phenomenon*

By focusing on material worldview, I believe that Empedocles' theory set the groundwork for a possible reconceptualization of *eidolōn*. This is of great significance as it may shift away from the ontological ambiguities of divine 'apparitions' towards the domain of human perception and understanding. It is here, driven by this theory, that I can conclude that, for Empedocles, both perceiving mental images and material objects stands as a primary mechanism of knowing, rendering the discernment of material and mental errors distinctly a human affair.

We note that Empedocles' theory appears to only cover the channels by which appearances come to be sensed, lacking any further accounts regarding the affective or subjective side to perception. (Barnes, 1982, p. 483; Curd, 2016, p. 55) I also note that Empedocles appears to adopt a more restrictive stance, as he attributes errors and confusions in our perception and apprehension of the world to a lack of familiarity with his teachings. One might ask: how to offer an account of perception that gives rise to a subjective experience that also accounts for errors and confusions? What psychological factors influence perception, and vision, and how can they shape our

experience of the world around us? What is worth exploring beyond the limits of Empedocles' strict physiological and material account of perception? What is left out?

Despite this conceptual lacuna, scholars of vision agree that Empedocles' theory of 'effluences' played a pivotal role on subsequent theories of sight and on the way 'images' were later conceived. (Barnes, 1982, p. 377; Squire et al., 2016, p. 52; Sepper, 2013, p. 113; Cassin 2014, p.245) Although Empedocles' theory of 'effluences' applies to all the senses, (*Meno* 76d) it does not contain a precise account regarding the affective response to the manifestation of images beyond the eye by means of these 'effluences', and even less an account of subjective confusions such as "hallucinations, after-images, and other paraperceptual occurrences." (Barnes, 1982, p. 483) I will survey Democritus' theory of portraits (*deikelon*) *i.e.*, theory of *eidōla* that centers on the impression of images on one's eyes and his attempt to offer a more precise account of the subjective side of perceptual error.

3. Democritus and '*Eidolōn*': the Visual Theory of '*Eidōla*'

Following Empedocles, Democritus proposes to explain the formation of images in the eye from 'effluences' now called *eidōla*. The key difference from Empedocles is that his theory of *eidola* is used to give an account of visual perception only, not all the senses. (Barnes, 1982, p. 480) For Democritus, with the aid of the surrounding environment, images are formed by an 'impression' (*emphasis*) made on the eye given its distinct physical composition (the eye being both moist and soft) by means of these *eidōla*. Democritus builds upon the Empedoclean theory that the sun is an 'aggregate' of fire 'effluences', by adding that it prepares the surrounding air for the 'moulding' (*appoplattómenon*) of *eidōla*, that will then become a more effective 'impression'

(*emphasis*).[11] Democritus also adds that the physical composition of the eye, being both moist and soft, facilitates the admission and retention of an image. (Rudolph, 2011, p. 69) In Democritus' account of vision, the surrounding environment creates a wax-like 'air imprint' from the *eidōla* before being 'imprinted' (*tuposthai*) on the eye. The combination of fire and air 'effluences' causes a 'compression'-like effect (*systéllómenon*) that shrinks the *eidōla*. This 'compression' is caused by the efflux of *eidōla* coming from objects interacting with the surrounding environment that somehow intermingles[12] with the eye's efflux or 'visual rays'. The quality of what one sees depends on the effectiveness of the 'impression' made from the collaboration between the surrounding fire, and the surface of the eye.

3.1. Theory of Vision and Ancient Greek Linear Perspective

According to scholars, Democritus' theory of vision was also informed by a commentary on scene-painting written by Agatharchus. According to Vitruvius, Agatharchus introduced the method of perspective to scene-painting[13] (*skēnographia*), leaving a notebook in which he wrote down his findings. These findings influenced Democritus into writing about the subject, that is, on "how a fixed center should be established, and the lines should correspond realistically to the sight-line of the eyes and the extension of the rays", (Rudolph, 2011, p. 72) *i.e.*, on the relation between visual rays emitted from the eyes and simple geometric principles. This treatise on optics may have been the main theme of the now lost work *The Drawing of Rays* (*aktinographie*). (Panovsky, 1991,

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[11] It should be stated that this impression, which is an appearance *on* the eye (like appearances on mirrors or what appears on still waters), is part of the mechanism of vision. This observation met with much distain in antiquity. (Burkert, 1977, p. 106)

[12] Some scholars (like Andrea Nightingale) claim that Democritus has only a single theory of visual perception, *i.e.*, the theory of air-imprints, while Rudolph claims that this theory is complemented by a theory of visual rays and *eidola*. I follow Rudolph's conjecture. (Squire et al., 2016, p. 50)

[13]The depiction of the recession and projection of objects and buildings in a virtual three-dimensional space on a two-dimensional surface, achieved through reliance on a geometry of lines. Scene-painting appear to have been developed specifically within the culture of Greek theatre. (Squire et al., 2016, p. 115)

p. 102; Rudolph, 2011, p. 71) If in fact Democritus found a relation between a drawn line, mathematics, and sight, it strengthens the idea that Democritus theorized some form of mathematically informed theory of visual rays akin to those later formalized by the mathematician Euclid. (Panovsky, 1991, p. 102) I may assert that Democritus directed the course of subsequent theories of sight, (Squire et al. 2016, p. 55) influencing the collaboration between art and optics (Squire et al., 2016, p. 117) whose artistic products ('scene-paintings') may have been able to manipulate a spectator's sense of sight. To our knowledge, Democritus did not offer any writings on the psychological effects of scene-painting on the spectator. What he probably offered were physiological and environmental theories, via the theory of air-imprints, concerning the structures that explain vision and its capacity to differentiate the characteristics of objects.

3.2. 'Eidola' as a Parapsychological Phenomenon

Like Empedocles, Democritus characterizes visual perception and thinking as 'alterations' (*heteroiôseis*) in the body, (Aetius A30) where size, shape, color, etc., from 'impressions' correspond exactly to the animate and inanimate objects that produced them in waking reality. However, Democritus seems to make an important distinction between the dream state and waking reality; between 'impressions' received while awake and *eidola* manifested while one is asleep. When one is asleep, the exactitude of this *presupposed* correspondence (between impression and external object) may become blurred or illuminating. Considering *eidola* as emanations from external objects or persons with the capacity to influence emotions or direct intentions, I can propose that Democritus was making a difference between the two following kinds, albeit parapsychological,[14] of *eidola*: (i) Those that manifest during sleep due to the entry of 'sonant

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[14] By 'parapsychology' I mean a field of study concerned with psychic phenomena which fall outside of conventional scientific explanation. In the case of Democritus, telepathic knowledge of an others' intent or a kind of divination. (Bicknell, 1970, p. 303)

molecules' accompanying the *eidola* through body 'pores', eliciting entirely human-origin thoughts, intentions, and impulses; and (ii) visions which might be of divine knowledge, demons, or both, and can be of divine, environmental, or human origin. (Bicknell, 1969, p. 323-324; Barnes, 1982, p. 460-461; Burkert, 1977, p. 107)

In assent to the first kind of *eidola*, Plutarch reports that emanations from humans and their creations in the waking world may carry desires, thoughts, and plans which, given the material nature of these, may generate "motions in the soul" (*psychín kinimáton*) when the perceiver is in a dream state. (Barnes, 1982, p. 460) As one sleeps, these emotionally charged *eidola* become active, verbally 'announcing' themselves within the sleeper's dreams. The faint verbal 'opinions' (*doxas*) produced by the 'sonant molecules' (Bicknell, 1969, p. 321) accompanying the dream *eidola* may be beneficent or malevolent. (Sextus, B166; Plutarch A77) For instance, if someone has the intention of committing a crime, and imagines this scene taking place within their imagination, this scene produces *eidola* which cause motions in the soul within others who are nearby and become manifest in their dreams. (Bicknell, 1970, p. 303-304; Barnes, 1982, p. 360)

From a parapsychological perspective (Barnes, 1982, p. 460; Burkert, 1977, p. 107; Bicknell, 1969, p. 322), the thoughts and intentions of other individuals can be apprehended by the dreamer through an adequate interpretation of the *eidola* that appear in our dreams and the impressions produced. (Barnes, 1982, p. 461) In other words, within one's dream state, one can see an image of events from the thoughts and intentions of other persons. (Bicknell 1970, p. 303) Following the same structure, the second kind (B175) suggests that these *eidola* are not human, but divine in origin. In this view, the intellection or interpretability of these *eidola* 'donated' by the gods, are entirely dependent on the dreamer's intellectual capacity to interpret their correspondence with the environment in waking reality. I assert that the emphasized presupposition

in both complementary etiological reports (Barnes, 1982, p.361) is that every *eidolon* has an original. This implies the importance of attending to and deciphering one's own or another's dream images. Such an approach stands as a viable means to grasp the world and individual intentions, even in cases where the connection between the *eidola* and their source remains unclear. (Burkert, 1977, p. 108).

3.3. Reconceptualizing 'Eidolōn' as Material and Psychological

Both Empedocles and Democritus' account of images aimed to offer an all-encompassing theory via 'effluences'. Whereas Empedocles explained every perception and environmental phenomena through material 'effluences', Democritus relegated his theory of *eidola* specifically to vision, (Barnes, 2016, p. 480) postulating that the qualities (magnitude, shape, and color, etc.) that objects emit (Squire et al., 2016, p. 55) are externally 'moulded' by the surrounding environment, famously likening the degrees of visual perception to wax imprinting. (Rudolph, 2011, p. 79) Both theories set the human body, the soul, and all its cognitive and physiological faculties as a passive and material receptor of images formed independently of any perceiver. Like Empedocles, Democritus believes all perceptual distortions are material in origin, physiologically due to damage on the eyes, emphasizing how these are all byproducts of environment given the available amount of sunlight.[15]

We note that Democritus' strict materialist theory of vision does give an account of the formation of perceptible images but like Empedocles, Democritus has little to say regarding the origins of perceptual errors beyond physiological damage to the eyes. In terms of the Democritean material parapsychology or psychology of *eidola*, human intentions and thoughts are material and

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[15] The importance of the environment as a medium was one of the only theories that held a lasting influence on western thought from Plato onwards. (Burkert, 1977, p. 102)

may 'impress' themselves onto others, causing unknown beneficent and malevolent effects on the perceiver when asleep. Although there is evident attention to the interpretation of these dreams, he does not provide a precise account of either the effects and consequences of these 'sonant molecules' that accompany *eidola*, nor how to adequately interpret them. (Rudolph, 2011, p. 82; Squire et al., 2016, p. 56; Burkert, 1977, p. 101)

The word *eidolōn* within Democritus' theory may be intertwined with various influences such as the environment, the divine, as well as parapsychological and psychological forces. Where one places their emphasis, the divine or on the individual, has significant consequences to *eidolon*'s definition and, as a byproduct, Democritus' entire worldview. That is, if following Empedocles, the gods do not intervene in dreams, then gods do not exist (Barnes, 1982, p. 461) and the origins of dream *eidola* refer solely to human affairs. If, closer to the Homeric definition, gods do intervene in dreams, then they do exist, though the form of a god's 'donation' requires interpretation and thought beyond an environmental and a human referent. While the potential origins of *eidola* between humans and divine are noteworthy, I believe the presupposition that *eidola* refer to something and their mode of appearance during dreams to be of greater significance. That is, do *eidola* appear as eidetic and clear images that unveil plans and intentions like a cinema projection, or as interpretive and unclear images requiring further analysis during wakefulness?

Although Democritus did not provide any specific details on how to identify and interpret the nature of *eidola* within our dreams, it was through his philosophical work that he laid the foundation for the later development of the term '*eidola*' as representative of a mental phenomenon originating from internal psychological afflictions or external perturbations. This led to an examination of an *eidolon*'s characters, as an eidetic or chimeric entity, its implications, possible origins, and what kind of knowledge such 'images' may or may not contain. For Democritus, I

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suggest that getting acquainted with events in the world involves not just observing events unfold, but also a close consideration to personal reports from (mental) dream images. Plato delves deeper in this subject in that he collects the most diverse types of imagery within his general theoretical framework, (Vernant, 1991, p. 164) specifically in his understanding of the effects and construction of images.

Chapter Two: Plato and The Psychological Impact of Visual Representation

1. Plato: A Theoretician of the Image

In our examination of the general use of the word 'image' in Homer, Empedocles, and Democritus, I analyzed the tradition and theories of vision and sight that described the human capacity to interact, differentiate, and interpret external objects in the world. This analysis was rooted on the idea that the concept of 'image' at the crossroad of vision and mental representation encompasses a representational theme for interpreting the external world, as demonstrated through the various examples such as Homeric apparitions, Empedoclean effluences, and Democritean *eidola*. I believe that the underlying theme of 'images' in Plato oscillates along four pivotal axes, shaping our understanding of images. These axes delineate: (i) the origins of images that vary between the divine, as depicted by Homer, and the (ii) purely material as proposed by Empedocles and Democritus. Additionally, they examine perception by contrasting (iii) vision as a material process with (iv) the processes involved in mental representation. These oscillations establish the conceptual basis for how human faculties, be it visual observation or thought, engage and attribute significance to the external world.

Empedocles and Democritus frame visual and mental stimuli as reflections of the material dynamics of their all-encompassing theories. However, for these thinkers this theme meets its limit in its failure to provide an account for perceptual confusions, errors of identification, and, more generally, *how* do these errors come about within the soul. In Plato's philosophy imagery, by navigating these axes (i-iv), strives to rectify these deficiencies, providing a more comprehensive understanding of 'images' and their role in human cognition. As we shall see, Plato's theory of the image addresses this very issue.

