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THE EXCESS OF JUSTICE: TIMAEUS AND ARISTOPHANES ON SEX AND THE CITY

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A curious gap opens up in the account of the creation of the world which Plato presents in the *Timaeus*.¹ It occurs at the point where Timaeus of Locri has announced that the task allotted to him has been accomplished and all that remains to be done is to give a brief account of how living creatures (other than man) came into being (90e). It is the gap where we might expect to find (at last) an explanation of the introduction of the erotic into a cosmos that is thus far hideously unerotic. Yet Timaeus proves unwilling or unable to provide any explanation, and I will argue that his ludicrous discomfort makes him the ideal spokesman for the hideously unerotic ideal city of the *Republic*. Further, I will argue that the gap Timaeus must leave open is amply filled by another of Plato's characters, Aristophanes, in his speech at another of Plato's feasts, the *Symposium*. His encomium to Eros cannot fill the gap just as the proper piece fills a space in a jigsaw puzzle, but rather fills it to overflowing. His contribution is excessive and comic and fascinating, with much of the fascination lying in the fact that both this excess and Timaeus's caviling are responses to the ideal city, which is to say, to a state which attempts to establish a universal value by erasing singularity, a polis which tries to institute justice by excluding love.²

Timaeus's role at the banquet of discourse is to tell the story of the universe up to (and including) the generation of humans and, two pages from the end of his sixty-four page discourse, he announces that, having given an account of the gods' creation of the first genera-

tion of humans, he has well nigh completed his task. "For the manner in which the other living creatures have come into being, brief mention shall be enough, where there is no need to speak at length; so shall we, in our own judgement, rather preserve due measure in our account of them" (90e). This is the last opportunity; the question gapes; the gap opens but Timaeus cannot provide what is required of him. Instead, he hastens to cover it, dispatches the matter towards which his discourse has been moving all along, the matter which had made him embark on the discourse three times already. He is not ignorant of the requirement. The first time, Critias announces on his behalf what the subject matter will be: "He will begin with the birth of the world and end with the nature of man [*anthropon*]" (27a). Timaeus embarks on his discourse but before long has "strayed from tune" (*Critias* 106b) and brings himself back, reminding himself that he must deal with the "generation of bodies, part by part" (*Timaeus* 44d). He begins a second time, but somewhat later he admits: "We have not yet described the formation of flesh, and all that belongs to flesh, or the mortal part of the soul" (61c). It is only at this third beginning (90e) that, by rapidly repeating what has gone before as if to gather momentum, he launches into the messy business of bodies. He meticulously treats the generation of each part of the body, much as a medical man would, but the momentum is insufficient to carry him all the way to an account of the generation of human bodies, or the body parts necessary for this. Repulsed as he is by the matter of bodies, turning away from it twice before finally speaking of it, he is doubly reluctant to address the matter of sex.

In the end, it cannot be avoided for reasons which have to do with justice rather than cosmology or physiology. (This should not surprise us: after all, the *Timaeus* is only incidentally a dialogue about cosmology and is, essentially, part of a dialogue about the city.) The gods created the first generation of humans and could presumably have gone on taking an active part in the creation of subsequent generations were it not for the need to punish those first men who live as cowards and wrong-doers. They were reincarnated as women and "for this reason it was at that time that the gods constructed the desire of sexual intercourse" (91a-e). What precisely is this reason? That is to say, first, why did this sort of man, with these sorts of flaws, have to be reincarnated as this sort of creature? And secondly, why was it about this sort of creature that made the gods construct sexu-

desire? In answering, we must remember the range of punishment reincarnations Timaeus proposed: harmless but light-witted men [*akakon andron*] became birds, non-philosophical men became land animals, and the most foolish became sea creatures [91d–92c]. The implication is that the men who inhabit women's bodies in the second generation, though cowards, posed some threat (i.e., were not harmless), and pursued philosophy, and were far from foolish. While the virtuous man can ignore birds/light-witted men and animals/non-philosophical men and fish/foolish men, or at least can maintain a certain distance in his dealings with them, he cannot ignore or hold off women/wrong-doers. They are men [*anthropon*] who are not men [*andron*] and so cannot be simply left out of the city, but also cannot be altogether involved in it.³ Yet this is not reason enough for the gods to make men and these men/not men desire each other, and the second part of my question remains unanswered. Timaeus presents the mechanics of the system which the gods now create, complete with "privy members" [*aidoion*] and wandering wombs, *eros* and *epithumia*. He mentions that this is created in both men and women "for the same reason" (91c), but that reason remains unspoken.

