

Hum 110 Spring 2012

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A Kind of Gadfly

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1. needed to be stirred up by a kind of gadfly... I never cease to rouse each and every one of you, to persuade and reproach you all day long and everywhere I find myself in your company (30e-31a).
2. a form of systematic interrogation applied to whoever agreed to submit to it (Brunschwig 746).
3. the unexamined life is not worth living (38a).
4. improvising and innovating about the gods (5a).
5. If, Meletus, you agree that Euthyphro is wise in these matters, consider me, too, to have the right beliefs and do not bring me to trial. If you do not think so, then prosecute that teacher of mine, not me, for corrupting the older men, me and his own father, by teaching me and by exhorting and punishing him (5a-b).
6. to prosecute the wrongdoer (5d).
7. Bear in mind then that I did not bid you tell me one or two of the many pious actions but that form itself that makes all pious actions pious (6d-e).
8. what is dear to the gods is pious (7a).
9. what all the gods love (9e).
10. Is the pious loved by the gods because it is pious, or is it pious because it is loved by the gods? (10a).
11. is loved because it is pious (10d).
12. that the pious has the quality of being loved by all the gods (11a).
13. I have no way of telling you what I have in mind, for whatever proposition we put forward goes around and refuses to stay put where we establish it (11b).
14. the pious is a part of justice (12d).
15. that is concerned with the care of the gods (12e).
16. benefit [to] the gods and make [s] them better (13c).
17. we must investigate again from the beginning what piety is (15d).
18. Some other time, Socrates... it is time for me to go (15e).

19. To the modern world he remains the enduring model of the great teacher, the questioner and skeptic who leads his pupils towards a solution by forcing them to see the inconsistencies in their own unconsidered beliefs and assumptions (Thomas vi).
20. to reason logically, to test what one reads or says for consistency of reasoning, correctness of fact, and the accuracy of judgment (Nussbaum 10).
21. At Reed we follow an unconventional tack, and we do so self-consciously. To be sure, there are as many kinds of Reed conferences as there are Reed professors. But they all tend to share this belief: that undergraduate education is most effective when students develop, articulate, criticize, and defend their own arguments. A conference is, in effect, an academic version of the blind leading the blind. Students – all of whom have a comparatively limited acquaintance with the subject matter – are responsible, through discussion, for formulating and evaluating theories and interpretations. Understood in this way, education at Reed is an eminently practical activity because it gives students systematic and ongoing experience in the actual practice of making and evaluating arguments. What better way to understand a set of analytic tools, concepts, and theories than actually to engage in the analysis itself? (Steinberger 18).
22. This is what I mean, that you do not believe in gods at all (26c).
23. I have a divine sign from the god which Meletus has ridiculed in his deposition. This began when I was a child. It is a voice, and whenever it speaks it turns me away from something I am about to do, but it never encourages me to do anything. (31d)
24. I have never been anyone's teacher. If anyone, young or old, desires to listen to me when I am talking and dealing with my own concerns, I have never begrudged this to anyone, but I do not converse when I receive a fee and not when I do not...I never promised to teach them anything and have not done so. If anyone says that he has learned anything from me, or that he heard anything privately that the others did not hear, be assured that he is not telling the truth (33a-b).
25. A switch of only thirty votes would have acquitted me. I think myself that I have been cleared on Meletus's charges (36a).
26. Socrates is guilty of wrongdoing in that he busies himself studying things in the sky and below the earth; he makes the worse into the stronger argument, and he teaches these same things to others. You have seen this yourselves in the comedy of Aristophanes, a Socrates swinging about there, saying he was walking on air and talking a lot of other nonsense about things of which I know nothing at all (19b-c).
27. what has caused my reputation is none other than a certain kind of wisdom (20d).
28. As a result of this investigation, gentlemen of the jury, I acquired much unpopularity, of a kind that is hard to deal with and is a heavy burden (22e-23a).
29. you know that what I said earlier is true, that I am very unpopular with many people. This will be my undoing, if I am undone, not Meletus or Anytus but the slanders and envy of many people (28a).
30. I never cease to rouse each and every one of you, to persuade and reproach you all day long and everywhere I find myself in your company (30e-31a).