Defining 'image' within Plato's philosophy is difficult given the sheer scope of his project. Since I are aiming towards understanding the psychology of verbal and mental images within Plato's philosophy, I will begin with an analysis of an event whose experience, for Plato, is most liable to both physiological and psychological errors: the spectating of painting. By examining Plato's comments on this specific experience, we will acquire a better understanding of the 'affections' (*pathemata*) to which the soul and body are subject to, potentially hindering one's apprehension of the world. Our guiding questions here are: (i) what happens when one sees a painting? and, (ii) how does this event affect a spectator? To answer these questions, I will first offer a general account of the word 'image' in Plato's philosophy.

1.1. General Account of Images in Plato

A painting, like every product of figurative and representational activities, is a fabricated image. (Vernant, 1991, p. 164-166) As a general principle in Plato's philosophy, 'images' (*eidola* and *eikona*) are examined and ontologically and epistemologically divided by examining their various degrees of 'participation' or 'communication' (*koinoneín*) (*Soph*. 248b2; *Rep*. 476a5) to the 'Model Forms' (*paradígmatos eídos*), rather than appealing to a strict correspondence between an object of perception and its degree of likeness to a material object in the world. 'Image-products', then, 'come into being' (*Soph*. 265b8) via the 'power' (*dunamis*) of imitation (*mimēsis*) set in motion by the 'productive activity' (*poiesis*) of a craftsman (*dēmiourgos*). For example, in *Republic* 596b5, the craftsman 'fixes his eye on the idea'[16] or the "specific pattern or design"

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[16] H. G. Gadamer and S. Rosen agree that *Eidos* and *Idea* "were undeniably interchangeable in Ancient Greek texts. Though Gadamer proposes that in the Platonic corpus, "*eidos* always refers only to the object" while *Idea* gives "greater emphasis on the viewing of something"." (Rosen, 2005, p. 401) In the case of *Rep*. 596b as in *Cratyl*. 389a6-d2, the craftsman is looking towards the 'paradigm or specific design' (*parádeigma*) through which he then and only then may construct the object in the likeness of the '*eidos* of the manufactured object' (*eídi tón skevastón*). (Shorey, 1903, p. 31; Adams Vol. 2, p. 388; Patterson, 1985, p. 35)

(Patterson, 1985, p. 35) of an object, in order to bring forth into the material world [17] a manufactured object. All 'productive activities' (cabinetmaking, cobbling, painting, writing, speeches) are attempts at following the likeness of the 'Form' that helps refine the specific outcome of what the craftsman has intended to produce.

Understood as an ontological term, the concept of 'image' (including *eikón* and *eidolōn*), then, covers a wide range of elements, such as material objects in the environment (like trees, mountains, and rivers), human-made instruments (such as poems, paintings, houses, and arguments), and human experiences (encompassing emotional responses to the images produced). Image-making involves the participation of a specific imitative process (cobbling, cabinetmaking, painting, writing, etc.) where an image-product's integrity [18] is proportionate to how well the maker's 'eye' is fixed to the 'Idea' and 'Form' of the product. Due to its material nature, the image-product can never be a double of the 'Idea' or 'Form'; instead, it will always be a 'likeness' (*eoikos*) *i.e.*, an 'image'(*eikón*) that can always be further improved (*Soph*. 240b2-11; Patterson, 1985, p. 38-39; Notomi, 2001, p. 148)

1.2. The First Kind of Image: 'Eikon', the Faithful Image

Plato uses two different words to name these products: *eikon* and *eidōlon*. 'Images' named *eikonas*, include all sorts of manufactured things (dressers, hammers, shoes, clothing, mirrors, weapons etc.) crafted by 'looking' at the model or paradigm (*paradeígm*) of the eternal 'Form' 'for each special use'. (*Crat*. 389c5-6) By 'fixing one's eyes into the 'Form' of a dresser, for example, it will always be the case that a dresser needs drawers, a top, pulls, and legs in its 'design' to

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[17] Cf. the domain of 'the visible' (*Rep*. 509d1-2); the world of 'becoming' or 'seeming' (*Rep*. 533a2)
[18] By 'integrity' I mean to contrast between a product that appears useful to a spectator and one that is useful regardless of appearance. (Cf. *Gorg*. 463d1-2; *Stat*. 303c1-3; see Notomi 1999, chapter five)

function correctly and be named a dresser. A successful 'image'-product (*eikon*) then requires the craftsman to discover what is 'naturally fitted for each purpose' in order to imitate to the best of her ability the eternal and stable 'Form' of the dresser. (*Crat.* 389c3-4) In the case of image-products that are material and visible, they are not unchanging. For geometrical and material reasons, it will never be the case where one perfect dresser 'naturally fits' for every possible room. (Patterson 1985, p. 36) There is space for specialized dressers and errors throughout the collaboration between accounts from the contingent visible world (choosing the correct materials, measuring accurately, making a dresser specifically designed for shoes, etc.) and 'paradigms' (*paradeígma*) from the 'world' of Forms (the what-is-a-dresser or 'look' (*eidos*) of the dresser).

A 'teleological understanding' (Denyer, 2007, p. 285) of what makes a dresser comprehensible and useful, ought to be spatially variable (its shape being dependent on the dimensions of the room where it will be placed) and task-specific (its main function being to put clothes away). The process of making an image-product (under *eikon*) requires intentionality, calculated trial and error, and the use of appropriate materials in agreement with 'natural fitness'. Through this imitative process, a craftsman can produce a material image-product in conformity to or coming closest to the 'Form' it was intended to represent or imitate. By emphasizing on maintaining the 'proportions of the original,' (*kata tas tou paradeigmatos symmetrias*) (*Soph.* 235d5-6) the image's 'appearance' (*phainomenon*) (*Soph.* 236b3) also becomes reliable[19] due to its relationship with the 'Form' via 'Similarity'. (Patterson, 1985, p. 41; Notomi, 1999, p. 147) As a subclass of the imitative arts coined 'likeness-making' (*eikastikē*), (*Soph.* 236b1) an '*eikon*' is an 'image-product' that maintains a reliable or correct (*orthótēs*) (*Crat.* 432b1-3) 'appearance'

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[19] It is here where the term *eikon* evokes the positive aspect of imitation as 'that which sticks with what exists' (Cassin 245) See note 20.

through a craftsman's intentional use of mathematical proportions and appropriate materials, resulting in an acceptable representation. (Rutter et al., 2000, p. 105; Notomi, 2001, p. 149)

1.3. The Second Kind of Image: 'Eidolōn,' the Deceitful Image

'Images' named *eidōla* are more complex, because apart from the imitative 'participation' or 'communication' between the craftsman, the 'image', and the process, they involve a fourth term, the 'apparition' (*phantasma*). In *Republic* 598b, as an image-product that 'imitates a *phantasm*', '*eidōla*' are said to touch upon only a small portion of an object, concerned only with the 'appearance' (*phainomenon*) without any regard for proportion. With regards to the dresser example, the cabinetmaker's image (*eikon*) requires a degree of calculation and measurement, while the *eidolōn* of a dresser (a painting of a dresser) require only the qualities that present themselves, that is, shape, color, and depth. For Plato, the art of painting and sophistry and their 'image-products' fall under the latter category of 'image-making'. (*Rep*. 597b9; *Soph*. 266c5-6) In the *Sophist* 266c-d, a painting is famously described as a 'man-made dream for those who are awake'; an image-product from the imitative art termed 'apparition-making', 'fantastic', or 'simulative art' (*phantastikon*). In the *Sophist* (235e-236a), Plato mentions those who produce large paintings or sculptures, "abandon the truth and give their figures not the actual proportions but those which *seem* to be beautiful".

An example that illustrates this distortive tendency can be found in the *Republic* (420c-d), where Socrates mentions that those who are motivated by a personal account of beauty are willing to overlook 'what is proper', desiring to paint eyes so beautiful that they will no longer be like eyes. The desire to enhance a statue's beauty by making alterations within what can be afforded by the visible but without paying attention to the proportions is the main tendency of what Plato calls the 'lovers of sight' (*philothéamones*). (*Rep*. 476b3-5, 479a1-5) Left to the voices of their

particular desires and current opinions, these 'lovers of sights' "would abandon the truth and give their figures not the actual proportions but those which seem to be beautiful." (*Soph.* 235e5-236a2) Emphasizing on the enhancement of its outward appearance results with the formation of an 'apparition' (*phántasma*), which, like the impact created by a 'perspective-drawing' or a 'shadow-painting' (*skiagraphía*), elicits a heighted sense of beauty and pleasure when spectated from a specific viewpoint. (*Soph.* 236b4-7, 236a4-6; *Theaet.* 208e5-6; *Rep.* 586b4-6, 602d1-3, 523a7-523c2) When viewed from any other point, the effect of the 'apparition' vanishes entirely, revealing its disfigured form. In other words, lovers of sights are open to distort a statue's appearance in such a manner that would inevitably disrupt its function as a correct representation of a likeness to what is beyond spurious and current opinions.

1.4. Distinctions Between 'Eidolōn' and 'Eikon'

As imitative products, painting and sculpting are characterized by Plato for being "three times removed" (*Rep.* 597e2) when compared with divinely instantiated products. (*Rep* 593c1-3) Under the general theme of imitation, (*Rep.* 595c7) paintings and sculptures represent the 'apparition' (*phantasmatos*) of a thing, (*Rep.* 598b2) lacking any functionality characteristic of man-made products like chairs and beds, or essential characteristics of divinely instantiated products. For Plato, then, the main distinction between the products of 'likeness-making' and 'apparition-making' lies in their method of construction. For instance, cabinetmakers methodologically via calculation, 'look' to the 'Idea' and what 'naturally fits' to producing an image (*eikon*) *i.e.*, a cabinet in accord with mathematical proportions. 'Likeness-making' and the word *eikon* then, are characterized as following step-by-step calculated proportions, persevering through trial and error to achieve a specific functional end. On the other hand, painters, and sculptors, although using complex techniques (and possible complex calculations), look only to

the affective and physiological "experiences afforded by sight" and popular opinions to produce an 'image' (*eidolōn*) *i.e.*, paintings or sculptures that project (to some unknown degree) those very same affective and physiological experiences. (Tanner 2016, p. 108; Rutter et al., 2000, p. 107)

The painter's craft, more so than the cabinetmaker's dependence on precise calculations, relies on opinions to make their image-products. (*Rep.* 598b5-c1) Such reliance predisposes the painter to alter the visible form of the object unknowingly or intentionally. Once produced, the image (*eidolon*) distorts the ordinary appearance of the original object into an 'apparition' (*phantasmatos*) that conceals its own disproportion under the veil of what the painter believes to accommodate the opinion of others. This subjective intervention defines the art of 'apparition-making', whose image-products not only obscures reality but also holds the power to provoke or manipulate the emotional responses of the observer, a power that encapsulates the essence of *eidolōn*. (Notomi, 2001, p. 147-151; Rutter et al., 2000, p. 104-105) Herein, the *eidolōn* can be interpreted as containing a pivotal element that can provoke a psychological response on a spectator, via their current opinions. In this context, a spectator's encounter with an *eidolon*, depending on what kind of public opinion the painter is currently swayed by, may elicit emotional responses that reaffirm a spectator's own desires or become deceived or persuaded into accepting a painter's judgements and desires as his/her own.

As we saw, Plato's concerns about *eikona* and *eidōla* lie at multiple levels. (i) 'Appearance' and 'apparition': the tension between 'appearance' and 'apparition' stems from what is a correct and true depiction of an opinion or original. (ii) The viewpoint: a spectator's position plays an essential role, given that despite lacking any mathematical proportion, an *eidolōn* will 'appear' more beautiful when spectating from a specific viewpoint, than spectating an *eikon* from any angle. (iii) Method and bodily experience: The reliability of an *eikon* is based on the ontological and

epistemological status of proportion and calculation, while the skepticism towards '*eidolōn*' is aimed towards a human's perceptual, affective, and experiential dispositions. In summary, Plato exhibits a multifaceted focus on 'images' (*eidola*) and image-making that contributes to the formation of an 'apparition' (*phantasmatos*). When a spectator encounters an *eidolōn*, *i.e.,* is immersed in 'apparitions', it leads to the elicitation of affections (*pathemata*) such as fear, awe, love, etc. These affections can be physiological manifestations or influenced by psychological factors, like external deceptive or persuasive beliefs (*doxa*), including the belief that what appears beautiful is indeed beautiful. This leads me to the following question: How does Plato's understanding of the interplay between material and mental images influence a spectator's perception of the world, and what implications does this have for a spectator's psychological and epistemological engagement with the world?

2. Transition from Material to Mental Images in Plato's Thought

In transitioning from the Pre-Socratic focus on mental imagery to Plato's exploration of both mental and material images, it is essential to underscore how cognition and perception participate with one another in Plato's thought. This chapter delves into the psychological impacts of visual representation, specifically examining how the active processes of cognition and understanding construct mental images from external material manifestation. The shift from purely material images to one of mutual participation between mental and material images in Plato's work marks a significant development in the study of ancient Greek thought on the perceptual and cognitive processes of representation.