Are there moments, elsewhere in his discourse, which would help us locate an account of *eros*? The task seems hopeless when we remember that, for Timaeus "human"—at least in the first generation—means "man." This is not to say that all the souls made by the gods and set in the heavenly bodies as though in chariots, and told the laws of Destiny, and shown the universe (41e) were put into male bodies, but rather that Timaeus deeply confuses "man" and "human." Each soul was given a mortal part, nicely round and divine, and was attached to a body with arms and legs, bones, marrow, flesh, sinews, livers, spleens, hearts, lungs, pancreases, intestines, bowels, skin, hair, nails but—it would seem—no genitals. These beings were sexless but it emerges—when we learn that cowardly men go on to become women—that in Timaeus's mind they were also male. "Sexless human" and "male" mean the same thing, and in order to give an account of *eros*, he would have to undo this confusion and present his discourse yet again.

One revealing moment does come when Timaeus traces the emergence of the first generation (44d). Those first beings consisted of intellect granted by the demiurge, a mortal part of the soul (the head) fashioned by the created gods, and a mortal body designed to

stop the head rolling around helplessly on the earth, which—the head being spherical—would be the only motion possible for it. This moment of Timaeus's discourse grants a glimpse of the world without bodies, the *polis* without *eros*, and its comedy betrays in an instant the revulsion the glimpse provokes. Timaeus hurries on. The addition of a body was not entirely helpful, he says—nostalgic, perhaps, for a time of heads alone—because it brought its own set of problems and the best that the gods could do was to set the more base desires in the belly, as far as possible from the divine head. Humans then had a dual nature and “the appetites natural to humans are of two kinds—desire of food for the body, and desire of wisdom for the divinest part in us” (88b). “Desire” here translates not to “eros” but to “epithumia.” Rather, *eros* is conspicuously absent.

Yet not even the prudish Timaeus can ignore *eros* entirely, and it is mentioned briefly in the earlier account of the first generation (41d–42d) of bodies along with the complications it and its mortal soul brings.

For a vehicle [the gods] gave [the head] the body as a whole, and therein they built on another form of soul, the mortal, having in itself dread and necessary affections: first pleasure, the strongest lure of evil; next, pains that take flight from good; temerity, moreover, and fear, a pair of unwise counselors; passion hard to entreat, and hope too easily led astray. These they combined with irrational sense and desire [*eros*] that shrinks from no venture, and so of necessity compounded the mortal element. (69c–d)

Having forced himself to articulate the word, Timaeus avoids doing so again (until the final moment of the dialogue), and he proceeds as if it does not exist. Indeed, how could there be *eros* in these sexless men? They live and die and their bodies function, and, at this point in his discourse we must suppose that when it comes to the matter of generation, the gods must still intervene (90e–91a).

The occasion on which the matter of sex finally arises (90e) is, I would suggest, Timaeus's cue to interrupt himself and start his discourse for the fourth time, returning to present an account which does not rely on the confusion of “man” and “human,” but here the dialogue ends. This is the point where we might expect him to acknowledge the gap and to fill it by providing that miss-

ing fourth (mentioned in the opening words of the dialogue) which would answer our questions. Why does he not?

Remember that Socrates is the one for whom this feast has been prepared and it was he who set the tone for the day. He began the proceedings with his recapitulation of the discourse on the city from which the erotic was also excluded—the technical, self-sufficient, capital city—and this is the tone Timaeus thinks he must maintain. But he can think so only if he ignores the remarks Socrates makes as he prepares to enjoy Timaeus's offering. There Socrates, in distinctly erotic language, acknowledges the limits of the city he described the previous day.