31. neglected what occupies most people: wealth, household affairs, the position of general or public orator or other offices, the political clubs and factions that exist in the city (36b).
32. the unexamined life is not worth living for a man (38a).
33. nor must one, when wronged, inflict wrong in return (49b)...for anyone who destroys the laws could easily be thought to corrupt the young and the ignorant (53c).
34. He was the type of man who would criticize any form of government for its shortcomings (and indeed such criticism would be necessary and useful for any government, although it is possible only under a democracy) but he recognized the importance of being loyal to the laws of the state. As it happened, he spent his life largely under a democratic form of government, and as a good democrat he found it his duty to expose the incompetence and windbagery of some of the democratic leaders of his time. At the same time, he opposes any form of tyranny (Popper 128).
35. that to express oneself badly is not only faulty as far as the language goes, but does some harm to the soul (115e).
36. a cock to Asclepius (118a).
37. Socrates concentrates essentially upon accentuating existence, while Plato forgets this and loses himself in speculation. Socrates' infinite merit is to have been an existing thinker, not a speculative philosopher who forgets what it means to exist. (Kierkegaard 184).
38. reason into a tyrant (Kaufman 478).
39. Just as Socrates felt that it was necessary to create a tension in the mind so that individuals could rise from the bondage of myths and half-truths to the unfettered realm of creative analysis and objective appraisal, we must see the need of having nonviolent gadflies to create the kind of tension in society that will help men to rise from the dark depths of prejudice and racism to the majestic heights of understanding and brotherhood (Hayes 539).
40. To a degree academic freedom is a reality today because Socrates practiced civil disobedience (Hayes 541).
41. To be a philosopher is not merely to have subtle thoughts, nor even to found a school, but so to love wisdom as to live according to its dictates, a life of simplicity, independence, magnanimity, and trust. It is to solve some of the problems of life, not only theoretically, but practically" (Thoreau 155).

I. Euthyphro's Attempt to Define "Piety":

1. Piety means "to prosecute the wrongdoer" (5d).
2. What is dear to the gods is pious (7a).
3. The pious is only "What all the gods love" (9e).
4. A thing "is loved because it is pious (10d).
5. "The pious is a part of justice" (12d).
6. Piety is the part of justice "that is concerned with the care of the gods" (12e).
7. The pious is not beneficial to the gods but only pleasing to them.

#7 is the same as #2 which has already been rejected, and thus a definition of piety has not been achieved.

II. Charges Against Socrates (A) and His Refutations (B)

1. (A) Socrates is an accomplished speaker who can use language to deceive (17a).

(B1) He is going to use the language of the marketplace not the courthouse (17c).

(B2) This is his first appearance in a lawcourt and therefore he cannot be accomplished in this kind of speech (17d).

(B3) How he speaks is not important. The importance of a speaker "lies in telling the truth" (18a).
2. (A1) Socrates is a student of all things in the sky and below the earth and one who studies these things doesn't believe in the gods (18b-c).

(A2) Socrates makes the worse argument the stronger (i.e., he is a Sophist) (18b).

(A3) Socrates teaches 2A1 & 2A2 to others.

(B1) No one whom he has ever talked to has ever heard him discuss these topics.

(B2) Socrates does not accept a fee for what he does and so cannot be a teacher (19d, 33a-b).

- (B3) His bad reputation comes from his human wisdom (20d) that he is very conscious that he is not wise at all (21b); but he is wiser than others because they think that they know something when they do not (21d). This causes Socrates to be unpopular and to suffer slanders from others (22e-23a) both because others accuse Socrates of claiming wisdom and because the sons of the rich imitate him and go around questioning their elders (23c), which the elders believe is corrupting the youth (23d). But because the elders cannot come up with a specific thing Socrates has taught, they invent the charge of not believing in the gods and “making the worse the stronger argument” (23d).
- (B4) Meletus isn’t even sure of his charges because first he accuses Socrates of believing in different gods (26b), and then of believing in no gods at all (26c).
- (B5) Socrates’s mission of questioning others about their knowledge comes from the Oracle at Delphi (21a); therefore, he doesn’t believe in strange gods; but he also says a voice speaks to him that could be evidence of strange gods (31d); but since Meletus has changed the charge to believing in no gods, Socrates has proved he is not guilty.

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