2.1. The Concern of Imitation and Representation in Plato's Critias

A segment of the *Critias* (107b4-d1), particularly the discussion of "imitation and representation" (*mimēsin kai apeikasian*), serves as a metaphorical lens through which we can

view the broader theme of this chapter: the psychological impact of perceptual representations. Critias, through his discourse on the conflict between Athens and Atlantis, lays the groundwork for understanding the dual nature of images as both material entities (paintings and verbal discourse) and mental constructs. This twofold nature is pivotal in understanding how Plato portrays the cognitive interactivity with these images, and how 'images' influence human cognition, belief formation, and one's perception of the world. The passage reads as follows:

> The accounts given by us all must be, of course, of the nature of imitations and representations; and if we look at the portraiture of divine and of human bodies as executed by painters, in respect of the ease or difficulty with which they succeed in imitating their subjects in the opinion of onlookers, we shall notice in the first place that as regards the earth and mountains and rivers and woods and the whole of heaven, with the things that exist and move therein, we are content if a man is able to represent them with even a small degree of likeness; and further, that, inasmuch as we have no exact knowledge about such objects, we do not examine closely or criticize the paintings, but tolerate, in such cases, an inexact and deceptive sketch. On the other hand, whenever a painter tries to render a likeness of our own bodies, we quickly perceive what is defective because of our constant familiar acquaintance with them, and become severe critics of him who fails to bring out to the full all the points of similarity.
>
> (*Criti*. 107b4-d1)

2.2. The Painting Metaphor in the Critias: from image to discourse

This twofold concern, between human and divine bodies, is illustrated in the *Critias*, where Critias discusses the challenges of "imitation and representation" (*mimēsin kai apeikasian*) (*Criti*. 107b5) as an introductory metaphor to his discourse on the conflict between Athens and Atlantis. Critias observes that the act of 'producing images' (*eidolopoiían*) by painters provokes a notable tension between 'appearance' and 'apparition' on a spectator's apprehension of an object, reflecting a cognitive perspective of imitation and representation through the possibility of deception and persuasion. (*Criti*. 107b) When the theme or object is unfamiliar, a spectator is often 'content to accept' what he sees, *i.e.*, accept the 'apparition' (*phantasma*) of the 'perspective painting' (*skiagrafia*) despite being a 'slender representation'. (Taylor trans.) The potential 'apparition' is accepted by the spectator especially when the theme or object represented in the painting appeals to his emotions or corresponds with her beliefs (*doxa*). Critias notes that when painters make an imitation of the body, spectators quickly 'apprehend' (*katanóisin*) mistakes given their familiarity with that object. (*Criti*. 107d3) However, when the theme and objects involve divinities, a theme Critias believes most individuals are unfamiliar with, spectators are 'content' with a minimal degree of supposed likeness, thus outweighing examination (*exetázomen*) and critique (*elénchomen*). Hence, when themes of divinity or 'divine' objects are involved, in painting or in discourse, (*Criti*. 107d4) the likelihood that a representation would promote a deception inducing 'apparition' is significantly higher.

We find two relationships in Critias' observations that may lead to deception. The first is between the painter and the craft of painting: given that the nature of painting is intimately related to visible perception, painters depict gods as bodily beings with human emotions and faults within the visible world. (*Rep.* 377e) This product misrepresents the theme of divinity, resulting in an

'apparition' that projects a painter's (un)intentional opinion (*Rep*. 382a) rather than the truth. The second relationship involves the interaction between spectator and painting. Artistic projected 'apparitions' emanating through the painting are most persuasive or deceptive when a spectator is in a cognitive state of uncertainty. These 'apparitions' lead the spectator to accept perceptual or conceptual attributes that characterize 'divinity', which in turn influence a spectator's understanding of what is divine. Both relationships point towards what Critias believes to be the challenge of imitation and representation. This tension, between both the act of painting and the act of spectating a painting is driven by what is familiar and unfamiliar. As viewers process these tensions, the resulting evaluation reinforces certain opinions, in this case, the subtle opinion that divine themes can be aptly described and analyzed solely from what can be visually perceived and experienced, and thus being content with or, in the least, overlooking aspects which are not immediately perceivable, which in turn, leads to further misinterpretation.

These observations serve as a metaphor to describe the challenges of presenting a discourse that is 'easy' (*euporian*) for an audience with limited understanding of the subject. (*Criti*. 107b1-4) The basic takeaway from the metaphor is clear: the less familiar the theme, the more a spectator is content with what is presented, and the more likely he will be deceived, whether in painting or discourse. Despite the shift from visual to auditory modality, discourse can be viewed as an image-product in this context. As an image, the success or failure of discourse hinges not only on the relationship between the speaker, their craft, and their familiarity with the topic, but also on the connection between the image-product, the spectator, and the spectator's prior knowledge of the theme. However, a problem arises: Given that the effectiveness of an image relies not only on the image-maker's craft but also on the spectator's pre-existing knowledge, what additional kind of

knowledge must an image-maker possess to ensure not only its 'easeful' (*euporian*) delivery, but the image-product's resonance on the spectator beyond mere artistic appeal?

2.3. Understanding 'Eidolōn's Persuasive power

To define '*eidolōn*' more precisely, I need to examine the specific aspects that make it deceptive and persuasive, the 'apparition'. In *the Critias*, was the painting itself deceptive, or was it the spectator's ignorance that led to deception, where the painting itself is no more deceptive than any other 'image-product'? With regards to the 'apparition', is Plato making a *physiological* observation, where 'perspective paintings' are immediately and independently deceptive, evoked by the image's 'apparition' and the weakness of the eye? Or are they *psychological* observations relating to soul guiding experiences (*Phaedr*. 261a), in which the image-maker intentionally manipulates the image creating an intervening 'apparition' that persuades and deceives through a specific weakness within the spectator's soul? How does the 'apparition' aspect of '*eidolon*' blur the line between the ordinary appearance of an object and a deceptive illusion, and what does this reveal about the spectator as a physiological and psychological entity?

2.4. Physiological and Psychological 'Eidolōn'

If we think about images (*eidola*) of statues and paintings from our previous examples in metaphysical terms, there would be nothing else to say except that the products under the 'apparition-making' art are deficient, lacking any true ontological consistency beyond the appearances of shapes, colors, and depth, holding very little likeness to an original. However, as an object in the world, the image leads to an epistemological concern: What are the processes that lead to deception and persuasion, and how can these outcomes, emerging from the interaction with the images, affect an individual? To answer this, we need to use a comprehensive reading of '*eidolōn*', as an object that imitates an original, encompassing not only visual or material forms

but also, textual, auditory, and mental experiences (e.g., statues, paintings, discourses, myths, opinions, etc.) when apprehended physiologically or psychologically.

2.5. Physiological Aspects of an 'Eidolōn'

Viewed in this comprehensive sense, image-products of the 'apparition-making' art may affect the viewer physiologically; for example, 'trompe-l'oeil' (*skiagrafia*) always deceive, even if one knew beforehand that the phenomena will occur. Plato offers a few examples: (i) things always look crooked when placed in water (*Rep.* 602d); (ii) when seen from far away, objects are always subject to misidentification (*Phileb.* 38c); (iii) displaying a painting from far away deceive children and adults (*Rep.* 598b-c, *Theaet.* 203e). These examples illustrate the limits of one's visual perceptions, as not unequivocally reliable.

2.6. Psychological Aspects of an 'Eidolōn'

Image-products may have a more *psychological* impact on the spectator when interacting with a representation of an original. Here are three examples. The first is the poetic 'representations' (*eikazē*) (*Rep*. 377e1) of gods as deceitful. (*Rep*. 380d) If gods could deceive, they could do so by altering their external appearance to that of a stranger (*Rep*. 381d1-2) or other shapes (*Rep*. 381e6-7) or produce an 'affection in the soul' (*psychēi estin pathēmatos*) (*Rep*. 382b6-7) in waking reality or in one's dreams (*Rep*. 382e8-10) by means of 'apparitions' (*phantasias*), words (*logous*), or signs (*sēmeiōn*). If spectators judged that poetic representations of gods as beings capable of or inclined to deceit were accurate, gods could, if they so desired, distort or manipulate the external environment, human perception, and cognition, blurring the line between truth and falsehood. This consequence renders human understanding as ontologically uncertain.

A second example can be found in the effects of poets praising tyranny as godlike. (*Rep*. 568b1-4) For Plato, when poets do so, they produce an 'image' (*eidolōn*) of pleasure (*Rep*. 587c7)

that affects those who lack experience of knowledge and virtue. (*Rep*. 586a1) If these praises are 'exhibited' (*epideiknutai*) (*Soph*. 224b4) by fine, loud, and persuasive voices, they can deceive spectators into admiring tyranny, a deception rooted on the judgement that 'doing whatever one wishes' (*Gorg*. 468d1-3) is 'truly pleasurable', (*Rep*. 586b5-6) highlighting the emotional influence of images. Discourses about what happens to the soul after death provide us with a third example. Similar to the way images glorifying tyranny sway public opinion, discourses that represent every soul[20] as lamenting their fate as mere 'phantasms' (*eidolōn*) of their true selves and being composed of an air-like substance, produce an unnecessary fear of death within children and adults alike. (*Rep*. 386d3-387b5; *Phaed*. 77d4-77e5)

From a psychological perspective, each deceptive event can guide a spectator's soul in some manner depending on an image-maker's intentions. However, a comprehensive understanding of these deceptive events hinges on how one interprets the term *eidolōn*. From a spectator's perspective, *eidolōn* means a potential assimilated mental representation (between appearance and apparition) that is to be judged either true or false, which itself is an affective mode that would then influence his/her existing (if any) ontological, political, and metaphysical commitments. The persuasive power of these *eidola* also depends on a spectator's familiarity with a subject or the profundity of their pre-existing beliefs. This interpretation leads us to a focused exploration of the nature of persuasion, lying within the mechanisms of the soul that determine a spectator's thoughts, emotions, and actions, as we will see in our next section.

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[20] I should mention that in the *Phaedo* (81c-81d), Plato employs the term '*eidolon*' with its Homeric connotation as an immaterial 'apparition' of the dead. In this context, this word is used to describe specifically the souls of 'inferior men' who have retained their 'bodily element'.

2.7. Critias' Painting Metaphors Revisited

To understand what Critias means about the nature of 'imitation and representation' (*mimesin kai apeikasian*) (*Crit*. 107b5), I maintain that paintings must be considered as possessing the capacity (via their 'apparition') to affect the spectator both psychologically and physiologically. As image-products (*eidolōn*) understood in this sense, paintings are objects that 'appear' (*phainomenon*) in the 'visible domain' as deceptive imitations of an original through its various psychological and physiologically stimulating 'apparitions'. (*Rep*. 598b1-7)

Despite that for Plato the art of painting is not an appropriate method to represent gods, men, or environmental objects such as trees or mountains, a spectator may still confidently name and/or (mis)identify them on a painting. Considering that the painting in Critias' example is a 'perspective painting' (*skiagrafia*), it holds the power to deceive the viewer, from a particular viewpoint, into believing that the painting is more beautiful than it truly is, or that there are real people present when looked at from afar. Due to its potential illusory effect, the 'apparition' of an 'image' (*eidolōn*) may surpass, as psychologically and physiologically more pervasive, the 'appearance' of a mathematically proportionate image (*eikon*) highlighting the fine line between appearance and deceptive apparition. This understanding of *eidolōn*, as almost but not inherently incorrect, is what led Plato to characterize such 'images' as false or deceitful. (*Soph*. 260c, 265c) From a psychological perspective, the kind of belief evoked by the act of spectating the depiction of human-like gods in the same scene with humans, becomes imprinted as a 'mental image' (*eidolōn*) within the spectator's soul. These 'mental images' are physiologically 'confusing' (*tarachē*) and provocative, while simultaneously possessing a psychological persuasive power. (*Rep*. 493d, 475b2-475e2, 586b6-586d1)

3. Mental Images: An Introduction

Plato's notion of 'image' covers more ground than the Empedoclean and Democritean conception of 'image', in that it includes an awareness of physiological deceit caused by external 'images' (*eidola*). For now, our analysis of paintings under Plato's notion of 'image', points towards a plethora of affections from the visible world that may be harmful due to the inherent character of images. It has also been acknowledged that a spectator's behavior ought to be taken into consideration when interacting with 'images', revealing the possibility for deception and persuasion to a spectator's affective, ontological, political, and metaphysical commitments. To explore the mental phenomenon of persuasion experienced by a spectator more closely, we must examine the roles played by the soul, sight, and the image-maker. Does Plato offer a psychological explanation or a conceptual framework that explains the nature of 'mental images'?

Our analysis of *Critias* 107b indicated that, depending on his acquaintance with the subject of divinity when looking at a painting, a spectator may be led to affirm certain characteristics under divine phenomena. Critias claimed that it is the 'nature of imitation and representation' that explains how a spectator acquired his (correct or incorrect) opinion (*doxa*). But how exactly can the generation of opinions, formulated by an observer, be explained through 'imitation and representation'? Is the formed opinion constitutive of the painting itself, akin to Democritean 'sonant molecules' emanating both from the presence of the painting and the will of the painter? Is it simply an empirical judgement given a spectator's acquaintance with the subject throughout his life (for example listening to speeches in the agora and seeing many paintings)? The following section expands on the kinds of judgments and opinions that visual representations can provoke within the soul.

3.1. Seeing a Portrait in the Phaedo

In the *Phaedo* 73e-74a, Plato offers a psychological analysis on how a spectator interacts with a 'portrait' (*graphein*). The word '*graphein*' in Ancient Greek, can be used for written (*i.e.*, literary or descriptive portraits),[21] drawn, and painted products about some one person or object, thus broadening the scope of 'portrait' in the context of image-products. (Vernant 1991, p. 151) In this analysis, Socrates contends that when one sees a portrait, in this case, a portrait of Simmias (one of the dialogue's interlocutors), one might either 'recall' (*anamnisthínai*) Simmias the person or 'recall' another 'similar' subject, like Cebes (Simmias' brother; *Phaed*. 73e7-74a1). In another example, Socrates attributes to 'recollection' (*anamnesis*) the capacity of a lover to bring to mind the 'image' (*eidos*) of his beloved from the perception of a lyre belonging to him. In both cases, recollection of a different object occurs from the perception of an object considered 'similar' by the observer. (*Phaed*. 73c4-73d1) When examining what connects the perception of object A and the emergent memory B in both instances, it becomes evident that the process of recollection relies on an observer's pre-existing notion of 'similarity' — a familial relation in the first case, and a romantic or affective connection in the second. Furthermore, both scenarios emphasize an understanding and application of 'similarity' that is both empirical and affective. Are these empirically and *somatically* bound concepts of 'similarity' viewed in a positive light? That is, is it proposed that they positively affect the soul in its quest towards the good, or do they 'weigh it down' towards further afflictions? To answer this, we must explore the origins of 'similarity' and what function it was meant to properly undertake.