I may now go on to tell you how I feel about the society we have described. I feel rather like a man who has been looking at some noble creatures in a painting or perhaps at real animals, alive but motionless, and conceives a desire to watch them in motion and actively exercising the powers promised by their physique. . . . I should like to hear an account of her putting forth her strength in such contests as a city will engage in against others (19b–c).⁴

Who then can provide the missing fourth, the last part of Timaeus's dialogue? Who can explain why the gods created desire, and at the same time respond properly to Socrates's request? Aristophanes's performance at the Symposium would provide an extraordinarily appropriate choice. The dialogue of that name is also the account of a feast, but one that catered to the base desire for food and drink as well as the desire for wisdom. *Timaeus* has consisted entirely of discourses, albeit likely discourses, and, by the time Aristophanes speaks, the *Symposium* too seems in danger of being taken over by *logos*. Dinner is over, the flute girl has been sent off to the women's quarters, the guests have agreed not to get too drunk, and each has been invited to deliver an encomium, a (Dionysian) song of praise, to Eros. Despite the specific form of speech required, both Pausanias and Eryximachus have chosen to substitute discourse. They have explained the superiority of Urania—the heavenly, motherless characterization of *eros*, over Pandemos, the daughter of Zeus and Dione—and have praised *eros* only in so far as it serves justice and temperance within the bonds of human society. Eryximachus, like Timaeus, has just finished dealing with the human body. But, also like Timaeus, he has

dealt only with techniques for producing order and control. Apollo is ascendant.

How does Aristophanes rectify (or, more appropriately, disrupt) the situation? He responds in good Timaeian style, by starting again from the beginning. Aristophanes takes up the story which will be his song of praise at the creation of human beings: "First you must learn what human nature was in the beginning" (189d). But by the time he makes this beginning, he has already made two false starts. At the appropriate time the company turned to him for his contribution, but he was overcome with an attack of hiccoughs and Eryximachus, the doctor and the next in line must either cure the ailment or take his place. He does both. While Eryximachus delivers his discourse aimed at carrying Pausanias's argument to its logical conclusion, Aristophanes concerns himself with his bodily dysfunctions, trying the variety of remedies prescribed, holding his breath, gargling and finally succeeding with the last resort—the sneezing cure.

He emerges from his preoccupation just as Eryximachus concludes on a note of concord and order and he takes over with a joke on the doctor and his orderly love. "Makes me wonder whether the orderly sort of Love in the body calls for the sounds and itchings that constitute a sneeze, because the hiccoughs stopped immediately when I applied the sneeze treatment" (189a). Eryximachus spoke of love as though it had no connection with bodies. The problems of regulating love were, he has said, parallel to a problem in his own field (the treatment of the body) but, we must assume, do not fall within this field. Aristophanes reminds us that love does involve bodies and that even the most orderly love needs tickles and noises. The body brings the most heavenly of loves down to earth.

Before he can go on with his jokes there is a warning from Eryximachus. If he continues like this he may be made give an account (*logos*), despite the fact that Eryximachus himself has already announced that an encomium is what is called for. Faced with such a prospect, Aristophanes chooses to start once again, unsaying what he has just said but warning that his muse cannot leave comedy behind. Comic moments in *Timaeus* were invariably telling and Aristophanes's encomium, being comic, will be so too.⁵ It is comedy generated almost involuntarily, a recoil in the

face of what is horrific: heads without bodies, the city without *eros*, love without tickles, enormous bounding circle people, welded together lovers. The thrust of those moments (if we can claim that they serve a single purpose) is towards and beyond the limits of intellect.

"First you must learn what human nature was in the beginning." Thus Timaeus announced his final beginning, and by this point the cosmos has been created by the demiurge in the chora after the model of the unchanging. It is like an animal, round, moving of itself, spinning on the spot. It has no arms and legs since there is nothing outside to hold and nowhere to run. It has no eyes and ears since there is nothing out there to see or hear. It has no gaps for food to come in and waste to go out, since it feeds on its own waste. It has, we can assume, no genitals but we must also note that Timaeus has shrunk from even mentioning the unmentionables (*aidoia*⁶), even in their absence.

Aristophanes picks up the thread, and begins, as Timaeus began his third discourse, with a recapitulation of what had gone before (69a). Again, there are discrepancies between the previous discourse (Timaeus's third discourse) and the version offered as a recapitulation (Aristophanes's) and this time the discrepancies will eventually reveal the *aporia*. But Aristophanes begins simply. In the beginning, human nature consisted of three sorts, not Timaeus's "one and the same," and each sort was distinguished by its genitals. The matter on which Timaeus remained doggedly silent is the matter on which Aristophanes's issues his first proclamation. Already we have an indication that the gap left in Timaeus's discourse is to be filled, and an indication that Aristophanes's first humans were excessive creatures. They not only had genitals, but each had two sets. Those with two sets of male genitals were from the sun, those with female parts were from the Earth and those with one set of each were from the moon. Their bodies, then, sprang from the same heavenly spheres that, according to Timaeus, were the dwelling places of human souls (41d). Those souls, being divine, were appropriately given spherical dwelling places when they became mortal. Timaeus allowed them just helpless heads, but Aristophanes gave them complete, powerful, rounded bodies.