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[21] Cf. *Meno* 80b-c

3.2. The Genesis of 'Similarity' Explained Through the Myth of Pre-Existence and Theory of Recollection

The Phaedo offers a myth and an adjunct theory that explains both the origins of and how one's notion of 'similarity' is affiliated with sight and the bodily affections which shape what is 'recollected': the myth of the 'pre-empirical existence of the soul' and the theory of recollection (*anamnesis*). I will offer a brief exposition. Before its embodiment, *i.e.,* before a human being is born, the soul existed in a realm where it was in contact and had knowledge of Beauty itself, the Just, the Equal, the Good, and all those Forms which Plato terms "what it is". (*Phaed*. 75c-d4) Once embodied, the soul is immediately in a dissonant 'companionship' (*Phaed*. 66a4-c2) with the body, due to the imprecision of sight and hearing, (*Phaed*. 65b1-3) bodily afflictions, and the contingency of the visible world. (*Phaed*. 79a7) The strain of these influences caused the soul to forget (*Phaed*. 75e1) its participation within that prior invisible existence (*Phaed*. 79a5) and all the knowledge of 'Forms' (*Phaed*. 102b1) acquired there. Consequently, learning is associated with the recollection of those forms from the soul's prior existence. (*Phaed*. 72e) The theory of recollection then posits that when we perceive something, we are actually bringing to mind something we had once forgotten and relating it to similarity and difference.[22] (*Phaed*. 75e)

To summarize, the explanatory power of the myth of the pre-existence of the soul along with the adjunct 'theory' of recollection, provide an account of the three following points. (i) In terms of human knowledge,[23] to preserve knowledge is to remember those 'Forms' known prior to one's birth; (ii) in terms of human perceptions and psychological afflictions, given (i), everything we perceive 'strives' to reach (*Phaed*. 75b1) the various invisible 'Forms', the knowledge of which

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[22] Our interpretation of Plato's theory of recollection relies on the work by Dominick Scott, Sebastian Ramon Philipp Gertz, and C. D. C. Reeve.
[23] Cf. Scott 1987, p.359.

may only become present to mind (Gertz 2011, p. 119) once the soul is 'purified' (*katharmós*) 'as far as it is possible' (*málista*) (*Phaed*. 65b, 66b) from any overburdening 'association' with the body (*Phaed*. 69c2-6); (iii) and in terms of human moral action, given (i) and (ii), moral actions are contextualized within a constant relational dynamic intertwining 'mortal', 'body', and 'visible' with the 'divine', 'soul', and 'invisible', where happiness is (re)discovered in overcoming 'human ills' and in assessing the 'deficiency' or dissimilarity of recollected notions to the Forms. (Sepper, 2010, p. 139; Cornelli 2019, p. 30; Shorey, 1903, p. 45; Reeve, 2006, p. 103; *Phaed*. 66c2-3, 81a4-9, 74a2-7)

The soul's instantiation of 'similarity' acts as a crucial link, its intensity determined by the soul's pre-existing knowledge of the Forms, connecting the observer, the impact of external perceptual objects, and the resulting 'memory' or 'mental image' (*eidos*). (Shorey, 1903, p. 48) The key point of contention lies on how intensely 'similarity' brings about knowledge of Forms by perceiving objects. Interpretations vary. Damascius (458-538AD) proposes that "the standard of judgements [*i.e.*, Similarity, Equality, the Good] exists prior to the things judged [objects judged 'equal']". In this interpretation, perceptual objects can only be judged 'similar' through the application of the recollected Form of 'Similarity' onto a particular object of perception. (Gertz, 2011, p. 113-116) Dominic Scott suggests that recollection is concerned exclusively (at least in the *Phaedo*) with 'a priori knowledge.' The question about how one forms empirical judgements, and 'hard philosophical knowledge' involves two kinds of recollection. In this interpretation, to 'actually' recollect and thus attain knowledge, one is required to rid themselves entirely of judgements attributed to sense-perception, a difficult feat that most are not willing to let go of. What connects these two kinds of recollection, is Plato's ontology of resemblance and participation

where the objects of perception carry real properties that participate via resemblance to the equally real, yet at the same time separate, Forms. (Scott, 1987, p. 350, 359)

Gabriele Cornelli's interpretation is interesting. Rather than pursuing a strict dualism between the unchanging and the soul on one side and change and the body on the other, Cornelli proposes that the soul is 'guaranteed an ontological possibility', it may take on bodily traits. This interpretation relies on a more precise reading of the soul's association with the body. Cornelli proposes that the soul, given a contamination from the body, transform itself through a 'process of *somatization*' (*sōmatoeidḗs*) (*Phaed*. 81b6, 81c4) in order to feel the world through the body. The body/soul dualism relies on the effort of an individual to keep them separate, a separation whose method of achievement is 'violent and painful'. (Cornelli, 2019, p. 28-30) With this interpretation, we can clearly appreciate how an observer's notion of 'similarity' within the soul is affected by the body in the sense that the soul becomes invested with the body's prior perceptual experiences and psychological dispositions. Following this line, our next section explores the body in a state of affliction and in what manner it may interrupt the soul.

3.3. Affections and Sight

In both examples (seeing Simmias' portrait, and the lover looking at the lyre) in the *Phaedo*, I observe that Socrates does not suggest any distortions emanating from ordinary objects or portraits that would deceive the observer into making an ill-conceived judgement about them. For Plato, 'recollection partly takes place'[24] (*Phaed*. 74a2 Taylor Trans.) immediately upon seeing an

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[24] It should be noted that lines 2-3 and 5-6 from 74a vary. Grube translates the first lines as "recollection is occasioned by things that are similar" and in the second "recollection is caused by similar things". Burnet translates both lines with "caused by". I use Taylor's translation, "reminiscence partly takes place from things similar" and "recollects any thing from similars", because I believe it emphasizes on the adjectival character of the seen object as a posterior ascription made by the viewer.

external object. The emergent 'mental image' (*eidos*), triggered by a notion of 'similarity', evolves through a process, formed within the soul from the observer's immediate sensory experience and then further refined and shaped by the observer's accumulated experiential dispositions. For the individual afflicted by love, whether consciously aware of this prior condition or not, the mental image of her beloved could be 'recollected' from any perceived object, given that it is influencing their notion of 'similarity', thus shaping the resulting 'mental image'.

Within the brief timeframe of a perceptual event, bodily 'recollection' emerges as a continuous and relational ongoing process within the soul, influenced by: (i) the immediate perception of material objects by the interplay between vision and an object's appearance; (ii) a spectator's prior psychological states or 'affections' (*pathemata*) which directly impact the dynamics of sight, and consequently delimit (iii) one's notion of 'similarity'. These 'material affections' (*pathemata*) (Shorey, 1903, p. 46) influence the soul's recollective process either immediately upon seeing an external object or, in the same way, in an anticipatory manner arising from the expectations of future affections. (*Rep*. 584c6-7; *Phaed*. 65a) The accumulation of these 'material affections' collectively affect the soul. (Cf. *Rep*. 462c9-462d1, 524b-c) They not only influence how it establishes similarities and differences in the world around it but also shape its capacity to make judgments, (*Phaed*. 74a, 75a-b, 66b-c4) thereby affecting its ability to understand and categorize relationships between different entities or ideas. At this point, the soul becomes 'heavy' and, in this way, invested with the 'bodily element' (*sōmatoeidḗs*) concerning it with the region of the visible. (*Phaed*. 81c4-d4)

3.4. The Afflicted Body

Based on the preceding account, I have established Plato's moral and ontologically grounded perspective on human psychology, which concerns the processes involved in the

perception and intellection of 'images,' including external objects and 'portraits' (*graphein*)
produced through 'image-making'. (Sepper, 2010, p. 136-139; Shorey, 1903, p. 47-48) In the
examples of the painting and the spectator in the *Critias* and the *Phaedo*, I believe that the spectator
appeals to a materially inclined notion of 'similarity' influenced by the 'mixture' between the
body's desire and sense-perception, which in turn directs what 'mental image' is recollected within
the soul. In a perceptual event, Plato's contention is not with any specific perceptual faculty or
quality of an external object's appearance, but with the prior affections constitutive of the body. In
this regard, Plato argues that the body fills us with desires, fears, and 'all sorts of *eidolōn*' (*Phaed*.
66c2-3) during a perceptual event, affecting what 'mental images' are recollected through one's
accumulated notion of 'similarity'.

The added example of the lover is revealing because it illustrates how a prior "affection"
(*pathema*) such as love, may shape one's notion of 'similarity' amid a perceptual event. In this
case, it is not merely that the objects one sees remind one of their beloved; rather, one pushes forth
a relation (in most cases unknowingly) to their beloved. If the lover fails to recognize that it is his
internal affections (*i.e.*, the desire to be with his lover) and *not* the inherent quality of objects that
bring forth 'mental images' of his beloved, he misattributes them as intrinsic to the object, and
worse, he confines the soul's attention to visible qualities. If we apply the lover's scenario to any
form of object-oriented affection (such as the love of money, love of esteem, love of knowledge,
etc.), the 'mental image' that emerges amid a perceptual event by an afflicted individual presents
a problem of attribution where mental imagery is the byproduct of the 'weight' of a body's pre-
existing affections and an overinvestment on stimulus amid a perceptual event.

This misattribution and overinvestment, then, distorts his interpretive response with what
he sees, misleading him away from reasoned thought. The stimulus of external objects such as a

lyre, an article of clothing, a color, a face, words in a conversation, a painting of a god, all direct his soul towards his beloved and perpetuate his 'affliction', where any attempt to challenge his involvement in this (mis)attribution is met with resistance. Once manifested, this mental image promotes the original affection that produced it, further distorting one's perceptual and mental experiences. At its most rudimentary, the emergent 'mental image' (*eidos* and *eidolon*) drives and shapes our experiences and attention, without necessitating awareness of their underlying psychological and physiological origins.

To better understand images within this realm, we need to focus not just on the perceptual event itself but more on the psychological aspects supporting it. What is the nature of these *eidola* that are (partly) generated by the body amid a perceptual event? By exploring the question concerning '*eidolōn*' in this way, we will gain a deeper insight into Plato's conception of the image and imagination within a transformative psychological context.

3.5. Defining 'Eidolōn' as a Byproduct Within the Body in the Phaedo

In *the Phaedo*, Plato emphasizes that the role and influence of '*eidolōn*' reside in its interplay with the body and soul. Defining '*eidolōn*' within the context of a perceptual event then becomes crucial to have a clear understanding of the interplay between the body, the soul, and the objects of the external world. In the *Phaedo* 66c2, Plato mentions that *eidola*, along with fears and desires, are a byproduct of the body's dissonant relationship with the soul, that leads one away from philosophy. [25] The term *eidolōn* in this fragment can be interpreted as a 'private phenomenon'—an internal process connected to observable behaviors like the pursuit of wealth

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[25] In the *Phaedo*, Plato offers a few negative examples that lead away from the dispositions that mark the 'lover of wisdom' (*philosophos*) and the 'lover of knowledge' (*philmathes*) such as the 'lover of ruling' (*philarchos*), the 'lover of wealth' (*philochrēmatos*), and the 'lover of the body' (*philosōmatos*) and the 'misologist' or 'hater of arguments' (*misologoi*) (Cf. 68c, 82c, 89d1; Shorey 42)

centered in the service (*therapeia*) of the body. (*Phaed*. 66c4-d2) For instance, in German it has been translated as '*Schattenbildern*' or '*Bildern*', in Spanish as '*fantasmas*', in French as '*simulacres*', and in English as '*imaginations*', '*phantoms*', '*fantasies*', '*fancies*', '*illusions*', and '*images*.'[26] These translations attempt to capture this phenomenon that originates within the body, is interlinked with fears and desires, and affects one's path towards the realization of a specific task or goal.

However, according to Thomas Taylor's interpretation, *eidolon* can be generally understood as a hindrance that affects intellectual conceptions such as how fantasy might go against reason or physiological desires, for instance how the love of drinking may obstruct a healthy lifestyle. This kind of hindrance is difficult to wipe away throughout one's life. (Taylor, 1972, vol. IV, p. 268) These perturbations can take many forms, for instance, the byproduct of an emotional bias like love that perturbs one's perception of objects, a societal (mis)conception that leads one to posit that the life of the tyrant as something desired by all, (*Gorg*. 468e) and a more general philosophical (mis)apprehension where one equates knowledge to perception. (*Theaet*. 151e1-2)

To understand how *eidola* are produced within one's soul and their connection to such external dispositions, like the ones just mentioned, that lead one astray and perpetuate what I consider a disturbed state, it is essential to explore the workings of the soul *within* this very disordered state. By beginning from a troubled soul, I can elucidate the conditions through which '*eidolōn*' become manifest from one's thoughts towards actions, ultimately contributing to a

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[26] Translators in order of appearance: Friedrich Schleiermacher and Barbara Zehnpfennig (German), C. Garcia Gual et al. (Spanish), M. Dixsaut (French), John Burnet, C. J. Rowe, David Sedley and Alex Long, Harold Fowler, G. M. E. Grube, and Thomas Taylor (English).

deviation from one's path. If we provisionally characterize 'images' *(eidola)* as 'faint judgments', then these images originate from empirical events, and their outward expression is marked by those very same images within the soul. How can we understand judgements as images emerging within oneself?

3.6. The Disturbed Individual

In book IV of the *Republic*, Plato argues that our soul, a composite of distinct parts, can attain harmonious state when each part performs its own role without occupying the task of another. Plato offers an account of the soul as consisting of three parts that oversee different functions: the rational element (*logistikós*) is concerned with calculation and measurement; the spirited element (*thymós*) is the part with which we feel intense emotions, and the appetitive element (*epithymētikō*) is concerned with bodily satisfaction. According to this theory, a soul is considered in a state of disarray (*Rep*. 434a3-5, 441a2,) and deemed 'vicious' (*aithōsi*) (*Rep*. 559d8) when the appetitive element, in collaboration with the spirited element, takes the lead, (588e3-5) after having effectively silenced or overthrown the rational element. (*Rep*. 442b1-2) Under the rule of the appetitive element, outward actions (*poiēmatōn*) and inward afflictions (*pathēmatōn*) that influence assent and dissent, and wishing and willing, (*Rep*. 437b-c4) anticipations and expectations (*Rep*. 584c) invest the soul towards achieving the maximization of bodily pleasures. Aided by the spirited element, one's inner appetitive desires and actions are provoked by both external seductions (*Rep*. 559d7-e1) and internal misconceptions or confusions about pleasures. (559e5-9) Desires, and the actions they give rise to, are directed towards a 'kind of pleasure' that encompasses both necessary and unnecessary material qualities. (*Rep*. 558d-559a) This pursuit aims to 'fill' the soul (*Rep*. 585b3-8) by securing bodily satisfaction through the cessation and evasion of pain. (*Rep*. 584a-c)

The sense of gratification derived from these kinds of pleasures, what Plato calls 'images' (*eidōlois*) of pleasure, (*Rep*. 586b8, 587c9) and the desire to continue to seek and be ruled by them out ultimately contribute to the degradation of both body and soul. (*Rep*. (*Rep*. 586b3-4, 537e, 539c) In this state, not only does it become challenging to acknowledge one's dissonant condition and to identify just and honorable influences that may help establish inner harmony between the different parts of the soul (*Rep*. 443e), but this dissonance also displays itself outwardly. This dissonance can occur through errors in perception (*Rep*. 602d, 523b3; *Laws* 663b4-5; *Phileb*. 38b) or misjudgments of opinions (*Rep*. 584c1, *Rep*. 338b1-2; *Theaet*. 151e1-2). Being incapable of resolving its dissonance, the soul erroneously employs the cognitive capacity of 'foresight' (*promētheian*) inadvertently manipulating events with the aim of procuring external objects believed to maximize or 'anticipate' (*prosdokia*) (*Rep*. 584c6-7) inner pleasures. (586b1-3, *Rep*. 442e) The pleasures sought under these conditions are outwards expressions of 'images of true pleasures' (*eidṓlois tês alēthoûs hēdonês*), (*Rep*. 586b5) that is, the exclusive seeking of bodily pleasures revolves around an internal and specific yet faint judgement of what 'pleasure' is.

Living with these 'images of pleasure' (*hēdonōn eidōlōn*), what one seeks is variable in nature. One is pulled by external sources such as popular opinions as to what is pleasurable and by specific private pleasures and appetites present within all of us. (*Rep*. 571b3-5, 606c) For a disturbed soul, both kinds of perturbations may deeply impact it. These perturbations can bleed into one another, like an ever-changing multi-headed beast, (*Rep*. 588c) without any fixed, rational relation between opinion and desire (*Rep*. 586a-b) where the more discordant the soul is, the more imaginative and complex the afflictions becomes, and the greater the deviations from one's intended path.

In summary, for Plato, the myth of the pre-existence of the soul and the adjunct theory of recollection explains the motivations behind an individual's actions, desires, and imaginations, which are funneled by prior experiences and (in)attention. The soul, in its striving for understanding the 'Forms,' is often hindered by its discordant relationship with the body, leading it to miss its true aim. I observe that the soul's desires are not uniform; it is driven by at least three sets of desires that motivate its actions. In a state of disharmony, the soul's desires are overly influenced by internal appetitive urges and external societal pressures, resulting and preserving in unstable and unreliable images and imaginations. Crucially, the unharmonious soul's desires tend to be empirically self-centered, stemming from previous experiences that the soul relates to the body and esteem. This bodily self-focus is problematic, as it often leads the soul to form associations through the notion of 'similarity', bringing forth incorrect or misleading images. These 'images' (*eidola*) are difficult to alter. Considering these problematic self-focused associations that actively form and preserve misleading images, how does Plato explain a soul's process for interpreting images and their interaction with desires, judgements, and perceptions? And how can a soul pass from forming and preserving misleading images to forming images that may lead to true knowledge?

Chapter Three: '*Eikasia*' as a Path Revealed by Platonic Imagery

Do not, then, my friend, keep children to their studies by compulsion but by play.

μὴ τοίνυν βίᾳ, εἶπον, ὦ ἄριστε, τοὺς παῖδας ἐν τοῖς μαθήμασιν ἀλλὰ παίζοντας τρέφε

(Rep. 536e5-537a2)

1. Scenario images and the Desiring Soul: Dream-images

In book IX of the *Republic*, Plato speaks about "unlawful visions appearing in dreams" (*Rep*. 572b1) as a key symptom of the disturbed individual, specifically the tyrannical character. When one sleeps, appetites and desires that are not kept in check by reason and the better appetites become manifest as if "freed from all shame and wisdom." (*Rep*. 571c6-7) In this lawless dream state, one "fantasizes" and indulges on shameless acts, what can be considered as 'scenario images', (Sepper, 2010, p. 150) that one would not indulge in waking reality. Sepper defines 'scenario images' as a scene woven together from visual stimuli and conceptual representations around themes (justice, beauty, death, etc.) or objects (tools, portraits, or trees, etc.), constituting their 'look' (*eidos*). These scenarios inherently exhibit multiple *eidos*, as each element (visual and conceptual) adds depth and movement, reflecting more than just the sum of their parts. [27] Gaining strength and vivacity from one's desires and pleasures, these 'images' take on a tangible, vivid, and interactive form – in this case, in our dream-state – displaying unchecked appetites that drive our pursuit of pleasure in our waking state. Such 'scenario images', according to Plato, not only disturb one's peace but also potentially lead one towards tyranny and self-destruction.

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[27] Cf. *Phileb*. 40a; *Rep*. 488a-489a.

As an example of the positive effects of dreams on a harmonious individual, particularly one deeply engaged in the pursuit of learning, we can refer to the *Phaedo* 60e-61b. Here, Socrates describes his dreams as 'now in one shape, now in another' but all 'saying' the same thing: 'practice and cultivate the arts.' Despite their multifarious and ambiguous nature, these audible images were so significant that he chose to heed them in his final hours preceding his death by hemlock. On the contrary, when the 'ruling part' of the soul is at rest, the bestial and lawless part motivated by unnecessary desires and pleasures awakens. This part indulges in behaviors that, while awake, one under ordinary circumstances would never undertake. "Shame and wisdom" (*aidos kai phronēsis*) are undermined, producing a scenario image mirroring the disturbance within their soul. In this state, moderation is nullified, where no scenario image is too outrageous or shameful. In this lawless state, one goes so far as to imagine sleeping with one's own mother. (*Rep.* 571c4-d3)

Is it then possible to reorient these mental 'images' toward a positive ethical or psychological end once emerged and imprinted on the soul?[28] This critical inquiry forms the basis for understanding the transformative potential of Platonic imagery. In this chapter, I will further explore the role of Platonic imagery as a cognitive tool. Focusing on the well-known Platonic images of *Republic* 6 and 7, the guiding questions are: (i) How does the Platonic image of the sun expand our understanding of imagery? (ii) What is the role of Platonic imagery regarding *eikasia*

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[28] At this point, it should be emphasized that I distance myself from the traditional Platonic metaphysical framework by focusing on the practical and transformative potential of Platonic imagery. Traditional interpretations of Plato emphasize striving towards the highest Form, the Good, beyond comprehension, highlighting a metaphysical framework foreign to my analysis. The "transcendent view" (Forms as substances in a higher, separate realm) aligns with this framework. (Kim, 2019, p. 138) From existing amid and forming misleading and self-centered images, my investigation focuses on something akin to the "transcendental approach" (Forms as integral to the world's objective structure). While acknowledging the rich legacy of Plato's thought, my investigation reframes his concepts (away from top-down transcendent to bottom-up transcendental approach) to explore how the soul can achieve the *minimal conditions* for knowledge and ethical development. This approach allows for a deeper investigation of the ethical and psychological implications of the experience of Platonic imagery.

as a kind of knowledge in the image of the line? And (iii) How can the Platonic image of the cave serve as a transformational and useful psychological tool?

1.1. Image Registration

The themes of 'dream images' are shaped by an individual's internal state and the impact of external events experienced before sleep. In both dream and wakeful states, our souls form images influenced by our inner dispositions and external stimuli. For instance, in Plato's *Philebus* observing an unclear distant object motivates a 'wishing' (*boulesthai*) to understand what is being perceived (*aisthēsesin*). (*Phileb*. 38c4-5) In this state of uncertainty, that is, the unfulfilled desire (*epithymia*) to understand what is seen, (*Phileb*. 41c1-4) an 'appearance' (*phantasthenta*) is subsequently formed. This appearance arises from the interaction of key elements — (i) one's prior memories and recollections, and (ii) the potential perceptual experience[29] (*pathos*) attributable to the object. These elements are then influenced by (iii) their subsequent material impact (*pathēmata*) on the body (*i.e.*, perception). Within this process, (i) and (ii) contribute to the formation of propositions (*doxa*), while as the perceptual event unfolds, (ii) and (iii) engage the sensory aspect (perception and the cognitive disposition *phantasia*), leading an observer to form at least a faint yet enduring private thought (*dianoomenos*) (*Phileb*. 38e5-6) of the potential object seen. (*Phileb*. 38e1-3) To illustrate how uncertainty and the ensuing 'appearance' influence the almost immediate cognitive processes involved in the perceiving of objects, Plato likens the soul to a book being written (*graphein*) and drawn by two scribes.

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[29] This use of *pathos* as a potential experience and not solely the act of perceiving is one of two proposed uses of *pathos* by Evan Keeling when explaining Plato's theory of perception outlined in the 150s of the dialogue the *Theaetetus*. (Keeling, 2019, p. 62-63; Cassin et al, 2014, p. 745) See also Panos, 2019, p. 130.

Within this image, the soul seeks to determine what perceptual qualities can be associated with the identity of the experienced phenomenon. (*Phileb*. 38e5-8) On an ongoing sensory event, what one is perceiving is driven by the experiencing of potential perceptible qualities (*pathos*) of external objects under the backdrop of one's prior memories and anticipated scenarios, (*Phileb*. 39d5-e6) culminating in a 'two-fold' affection (*pathēmata*), one on the body and one on the soul. (*Phileb*. 39a2, 41b11-c4) This process is likened to a scribe inscribing words on one's soul that leads to the formation of opinions (*doxa*). (*Phileb*. 39a1-3) After this initial inscription, there is a second scribe that draws an 'image' (*eikonas*) based on the written report. (*Phileb*. 39b4) The degree of veracity of the judgement from the drawn report is determined by the degree of veracity of the judgement from the written report. (*Phileb. 39b9-c6)

1.2. The Source of Confusion

Guided by a dominating judgement, the written and associated drawn inscriptions lay the 'mixed' and *unstable* groundwork (*Phileb*. 59d11-59e4) for the emergence of all kinds of mental representations (memory, anticipations, scenario images) in states of both wakefulness (as memories preserved by perceptions, and those resulting from 'appearances' in the *Philebus*) and sleep (the 'dream images' of the *Republic*). I notice that the veridical quality of the emergent mental representations can be constrained and obscured in two principal ways: (i) obscurity through conceptual constraints, where one's dominating judgement (*doxa*) might be too limited in its comprehension or fails to adequately encapsulate a representation, as is often the case with many of Socrates' interlocutors, [30] and (ii) through sensorial experience constraints, where mental representations could arise from a misperception of the intensity of an affliction from a sensory experience. (*Phileb*. 41e9-42a3) In a word, mental representations are influenced by a lack of

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[30] For instance, Protarchus' argument that 'pleasure is the Good' in the *Philebus*.

conceptual understanding and/or from the misidentification of external stimuli, due, for instance, to excess stimulus.[31] In memory, what is primarily affected is the faint recognizing[32] of similarity and difference between memory and percept. Given the faintness, an 'appearance' is formed through the cognitive disposition *phantasia*, where the immediate object of perception is proposed (*doxa*) to be something specific. Another consequence involves anticipation, or the objects of desire that one believes are worth pursuing.