Timaeus pictured the helpless heads rolling in the hollows of the ground, unable to propel themselves over the hills, and he saved them by introducing the body. Yet the very fact that it is an afterthought is an indication that it is entirely separable from the head and thus dispensable. The body is elongated, has gangly limbs and comes in parts—the chest and the belly, the courageous and the appetitive, the front and the back, the hegemonic and the led—and though it can move in all directions, the gods add a hierarchy that makes it neglect, for the most part, the abilities to move in any way but forward. This mastery of the irrational turbulence within him allows man to draw the turbulence around him into its proper (forward) order. The bodies can spin like their heavenly parents, like the cosmos, but unlike the cosmos, these beings were beings *in* the world and so also have arms and legs, as Timaeus explained, for clinging and supporting themselves. Aristophanes's excessive circle people also have arms and legs, and lots of them—four arms and four legs, and all eight serve to spin the bodies at high speed along the ground. Aristophanes pokes fun because these are unerotic people, and they are terrible. Like the helpless heads, these tumbling circle people are a recoil from the prospect of the unerotic city; unlike the heads, they are powerful and their power is untamed. They are capable of all sorts of movement and, after all, the movement of the city is what Socrates (in the *Timaeus*) specifically asked to see. They move whichever way they want; being round, "forward" makes little sense to them, and they know no hierarchy.

They are also extremely strong, powerful and ambitious, and excessively fruitful, spilling their seed on the ground and making children "like crickets do." Thus, after the first generation, the circle people had Earth as mother, just as the guardians of the *Republic* must be made to believe that Earth is their mother. They, like the guardians, were free of the distractions of particular familial relations, of particular sexual attachments, of *eros*. They (like Timaeus's cosmos) were complete beings who needed no erotic outlet: their erotic economy was self-sufficient, their desires were self-satisfied, they were self-possessed.

In the absence of the distraction of sex, the circle people devoted their energies to the service of their ambition, and here was their undoing. Their attack on the gods sent the gods in search of

a solution to the problem, one that would bring the circle people under control, but not destroy them, i.e., would protect the gods while also protecting the gods' income of worship and sacrifices. The trick was to cut these excessive beings in half (cut them down to size) and to turn their faces inward towards the wound which Apollo had now covered, but not hidden.

But Zeus understood only half the problem and his solution was only half a solution. Put another way, he had reckoned without his fellow deity, Eros, the god who most loves the human race, the god who most deserves the praise of humans, the god most neglected by them. As Aristophanes reminds us: "If [people] had grasped the power of Eros they would have built the greatest temples and altars to him and made the greatest sacrifices" (189c). Yet, though denied his sacrifices, Eros continues to be a friend to humans. He eschews the economy of paying and receiving, but gives in excess.

The attack of the circle people had shown Zeus their strength and ambition, and the division had effectively weakened them by half and doubled their number. But the combination of the cut, its disguise and turning the heads inwards (conducted jointly by Zeus and Apollo) created a new problem. Now the completeness of desire and satisfaction which the circle people had all but ignored was destroyed and in its place was a gaping wound and an excess of aching desire upon which each was forced to gaze. The arms which had been reserved for tumbling and attacking were now used only for clinging in an outrageous attempt to satisfy that desire. The gods were nothing to the semi-circle people now and their only wish was to be once again complete. While Timaeus's people had two appetites—the bodily desire for food and the intellectual one for wisdom—Aristophanes's split humans had only the one which Timaeus leaves out. They threw their arms one half around the other and wanted only to grow together, and they died there of hunger and general idleness. They died of an excess of *eros*.