1.3. Personal Desires as a Source of Imagination

In *Philebus* 41a3-9, the following explanation aims to illustrate the organizing dynamic of 'inscribed words' as a stand-in for an individual's conceptual judgement (*doxa*) implied in each emotion (fear, anger, hope, etc.) on what becomes a 'painted representation' (*phantasmata ezōgraphēmena*) or scenario image. It is proposed that everyone is filled with 'hopes' (*elpidas*), and at the same time, has words that represent those very 'hopes' in the soul. From one's conception of 'hope', the second scribe paints a scenario corresponding to those very conceptions in the form of an object of desire. As an example, what one imagines is becoming rich, a scenario-image founded on an appetitive desire for gold, which strictly speaking, is an object of desire conditioned by one's conceptual judgment (*doxa*) of what is worth hoping for. This scenario-image is so clear, that one can even place oneself partaking, enjoying, and thus fulfilling their desire as if the acquisition of gold were directly linked to one's well-being, potentially leading to a narrowed and misleading pursuit of fulfillment in any sense. (*Phileb*. 40a10-12; *Rep*. 534c) It is in this sense that scenario-images displayed in our soul are not the direct source of disturbance, but symptomatic of

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[31] Cf. Gorgias' *Encomium of Helen* 16-17, detailing how intense fear from seeing enemy armor causes lasting psychological traumas. Likewise, in *Rep*. 492a1-492d3, powerful crowd reactions can overpower individual beliefs, forcing conformity to collective emotions and views. These examples highlight how extreme sensory stimuli can make a deep impression on the soul, affecting one's mental states and choices.

[32] This faculty is called *dianoia* (*Theaet.* 191a10-c6; *Phileb*. 38e5-6) (Dimas, et. al. 2019, p. 130)

a misguided (in the *Philebus*, false) understanding of desire and fulfillment, reflected in the object of one's aspirations and how, through it, one aims towards an expected (in this case material) and private well-being.

1.4. The Influence of 'Hope' on Perception and Directed Attention

It should be emphasized that our point of focus is not whether one should enjoy imaginations depending on their probability of occurring, nor a matter of condoning or condemning such appetitive desires for gold. Instead, our focus is on the validity of the resultant word-infused 'image-products', and its dependence on one's conception (*doxa*) of an affection (hope, fear, anger, etc.) *because* these conceptions direct what is imagined.[33] In other words, how what one coins as desirable has a direct influence on what one imagines. Under the powerful affection of hope, an emotion that inherently encompasses both affective response and judgment about future events, (*prosdokēma*, *Phileb*. 32b9-c2) it becomes evident how images and words motivate actions towards anticipatory desires, direct one's attention to a specific object of desire believed to produce a certain amount of satisfaction and modulate one's cognitive dispositions to encounter (or at least visualize) said object. The defining feature of hope is the proposed eventual achievement of satisfaction through *any* aim, wherein the very nature of this aim, *i.e.*, the believed object of desire, will grant satisfaction, and thus runs the risk of paying less attention of their benefit.

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[33] This insight is corroborated in the *Timaeus* 71b5, as a distinction and conflict between the cognitive disposition of the spirited and appetitive parts of the soul to different forms of communication, *i.e.*, *logos* for spirit and 'images' for appetite. Specifically, in the *Timaeus*, images of the imagination are impressed upon the liver, serving as the material with which the 'power of thought' discerns the truth or applicability of these very images. Cf. *Rep*. 571d5-572a4.

1.5. Aiming at Acquired Hopes

Plato proposes that within our soul everybody constantly has affective responses to unfulfilled desires and that we are brimming with hopes that heavily influence our actions and perceptions. (*Rep*. 369b7-10; *Phileb*. 39e4-6) This means that at every moment of one's life everybody is constantly trying to fill this proposed emptiness with the expectation that their particular desires will be fulfilled. For Plato, what everyone considers is worth desiring determines whether one positively or negatively nourishes oneself as both body and soul. (*Phileb*. 40e1-3; *Rep*. 585a5-585b9) This leads me to propose that for disturbed individuals, what pervades and reenforces their unharmonious state are the effects of their imaginings born out of their acquired conception (*i.e.*, the believed object of desire) that gives rise to anticipatory desires. From the disproportionate mixture of concepts that aim towards objects that in no way will preserve body and soul under the effects of 'hope', one's perceptions, imaginations, actions, and statements (*Phileb*. 38e1-2) become 'imbued' (*anepimplasan*) with the concept's corresponding afflictions, (*i.e.*, a twofold pain from yearning the amount of gold one does not, or perhaps will never, possess) leading inadvertently to a situation where one's hope paradoxically results in a discordant relation between body and soul. I propose that to enact a reorientation of these lawless word-infused images-products, one is required to participate in a process where, in the least, there is a commitment towards the reconceptualization of what one considers is worth hoping for, that is, a reorientation towards that which is worth imagining.

2. Platonic Imagery: Redirecting the Disharmonious Stream of Desire

I propose that Platonic imagery, defined as images in words (*eidōla legomena Soph*. 234c4; *eikōn en logois Rep*. 588b8) evoked within Plato's dialogues, aims to reorient or, at least, point towards the cognitive states and dispositions of a potentially disturbed individual. Platonic imagery

molds the formation of linguistic and experiential notions based on current sensory stimuli and memories, influencing a soul's capacity for observation and subsequent interpretations of a present sensory experience. In this line, they help direct one's attention and desires toward selected qualities from both immediate experiences and past events, shaping anticipations for future scenarios.[34] By using words with a firm understanding of their imaginative effects, an image-maker can intentionally guide hearers or readers to visualize a directed 'scenario image' that can re-contextualize their overall thinking.

I propose that Platonic imagery is constructed to not only convey information but also shape cognitive processes by guiding the imagination of the other to understand and anticipate their relation to events in the world. (Sepper, 2010, p. 151; Notomi, 2019, p. 6) These words and the ideas that their combinations put forth, intentionally selected for their strong perceptual attributes as external objects, (Keeling, 2019, p. 64-65) guide listeners and readers away from disharmonious thought patterns, towards alternative ways of perceiving and anticipating the external world. Through an in-depth exploration of the sun, the line, and the cave images from the *Republic*, I aim to elucidate the capacity for Platonic imagery to initiate a transformative reorientation through an individual's imagination.

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[34] Cf. 485d, where Plato employs the stream metaphor (*rheuma*) to elucidate the concept of desire redirection (*epithymiai sphodra repousin*). In this context, he articulates how focusing one's desires towards learning (*mathēmata*) and philosophy (*philosophos*) effectively channels (*apocheteumenon*) one's attention and shapes expectations for future engagements, thereby influencing the individual's interaction with both immediate and anticipated experiences. The analogy accounts to two modes of attention: when centered on bodily pleasures the stream is diverted, and when centered on pleasures of the soul, the stream is reenforced. The analogy also carries the dichotomy between soul-oriented and body-oriented attention: when centered on bodily pleasures, the stream of desires is diverted (*apocheteumenon*), and when focused on the pleasures of the soul, the stream is reinforced.

2.1. Imagery Within Intermediate Spaces

Thus far, we have seen how images have been used as an aid to describe the workings of psychological phenomena such as what happens when one looks at an unclear object. Plato was the first to intentionally use images for this purpose via the imaginative domain. (Vernant, 1991, p. 164; Sepper, 2010, p. 183) Plato also uses imagery in words to describe more complex experiences (*pathos*). For instance, Plato describes the experiences true lovers of knowledge (*alēthinous philosophous*) (*Rep*. 489a5) face for being considered useless in cities by synthesizing (*synagagein eikazonta*) an image (*eikonas*) from various elements or qualities. (*Rep*. 488a1-6) He does so by presenting a dynamic image-scenario about a shipboard quarrel between sailors and ship-owners concerning who could best captain a ship. This narrative, primarily aimed at the interlocutors in the dialogue, serves as an allegorical tool for Adeimantus and Glaucon to firstly examine (*exetazomenēn*) and then teach (*didáske*) others about the societal attitudes towards philosophers and philosophy. (*Rep*. 489a4-b2) The image's target audience (those who prioritize facts (*ergō*) over words (*logō*) *Rep*. 487c4-6, 476c-e7) are presented a way of 'viewing' (*theoria*) (Sepper, 2010, p. 150-154) the effects of public opinion(s) that result in discontent towards philosophers and, by extension, skepticism towards justice in itself. (*Rep*. 366d4-367a)

Unbeknownst to the target audience, the opinions that emerge out of the audience's skepticism towards philosophers and philosophers' commitments towards the 'nature of each thing itself' (*Rep*. 490a8-b1, 476c2) is characterized as a state of dreaming (*Rep*. 476c5-7), flowing through 'intermediate power' (*metaxi dynamēi*) of opinion-forming (*doxazein*). (*Rep*. 479d8-18, 477e2) Engaging in this process, the target audience (*i.e.*, those who cannot tolerate nor accept the 'things themselves' *Rep*. 493e-494a1) are subtly influenced (*repousin*) by prevailing societal views on beauty, the fine, and the good, in public settings like assemblies, courts, and theaters, where

collective noise and emotional fervor amplify praise (*epainōsin*) and criticism (*psogou*) about any opinion.

This fragmented state founded on ever-changing public opinion reflects how they (as lovers of opinion *Rep*. 480a6) shape what is considered conventional (*nomima*) (*Rep*. 479d4-6) behavior and beliefs, thus explaining their contemptuous attitude towards lovers of knowledge and their object. In this vein, I propose that words and the images they evoke are to be viewed as 'objects of opinion' (*doxaston*), (*Rep*. 479d8) partaking between ignorance and knowledge (*Rep*. 478d3) that characterizes the state of the 'lovers of opinion'. The impact of images is most prominent in childhood, given a child's heightened sensitivity to allegory, (*Rep*. 378d5-6) demonstrating an instance where opinion-forming is founded on likenesses considered by public opinion as the 'thing in itself'. (*Rep*. 476c-d4)

An image, irrespective of its truth or use, can leave a lasting imprint on the imagination, influencing one's capacity for knowledge. (*Laws* 643b4-643d5) Images, then, as external sensory objects (that is, their phonetic elements, a speaker's facial expression, timing of delivery, context, sense, etc.) can potentially affect (*pathos*) one's private mental impressions through imagination. (Reverchon, 2021, p. 16) If an image-maker is to attempt at conveying truth, she must have awareness of the cause of listener's image prone state. If listeners are indeed highly sensitive to imagery, how does Plato successfully utilize a word's imaginative impact on the soul, and to what extent are they beneficial?

2.1.1. Platonic Imagery within the Domain of Doxa

What distinguishes Platonic imagery is that the image-maker, Plato, possessed a keen awareness of the importance of preserving the distinction between 'things that participate' (*metachonta*) and 'things in themselves' proper. (*Rep*. 476d1-4) This distinction, deeply rooted in

the reliance on opinion-forming, is the focus of the ship quarrel image; it not only highlights the division between the lovers of opinion and lovers of knowledge but also uncovers the motives driving the lovers of opinions' preference for opinions. In this complex sense, Platonic image functions as a cognitive tool that redirects 'from sense to abstraction' (Shorey, 1895, p. 238) the fixation brought about by habits, perception, and opinions (*Phileb.* 55e1-56a1) that characterizes the experience of all objects of seeming. This means that Platonic imagery is not just an illustrative tool to justify any model or representation, but an epistemological tool to initiate an immersed experience with objects, that for Plato are of significant human interest at multiple levels, not only intellectually but also emotionally. However, as we will see, what maintains this immersive experience is not just the careful crafting of an image between the model (*paradeigma*) and opinion.

2.2. The Function of the Good Within Imagery in the Republic

I propose that Plato's concept of 'the Good' embedded within the conceptual framework of Platonic imagery serves as its ontological foundation. (Sepper, 2010, p. 139) The concept of 'the Idea of the Good', is a unifying, stable, and transcendent entity beyond being, (509b) that forms the 'ultimate [ontological] terminus'. (Ricoeur 2003, p. 37) It serves as the foundational principle upon which all objects, both being and becoming (*Rep.* 511c) are unified and comprehended (*koinōnian… kai syngeneian*). (*Rep.* 531d1) 'The Idea of the Good' unifies theoretical and practical search, which paradoxically functions as the supreme foundation *and* supreme *aporia*, (*Rep* 505e) being both 'sun-like' (*Rep.* 509b) and 'shadow-like'. (*Rep.* 511b, 533a; Ricoeur, 2003, p. 38)

A Platonic image *about* 'the Idea of the Good' (for instance the image of the Sun) mediated through words, serves as a transformative tool (Reverchon 2020, p. 8; Sepper, 2010, p. 156; Notomi 2019, p. 10) whose main intention is to 'turn the soul' (*Rep.* 521c) of its hearers. This

'turning' signifies that hearers have begun to understand that the 'Forms' (*eide*) are known through the 'Idea of the Good', and it is from these Forms that the 'objects of *doxa*' are participants. (*Rep.* 476d1-4, 511e, 509b) Acquiring a 'unifying comprehension' (*Rep.* 531d1) of the 'Idea of the Good' becomes the primary subject of investigation, that is, achieving harmony within the soul that brings forth a new kind of attention, where one becomes more attentive to the 'eye of the soul' (*to tēs psychēs omma*) (*Rep.* 533d2) as opposed to the bodily eyes. But 'the Good' is said to be situated 'beyond being', (*Rep.* 509b) which itself poses an immediate problem: How can words and thought grasp what has been said to be 'beyond being'?

This problem not only invites us to question the limits of theoretical knowledge, but also the limits of its tool, discursive reasoning, that is, the use of language as a vehicle for rational knowledge. More practically, can Platonic imagery reorient a hearer's or a listener's notion of what is 'good' to one dissociated from the habits and beliefs brought forth by public opinion? Given the difficulty of this task Plato's Socrates offers three images, albeit with some reservations. (*Rep.* 506c)

2.2.1. Speaking about 'the Good' Within Platonic Imagery

Before presenting the 'analogy of the sun', Socrates proposes that *every* soul pursues 'the Good' on the "hunch that the Good is something", (*Rep.* 505e1) an opinion based on his observations that many people disagree about what 'the Good' is, yet act, acquire things, and form unsatisfying beliefs about it. (*Rep.* 505b-e) Adeimantus, Socrates' interlocutor, engages with this concept, asking Socrates if 'the Good' is like 'knowledge', 'pleasure', or 'something else entirely'. (*Rep.* 506b) This raises the following concern: What are the implications of assimilating the 'Good' with pleasure, knowledge, or something else? As I noted from the section on the *Philebus*, how one defines 'the Good' informs one's entire engagement with the world and with oneself.

It is important to emphasize that it seems quite difficult – perhaps impossible – to conceptualize adequately and definitively 'the Good'. How then can Socrates elaborate an image of something which he himself says is beyond essence, thus escaping any possibility of expression in words or being known? I propose that it is for this very reason that Socrates employs three images in words, (i) the sun, (ii) the line, and (iii) the cave, as a set of cognitive tools whose function is directed not at defining 'the Good' but to express in some way the universal human tendency towards the 'Good'. Through active participation in imagery, the assumed universal human tendency towards the 'Good' intersects with Platonic imagery, resulting (if the image is a well-crafted one) in a recontextualization of the 'Good' that, in the least, widens its hearers experience of what can be considered 'good'.

2.3. First step: Framing the Image of the Sun as a Platonic Image

In 507b-509b, Socrates discusses the 'child of the Good' or 'the simile of the sun.' Through this illustration, we can observe how the image leads one to carefully examine the dependence of sight on sunlight to condition his interlocutors to better contemplate the analogy with 'the Good'. In 507b, Socrates begins his first line of questioning asking with what one sees visible things, a query designed to "call forth" (*parakalounta*) an investigation into sight itself to test the limits of what one can know with it. Socrates continues (*Rep*. 507d-507e) asking through what medium sight functions, where his interlocutors are unable to answer. Socrates answers that light is considered the medium in the seeing process, a medium that makes the qualities of objects (magnitude, depth, color, etc.) visible to the eyes. Socrates adds that, noble as light is believed to be, it is still something dispensed by a distant other, the sun.

Here I observe the first step in the development of the image, the notion that there exists an invisible medium that pervades and nurtures the visible environment and is essential for humans

to participate fully in everyday life. Having established that the affinity between the sun and the eyes is possible through light, Socrates asks to what extent is the nature of sight sun-like. (508b) The sun and sight are distinct with regards to spatial placement, that is, sight happens on the eyes over here, while light dispensing occurs from the sun, over there. Despite the distance from each other, the sun and sight are intrinsically connected. What Socrates is proposing is that the sun is not sight, though it is the cause (*aitios*) through which the power and degrees of sight and visibility are modulated.

2.4. Transference

What I consider essential within the development of Plato's imaging process is that the 'offspring of the Good' broadly encompasses essential aspects of visible experience. It presents the notion that there is an invisible medium throughout the visible world that connects two essential aspects of human experience, the nurturing and sight-giving sun and the perceiving eyes that depend on it. Until this point, (*Rep*. 508b7) Socrates has been creating a model of the visible world. The model does not serve exclusively as an illustrative representation of the visible world, but as a mode of knowing[35] that can be extended or projected towards another realm, the realm of abstract thought or the intelligible domain. (*Rep*. 508b9-c1) Again, the purpose of this projective process (Sepper, 2010, p. 151) is not solely to assist in illustrating material and intellectual experiences, but to shift the aim of words that ordinarily refer to and describe strictly material objects of *flux* that characterize the domain of *doxa* towards another realm made of fundamentally invisible ontological and psychological entities.

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[35] That is: (i) the sun as a material object that causes things to be known, (ii) sight, that specific human power that knows things, and (iii) light as an 'independent' oscillating medium (508c) between (i) and (ii).

2.5. What Plato Achieved in the Image

The words that describe the relation between sight and light are analogically applied to the soul and truth. The 'soul's eye' becomes effectively operative as a faculty for perceiving entities of the intelligible realm when it aligns with the illuminating guidance of truth. (*Rep*. 508d4-5) In this context, the soul's capacity to discern (*noei*) the essence (*eidos*) of intelligible entities (*Forms*) is activated specifically in the presence of those objects when unconcealed by the illuminating power of truth. Upon the conceptualization of truth as an illuminating entity within the intelligible domain, the visible world transforms into a realm of 'shifting' opinions (*doxazei*), characterized by a twilight-like (or dream-like) ambiguity (*skotōi*). In this analogical framework, light and the sun's role are paralleled by truth and the 'Idea of the Good': just as the sun promotes coming-to-being and passing away both of which are revealed by light, so too do truth and the 'Idea of the Good' unveil and regulate the realm of being. (Adam 1902, p. 60) Analogously, the epistemological power to perceive the visible world is sight, while the objects of the intelligible world (the 'Forms') are known by the soul's 'sight'. The analogy is complete when 'the Good' is separated from being as 'beyond being' or the principle that determines the nature of all entities. (Adam 1902, p. 62)

3. Pursuit of the Good as a Natural Condition

We will focus on the condition that allows the soul to function as it does. In 505d-e, Socrates mentions that every soul pursues (*apomanteuomenē*) 'the Good.' The soul has an inherent pursuit of 'the Good', a natural condition that influences all human desire and action. This does not mean that the individual has knowledge of what 'the Good' designates. From this ignorance (*amathia*) (*Rep*. 609b11-c1) the soul is confused (*aporousa*), impairing its capacity to discern (*dianoou*). This cognitive impairment results in pursuing and desiring objects of *flux* under the name of 'Good,' thus failing to establish an 'enduring belief' (*pistei chrēsasthai monimōi*) or a

stable paradigm of what 'the Good' designates. Now, considering the soul's natural condition to look for 'the Good', the next essential step is to explore the different cognitive states the soul experiences that directly affect desires, pursuits, and perceptual powers. For the remainder of this investigation, I will focus on the disposition: *eikasia*.

3.1. Second Step: The Analogy of the Line

Having illustrated in words the distinction between the intelligible and visible domains, Socrates asks his interlocutor to 'represent' or 'conceive' both domains as a line divided[36] into two unequal sections.[37] (*Rep*. 509d5-7) The distinct sections represent the degree of ontological and epistemological 'clearness and obscurity' (*saphēneiai kai asapheia*) (*Rep*. 509d6-7) referring to the division between visible and intelligible from the previous image. The divided line will then aim to roughly name the degrees of clarity and obscurity the soul experiences at different points, in other words, the different cognitive states and the available cognitive resources a body and soul may use in their interaction with visible objects and their invisible 'Forms'. (Murdoch, 1977, p. 4-5; Ricoeur, 2003, p. 39; Migliori, 2009. p. 204; Rosen, 2005, p. 263, 269; Reeve, 2006, p. 139)

3.2. The Visible Section: 'Eikasia'

Socrates begins his description of the 'visible' domain (*Rep*. 509d5-510b1) with 'images' (*eikonas*). By 'images', he designates shadows, appearances in water, and those found on polished surfaces, and 'everything of that kind'. In the subsection above are the 'originals' of said images: the animals and plants around us, as well as man-made objects. (*Rep*. 510a4-5) These two segments

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[36] The directive to divide the line 'according to the same *logon*' (*ana ton auton logon*) at *Rep*. 509d7 can be interpreted in two ways: traditionally, as a 'numerical ratio,' given the geometrical context, or more philosophically, as a 'logical rationale,' implying a continuous conceptual understanding. This suggests that the division is not strictly about mathematical proportions, but also about logical relationships and reasoning, relating to how we understand and categorize different experiences of cognition and perception. (Suzanne 2022, p. 90-92)

[37] For an in-depth analysis on what Glaucon drew, see Echterling 2018.

encapsulate the objects of the visible domain. At 511d6-e4, Socrates indicates that the encounter with 'original' objects results with the cognitive state (*pathemata*) named *pistis*, while the encounter with 'image' objects results with the cognitive state *eikasia*. If we consider the soul's natural condition (always pursuing the Good) as the fundamental cause (Reeve, 2006, p. 56) of affliction (*pathos*), the distinction between *pistis* and *eikasia* lies in the degree the soul experiences this affliction when engaged with 'images' and 'originals.'

3.3.1. Qualities in the Visual Domain

To understand and differentiate '*eikasia*' from '*pistis*', our analysis will examine the immediate and mediated perception of perceptual qualities, to exploring how these distinct cognitive states shape the process of object identification that in turn influence one's beliefs. In a perceptual event, *pistis* encompasses the state that allows for the recognizing and *maintaining* of a continuous distinction between a material affection (from the 'original') and a proximate yet secondary visible affection (from the 'image'). For instance in *Republic* 602c, Socrates says that perceiving a stick that is both bent and straight in the water confuses (*tarachē*) the soul. If someone perceiving the curved stick is convinced that what he is seeing is only a modification of qualities brought about by the attributes of water, then this person is using the cognitive resources available under the state of *pistis*. *Eikasia*, on the other hand, is the rudimentary state of perceptually receiving the many qualities of visible objects, a state only focused on the immediate experience of a bent stick as opposed to a stick bent from some relation with the water.

In this line, I propose that *eikasia* functions as a preparatory state, instinctively encompassing every quality of perception for the natural transition from percept to perceptual object to another. Rooted in its relation (and etymology) to 'images,' *eikasia* operates at an immediate level, underscoring an unreflective and thus incomplete mode of identification. In this

context, confusion in the soul can specifically arise during a perceptual event within *eikasia*, stemming from a spontaneous yet undifferentiated recognition of perceptual qualities. This is exemplified by the experience of seeing a stick as straight at one moment and bent at another, without any clear trust (*pistis*) in an explanation that may account for these two seemingly contrary perceptions. (*Rep*. 602d6-9) This gap in association, evident in the contrasting perceptions, can flow in two ways: it may be bridged by resorting to methods such as measuring, counting, and weighing (*Rep*. 602d6-9), offering a rational explanation; (*Rep*.602e1) or it can become fragmented when explanations are provided without these, or any stable, method(s). The dichotomy of either bridging or fragmenting the gap is centered in the soul's inherent desire to seek 'the Good,' a desire that is especially pronounced in *eikasia*. Here, *eikasia* can be perceived as a 'necessary' state (Anastasios 1936, p. 83), where an initial, often unconscious interaction with what is seemingly an 'image' prepares a soul, in a manner more instinctive than deliberate, (Adam Vol. II, p. 72) towards a search for an 'original' (empirically) or its origins (*i.e.*, the Form of). This interpretation provides a cognitive framework that brackets 'confusion and conjecture' in a way that involves both the body and soul that begins with the perceptual process.

3.3.2. *From Visible Domain to the* Doxastic *Domain*

At *Rep*. 510a7, Socrates conflates the visible domain to the domain of 'opinion', further expanding the scope of the objects of *eikasia* (Adam Vol. II. p. 72) to include 'word images' and 'ethical images'.[38] (Storey 2020, p. 24, 39) As a result, the products of poets, painters, sophists, Plato, and one's bodily experience of them fall within this domain. This includes one's experience

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[38] Following Adam, 'word images' in this context stands for mental imagery elicited by a lower variety of opinions such as images (*eidolon*) produced by poets. (*Rep*. 598a-b, 599a) Damien Storey defines 'ethical images' as metaphors that perceptually stand in need of interpretation. For example, it is to perceive an event that *appears* just and then interpret it as such.

of public opinions, (*Rep*. 492a-493e) images of good and bad characters exhibited by poets, (*Rep*. 401b, 603c) nuanced poetic objects, (*Rep*. 595-602b) scenery paintings, (*Rep*. 602d) and Plato's images spread out through the *Republic*. Understanding the domain of the visible as one mixed with both opinions and material objects, we acquire a broader range of the objects (as cognitive resources) the state *eikasia* is engaged with and how these resources, through the body, motivate intellectual action, for better or worse. From this point, our object of inquiry will be the effects of Platonic imagery within the soul under the context of *eikasia* and 'images.'

3.3. Platonic Imagery Under the Affection of 'Eikasia'

As a cognitive tool, Platonic imagery in words (*eikon* and *eidolon*) play a fundamental role on the soul. Platonic imagery can elicit a 'turning round of the soul' (*psychēs periagogē*) towards 'the Good'. In the image of the sun, there is a 'turning' in perspective and attention within its listeners or readers. This 'turning' involves reframing the qualities of light, initially contextualized experientially under visible locutions, to one contextualized under invisible, but *Platonic* locutions. The 'turning' corresponds to a movement occurring within the soul due to the external stimulus of Platonic imagery.

3.4. Errors prompted by 'Eikasia'

Eikasia is felt at an incomplete yet pivotal moment of tension between bodily-oriented and soul-oriented motion. When perceiving objects or sequence of events without acknowledging one's initial *eikastic* condition, one becomes prone to many kinds of errors. Broadly speaking, *eikasia* is the state where the connection between image and original has yet to be resolved. A possible kind of error is perceptual: confusing images with originals, or the state in which one is looking at shadows: for instance, confusing a reflection in the mirror with a material original. (Storey, 2020, p. 21; Migliori, 2009, p. 211; Denyer, 2007, p. 290; Sedley, 2007, p. 263) Another

kind is evaluative: for example, it can be a failure to recognize that perceiving an event, like seeing an act of piety, serves as a base for what 'Piety' in itself is. (Storey 2020, p. 39-40; Hamlyn 1958, p. 22) These kinds of errors not only include those involved with sensation (centered in immediate identity errors, that may just as quickly be corrected) but also points towards more pervasive kinds of errors (educated or not) that touch upon one's ethical and social notions. (Shorey, 1980 p. 236) If understood under this light where *eikasia* is a rudimentary state where these kinds of error-prone and indeterminate events take root, then the specific role of Platonic imagery becomes clear. Platonic imagery can act as a fulcrum, tipping the balance away from material, bodily, or empirical primacy, towards associations with more measurable and stable yet intangible concepts, that are themselves closer associated with 'the Good'.