For *this* reason the gods invented sexual intercourse. In *Timaeus*, sex must be merely because there must be women, and desire is mentioned only to help account for the mechanics of the thing. For Aristophanes, on the contrary, desire is primary. The gods (accidentally) unleashed it when they cut the circle people in

two, and now they must create something to provide a satisfaction for that desire. So long as these creatures continued to long inconsolably, they continued to die and the gods (still anxious for their sacrifices but also filled with pity for these helpless creatures) invented sexual intercourse. The genitals, until now still on the outside of the half-creatures, were swung around to the front (to the inside) and so when two halves tried to join they produce a baby or at least "have the satisfaction of intercourse, after which they could stop embracing, return to their jobs and look after their other needs in life" (191c).

At this point, the gap in Timaeus's discourse has been filled and we know now the origin of *eros*, but we cannot halt here. We must follow Aristophanes on because this account of *eros* changes everything. Now desire is neither an afterthought, nor a means to satisfy a punitive requirement, nor a mere desire to have babies, as Timaeus would have it, but a primal desire to be joined to our beloved. Even when he finally recognises *eros*, Timaeus is still one "who has entirely missed the power of Eros," choosing to describe it as simple and functional. In Aristophanes's more complex account, *eros* can only be satisfied (and then not completely) by the combination of sex-and-babies (in the case of heterosexuals) or sex-and-work (in the case of male homosexuals).

Aristophanes explains. Men and women who desire each other run lecherously about making babies and they are lost in the affairs of the family and particularity. Women who desire women "pay no attention to men" (191e) and they drop out of sight.⁷ But men who desire men are the best of all—they have the satisfaction of sex and then go to work, that is, occupy themselves with *techne*. They are masculine and brave and, to prove that they are the best, Aristophanes declares that these are the only people who concern themselves with the affairs of the city. At last we see how Socrates's city could exist and survive; it would be populated only by these men's men. The citizens would be involved with women only in so far as local custom demanded, with the result that on the one hand there would be no risk of children being born out of season and, on the other, there would be little to distract each from his work. Their's would be the technical city, the impregnable city, the sterile city, and one wonders if such a city could ever set itself in motion. Could it ever go to war?

The search of each for his "very own young man" (in which Eros is the guide) is a striving for that end, a striving for the point when each will be happy to have Hephaestus rivet him forever to his lover, creating again the circle creatures (192d-e). Then the ideal city will be achieved, and *eros* will again be bound within those self-sufficient beings and the god, Eros, will no longer have a role. At this very point Aristophanes sees his comedy at work and he hastens to silence Eryximachus's laughter (193b). Behind the success of the comedy is the fact that the rivetted lovers are even more horrible than the original circle people—they have been sliced open "like flatfish," their heads twisted on their necks, their skin pulled taut, their genitals drawn from one side to the other, and now they are to be stapled together with hundreds of rivets. It is hardly the fate we would choose for ourselves and our loved ones. Nor would we choose his city, since it could only come about as the result of expunging heterosexual *eros*, and sealing far from sight all *eros* remains.

At this point a gap opens in Aristophanes's own speech and once again it involves the confusion of "human" and "man." "I am speaking about everyone, men and women alike," he says as he announces what must be done in order for the human race to flourish (193c), but he immediately lapses into the language of male homosexuality which has dominated the gathering. "We must bring love to its perfect conclusion," he says, "and each of us must win the favours of his very own young man," making it plain that this "we" is specific to his all male company and in keeping with its homosexual idiom. This is a breach which would disappear if women could indeed be subsumed in a scheme of things where "human" did mean man, but while women are merely ignored, it remains a troubling space.

What becomes of women in Aristophanes's scheme of things? The heterosexual woman, along with her man, becomes absorbed by the business of making and raising children. Her relegation to the household amounts to exile within the city; she occupies a place within its limits, but takes no part in its operations. In the *Republic*, such women have a central and destructive role once the ideal city is set on its downward path (by, let us not forget, the mis-timing of sexual intercourse and the birth of children out of season). Particular families are established and in this situation,

even if a man tries to be virtuous and philosophical, standing aloof from what is now the political fray, his wife's complaints make sure that his son will not follow his example. The character of the timocratic man, Socrates says, begins to be formed when he hears his mother complain that she is slighted by the other women because his father holds no public office. Timocracy is the rule of the ambitious and—her own ambitions hampered by her husband's philosophical inclinations—the woman works to make sure her son will not suffer from such burdens, but will instead be successful in the timocratic state. Thus, though confined within the household, she makes her presence felt in the city, in this case hastening its decline.