As presented in the image of the sun, the Platonic image facilitates the assimilation of the word 'light' with the notion of 'visuality' of truth, rather than the material quality of visibility found with its ordinary meaning. In a word, by having an acute awareness of *eikasia*, both the construction and the active discussion of Platonic imagery excels as a tool for reorienting the soul away from certain modes of knowing, in Plato's case, away from *sole* reliance on materiality. Having outlined the broader implications and manifestations of *eikasia*, we will turn to a specific perceptual moment that highlights a prolonged instance of *eikasia* in a dramatic setting, the cave-dweller's chained state in Plato's third image, 'the cave'.

3.5. 'Eikasia' and the Image of the Cave

In this next image, Socrates asks his interlocutors to 'look' (*ide*) at cave-dwellers chained in a dark cave, facing a wall since childhood. (*Rep.* 514a5) The cave is illuminated by a fire burning above and behind them at the end of a raised walkway. Between the fire and the cave-dwellers is another low wall (like those used to hide puppeteers in puppet shows) where, sometimes silently

and other times speaking, individuals carry 'artifacts' (*parapherontes*) including statues (*andriantes*) in the shape of people and animals made up of various materials along the wall. (*Rep*. 514b4-7) Thus far, this 'image in words' (*eikóna*) is still centered on the characteristics of light, though now with the highly imaginative addition of voices (echoes), artifacts, and statues in movement.[39] (*Rep*. 514c1-515a3)

After contextualizing the cave-dwellers' surroundings, one that Glaucon calls a 'strange image' (*legeis eikona*), (*Rep*. 515a4) Socrates directs a pointed question towards a particular aspect of the imagined cave-dwellers' condition: if these cave-dwellers have been chained since childhood, would not their entire visual experience consist solely of the shadows projected by the fire behind them? (*Rep*. 515a4-5) Given the cave-dwellers' condition, they have never had the opportunity to awaken a capacity to associate visual and audial stimuli with any other thing. If the cave-dwellers could speak to one another (*Rep*. 515b4-5) the words produced would then only point towards the shadows *directly*, and as a result, they would be speaking a language that 'deem reality' (*nomizoien to alēthes*) to shadows disassociated from the artifacts that cast them. (*Rep*. 515c1-2) From here, the essential question is: in what way is the described 'image in words' 'like us'? (*Rep*. 515a5) In what way are the cave-dwellers' state a 'comparison' (*apeikason*) to the different kinds of affection (*páthei*) prompted by education and its lack on 'our nature' (*hēmetéran*

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[39] The allegory of the Cave, one of the most iconic images in Western philosophy, has been extensively interpreted throughout history, reflecting a profound interest in the possibility and limitations of the "bracketing of reality". In German Platonism, philosophers like Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860), and Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) delve deeply into the essence and implications of Plato's cave, exploring its potential metaphysical dimensions. In contrast, thinkers such as Husserl (1859-1938) focus more on the interpretive and existential aspects, analyzing Plato's cave through a phenomenological lens. Thomas Taylor (1758-1835), an English Platonist, offers a (debatable) Neo Platonic interpretation, contextualizing the mystical and spiritual aspects of the image. These diverse interpretations highlight the image's complex significance and its influence on the development of philosophical discourse and its practice. (Kim 2019; Larson et al. 2021)

phýsin)? (*Rep.* 514a1-2) Both questions aim towards the same core dynamic: the effects of continuous yet passive reception of qualities that cause a specific motion within the soul, and how this passive state may slowly affect and condition us off track. Examining how the cave-dwellers' understanding of (perceptual) reality is incomplete or distorted will offer an important insight on why a specific cognitive aspect of our perceptual experience is limited and destabilizing when it is overlooked.

3.6 Describing the Cave-dwellers Under the Context of 'Eikasia'

The cognitive capacities of the cave-dwellers predominantly manifest in two ways. Firstly, the (hypothetical) use of dialogue (*dialegesthai*), (*Rep.* 515b4-5) one solely concerned with the visual resemblance in the outer appearance of the objects that they name. (Scott 2007, p. 196; Suzanne 2016, p. 178-182; Suzanne 2022, p. 85) The cave-dwellers name that which stimulates or will stimulate their senses them through conjecture, habit, and memory. (*Rep.* 516c-d) Through this same language, the cave-dwellers even participate in games where they give honors, praises, or prizes to those who can both remember (*anamimnēskomenon*) which object came earlier and those that might come later in the future, recalling (*mnēmoneuonti*) sequences of events, predicting (*apomanteuomenō*) future occurrences, and finally forming beliefs (*doxazein*) about them. (*Rep.* 516c4-d8) Secondly, the perception of shadows, the process that triggers awareness of an object's presence, establishes the minimal conditions for recognizing something in one's environment. The resulting presence allows them to serve as a foundational element in the development of language from perception, setting a sort of 'ground zero' from which understanding begins. (Suzanne 2016, p. 181)

It should be emphasized that it is not that the cave-dwellers do not possess a capacity to form more meaningful associations, but that given the confines of the image-scenario, they have

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never been exposed to an activity beyond immediate and incomplete perceptual cues in the first place. The cave-dwellers' 'shadow-language,' characterized by their lack of exposure, reinforces their tendency to take visual stimuli at face value, inevitably 'considering' the shadows they see and name (what for spectators like us are clearly identified as shadow-like or image-like qualities) as true. (*nomizō to alēthes*). (*Rep*. 515c1-2)

3.6.1 Analogues of Cave-Dwellers' Condition for Spectators 'Like Us'

How does the condition of cave-dwellers, literally bound to interpreting indirect sensory qualities, resemble experiences that we, as external spectators, might encounter? I find that the allegory of the cave's depiction of an unlikely image-scenario serves to explore the minimal requirement for 'truth'. The allegory demonstrates how bodily perception alone can be deceiving if taken sole foundation for language development, which then culminates in a perceptually oriented mode of 'truth'. Cave-dwellers, cognitively similar to us in childhood, react (*prattein*) to a multitude of 'images', remain (*diatribein*) in a state of ignorance, and aimlessly (*stochazomenos*) begin to associate perceptual cues with each other through language. Interpreting the 'perception of images' (*Rep*. 520c3-5) as an analogue for describing the condition of immediate sense-perception, *eikasia* becomes a theoretical cognitive tool allowing Plato to infer a 'likely' account (*Rep*. 517d1-2) of both observable (public) moral (*Rep*. 517d3-e1) and unobservable (private) intellectual phenomena. (*Rep*. 518c4-10)

Understood under the context of *eikasia*, we can see in what way 'we' are most passive within the *doxastic* and visible world where every kind of visual, event-based, and verbal stimulus is in a state of potential interconnection by the soul. *Eikasia* is then the earliest encounter with 'images' in the widest sense (*i.e.,* visual percepts, words, arguments, deeds, paintings) before the

development of a more nuanced understanding of the associative aspect of the perception.[40] If

souls are most passive during childhood, then it explains the origins of the capacity to 'distinguish'

(*krínein*) what 'completely is' from what 'completely is not' as one connected through language

and habit. In this vulnerable state, poets through cadences (*Rep*. 605b-c), crowds through shouting

and screaming (*Rep*. 492b-c, *Rep*. 493c9-d8), sophists through words and compulsion (*Soph*. 234c;

Rep. 492d), philosophers through theories (*Meno*. 76c-d; *Rep*. 443c), and caretakers through

storytelling (*Rep*. 378d-e) may freely 'impress' (*ensēmḗnasthai*) 'images' (*Rep*. 517d3-e1) most

easily on a child's soul (*Theaet*. 150e; *Rep*. 587c), which may be 'difficult to erase' (*dyséknipta*)

or may even be 'unalterable' (*ametástatos*) (*Rep*. 377b-c). From this lack, premature exposure to

experiences in the world slowly weakens one's capacity to think beyond immediate perceptions

and public beliefs.

3.7. 'Eikasia' as the Primary Conditions for Knowledge Unveiled under Imagery

Contextualizing *eikasia* under the progression of the three images (the sun, the line, and

the cave) uncovers this state as a primary cognitive condition, offering an explanation as to how

the soul interacts with images as perceptual stimuli and why this interaction can fundamentally

shape our experience of the visible world and the bodily limitations of understanding the

intelligible domain. The pivotal role of *eikasia* is not only the first condition that can guide (or lead

astray) the trajectory and progression of knowledge but also, as a concept, acknowledges the power

of imagery as that first light for effectively engaging active (*i.e.*, hopeful and desiring) spectators.

Eikasia's dual role, as both an asserted normative understanding of perceptual experience and the

tentative consequences of that very assertion, allows for the exploration of immediate sensory

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[40] As understood in the *Philebus* where the cognitive disposition *phantasia* acknowledges the conjectural aspect
of perception.

experiences and thus explains the 'truths' (or the lack thereof) available amid those experiences. By interpreting Platonic imagery as a cognitive tool aimed at soliciting a reconceptualization of what one considers worth hoping for, spectators like us are offered an opportunity to redirect their desires towards more meaningful and harmonious imaginations, that is, away from disharmonious or (self)destructive thought patterns, to which children are posited to be most susceptible to.

In the context of *eikasia*, childhood is marked by a reliance on parental guardians, encompassing biological needs, social and affective dependencies, and moral imitations. This early stage crucially shapes the child's soul, particularly through perceptual passivity, where sensory experiences and lawful acts (*nomima*) are predominantly molded by the immediate surroundings and caretakers (*Rep*. 538c) Plato's theory of knowledge, with an awareness of the *eikastic* state, recognizes the significance of these early developmental factors. It suggests the possibility for a cognitive transition from childhood's quality-based convictions, towards understanding the origins of those very convictions. However, this shift is gradual, difficult, and painful, (*Rep*. 515e1-3, 517b) as it begins with an attempt to heightened awareness of their *eikastic* state, challenging young learners to face the origins of their acquired convictions of 'truth' as ones built upon from their immediate, sensory-bound mind-frames, (*Rep*.525a2-5) explaining the inadequacies of relying solely on sensory perception (*Rep*. 524d-525a) to grasp any form of stable truth.

The place of *eikasia* as the rudimentary link amid process of image-perception lies in between the ontological foundation of 'the Good' within the framework of Platonic imagery on one side and the fundamental psychological drive of desire where all souls desire a 'good' on the other. Platonic imagery, therefore, is not just a representation or a tool to 'put knowledge into souls that lack it' (*Rep*. 518b8-c2); it is a catalyst that molds and 'turns' (*Rep*. 518d1-3) the soul towards

a journey from a rudimentary sensory-bound state to a higher and stable space for understanding to develop. This journey is facilitated by the cognitive tools provided by Plato, which guide individuals towards a deeper understanding of universal human tendencies towards 'the Good'. These images inherently possess a tacit awareness of the cognitive processes at play, illustrating the experience of being afflicted by imagery (*i.e., eikasia*) and, at the same time, guides the spectator through this cognitive journey. Ultimately, this preparatory state of *eikasia* encompasses every quality of perception, facilitating a natural transition from one perceptual object to another, and highlighting the importance of imagery in the cognitive development and harmonization of the soul. The path to 'truth' and 'the Good' begins with recognizing our initial *eikastic* state, with its inherent sensitivity to imagery, especially within immediate perception, demonstrating that for Plato, an 'upward path' (*tēs anō hodoūcan*) (*Rep*. 621c3) can be unconcealed through the power and influence of imagery.

Conclusion

By investigating *eikasia* as a rudimentary aspect of perception, we can better understand where desires and imaginations may intertwine to shape an individual's experience of the world. For disturbed souls, their conflict is not merely a product of external stimuli but arises from internalized and vivid imaginations, born from desires attached to material objects. These materially oriented desires nourished (*Rep*. 585b3) by the anticipation of their fulfillment, cause discordance between their inner opinions and their verbalized judgements amid the many sensations of the external world.

In this context, the primary role of *eikasia* emerges as a transformative element. It suggests that the experience of sense-perception always transpires under some degree of light (truth) where both an external object's (image) dimness and clarity (incorrect or correct identification via language) are ultimately dispensed by the sun (the Good). At this point imagery becomes indispensable in aligning the described (private) phenomenon that is the experience of sensation within the visual domain with the lowest aspect of Plato's theory of knowledge. Here, Plato's images, the analogy of the sun, the image of the line, and the allegory of the cave, are not simply pedagogical tools, but spaces to create the foundation to understand how the soul experiences the objects of the visible realm as one of shifting presences and imprecise perceptions. Through experiencing these images, 'we' are invited to acknowledge and reconceptualize the effects of our earthbound desires and perceptions. Only after having understood the limits of the visible world, one is in the condition to reorient one's nascent desires which in turn helps the soul better connect what one pursues, that is, images in the broadest sense, with 'the Good'.

Recognizing *eikasia* as an initial stage of cognition sheds light on how Aristotle's notion of 'common sense' (*koinē aisthēsis*) and 'image-presentations' (*phantasmata*) play a crucial role

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in forming our immediate perceptions. Here, Aristotle emphasizes that the 'soul' (*psuchē*) never 'thinks' (*noei*) without 'image-presentations' (*phantasmata*), highlighting their essential role in linking sensory data to imagination and intellectual understanding. (*De An.* III 6 431a14-16, 431b4-5) My investigation into the role of images within Plato's theory of knowledge uncovers a conceptual space, held together by images—*i.e.*, imagination—where individuals are invited to explore and reconfigure their private opinions through new forms of perceptual and linguistic association. This space can reveal and liberate the often-overlooked interplay between sensory inputs and acquired habits and opinions. Here, the transformative power of images emerges as a profound force for engagement within cognitive and ethical dimensions. Within these alternate possibilities lies a path toward 'the Good,' not mandated through dogmatic compulsion, but discovered through playful exploration and diverse engagements within the bounds of our embodied existence.

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