And what of women's women? Their silence is complete, but where do they go? It is somewhere out of sight, and in a place with nothing to do with men, a place not unlike the women's quarters (*choris*) of an Athenian household, a place hidden within the house, within the city.⁸ Before the men at the Symposium begin their after-dinner hymning, Erixymachus easily secures the agreement of his fellows in banishing the flute girl, one of only two women to make an appearance at their gathering:⁹ "Let her play for herself, or if she prefers, for the women of the house" (176e). The men cannot stop her playing, but they can try to make sure that her sound does not reach their ears. Significantly, they agree at the same time to banish Dionysius, and all vow, after hearing Erixymachus's medical information, not to get drunk. (When the drunken Alcibiades arrives later, he is accompanied, indeed half carried, by the second woman, also a flute girl.) The women are not far away, but for all the men know, the women's realm is the true realm of this god of wine whom the men have quite deliberately chosen to neglect. Might not the women's quarters be the site of what goes beyond their agreed temperance, what is excessive to their political world? Might it not be the undomesticated space hidden in domesticity, the space within the house (*oikos*) where all economy is surpassed? At the very least, women cannot be accommodated in the society of men as if they were men, just as *eros* cannot find a place in the just city as if love were a matter of justice. As responses to the depiction of the ideal city, both Aristophanes's encomium and Timaeus's discourse force this fact to our attention.

In each case, Socrates requested a different sort of speech, but the subject matter is in both cases the same. Timaeus delivers his discourse in reply to Socrates stated wish to see his ideal in motion. What is at issue is the *polis*, but, as Timaeus discovers, he cannot complete his speech without giving an account of the generation of humans and this will have to involve an account of sex and love. Aristophanes speaks in response to Socrates's call for encomia to Eros, so what is explicitly at issue is love and he chooses to take up at the point—where Timaeus left off—where the generation of humans is at issue. He goes on to discover that the affairs of the *polis* crave attention too; his comedy becomes a repetition and intensification of the thoroughly political comedy of the *Republic* (Book IX); his enormous circle people are repulsive for just the same reasons that the ideal city is repulsive. Thus, according to one map of their trajectories, Timaeus begins with the *polis* and ends with love, while Aristophanes begins with love and ends with the *polis*. That is to say, the *aporia* around which the speeches are performed, and with which I have been concerned here, is the very fact that these issues cannot be treated separately. As Timaeus and Aristophanes show us, love and the city are inseparable but, as long as we strive to build the just city, we are doomed to strive again and again to tear them apart.

NOTES

1 Plato, *Timaeus*, trans. Bury (Harvard, MA: Harvard University; Loeb Library, 1929), trans. Cornford, NY: Macmillan, 1959. Quotations are, unless otherwise noted, from the Cornford translation.

2 In what follows I draw on John Sallis's *Being and Logos* (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1986) and on Robert Lloyd Mitchell's *The Hymn to Eros* (Maryland: Univ. Press of America, 1993).

3 It may be possible, drawing on Book X of the *Republic* and the *Phaedo*, to discuss this matter in terms of redemption, and to entertain the possibility that those men who fell to the level of women in the second generation may return as men in subsequent generations. Nothing in Timaeus's discourse suggests that this is might be the case, however.

4 The translation is for the most part Cornford's, but "physique" is substituted for "form," following Bury.

5 See David Farrell Krell, "Female Parts in *Timaeus*," *Arion*, New Series, vol. 2, no. 3, Boston Univ. "We should also note that Aristophanes's speech serves as a kind of comic image of Timaeus's account. Precisely as a comic image it is more profoundly revelatory than the *logos* of Timaeus" (p. 419, n. 7).

6 "The Greeks has a word for things that evoke [a] complex, shuddering feeling. It is the word Aristophanes [in the *Symposium*] uses for these [private] parts: *aidoia*." Mitchell, *The Hymn to Eros*, p. 71.

7 See Mitchell on the disappearance of women who love women, and their doom of incompleteness (p. 78).

8 See *Timaeus*, 69e. We are told that the trunk of the body has a partition "as if marking off the men's apartment from the women's." The women's is the lower part, the part concerned with appetite and nourishment, and it is as far as possible from the head so that it might cause the least possible tumult and clamour (70e). In order that it might have some apprehension of reality and truth however, the gods made this also the site of divination and of demonic possession.

9 I do not include here Diotima, not only because she does not appear in the dialogue, but also because to consider her role would carry me too far afield.