Plato as a Wayfinder:
To Know Meno, the Robbery Case and the Road to Larissa

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Among Plato's illustrations for explaining his view on knowledge, there are three that are noteworthy in that objects of knowledge there suggested are not Forms but perceivable things — despite Plato's statement in his middle dialogues to the effect that the former are genuine objects of knowledge, with the latter being downgraded to objects of opinion. They are knowledge of Meno ([T1] below), that of the road to Larissa ([T2]), both appearing in the *Meno*, and knowledge of a robbery ([T3]) in the *Theaetetus*.

[T1] SOCRATES: If I do not know (οἶδα) what something is, how could I know (εἰδείην) what sort of thing it is? Or do you think that someone, who does not know (γιγνώσκει) at all who Meno is, could know (εἰδέναι) whether he is beautiful or wealthy or noble also, or whether just the opposite of each of these is the case? Do you think it is possible?
MENO: No, I don't. (*Men.* 71B3-7)

[T2] SOCRATES: If someone, knowing (εἰδὼς) the road to Larissa or anywhere else you like, goes there by walking and guides others, he will guide them in a right and good way. … But if a man has the right opinion as to what is the road, though he has never been there and doesn't know (ἐπιστάμενος), will he not also guide others aright?
MENO: Certainly. (*Men.* 97A9-B4)

[T3] SOCRATES: They [orators and lawyers] persuade people by their skill (τέχνη), not teaching but making them have whatever opinion they like. Or do you think there are any teachers so clever as to be able, in the short time allowed by the water-clock, satisfactorily to teach their hearers the truth of what happened to people who have been robbed of their money or have suffered some other acts of violence, when nobody was there?
THEAETETUS: No, …

> SOCRATES: And when the jury are justly persuaded about matters in dispute which one can know (εἰδέναι) only by having seen them and in no other way, then, judging of them from hearsay, having acquired a true opinion, they have judged without knowledge (ἐπιστήμη), though they are rightly persuaded, if the judgement they have passed is correct, have they not?
> THEAETETUS: Certainly. (*Tht.* 201A8-C3)

These three cases of knowledge arouse the following questions. (1) Are they genuine *examples* of knowledge for Plato or merely *illustrations* to explain what it is like to know Forms? (2) Does knowledge for Plato consist in some kind of acquaintance, as is claimed by some interpreters on the basis of these three cases?

Here for want of space I cannot help dealing with [T2] rather schematically, though about half of this paper is devoted to this topic. My overall claim is that even if Plato regards some kind of acquaintance as necessary for knowledge, it is wrong to take it as a special route to knowledge comparable to seeing, without any element of reflective thinking, analysis and inference, and that there is a certain sense where Plato regards knowledge of Forms, or rather of patterns that Forms build up in their relationship with one another, as crucial for us to know Meno, the robbery case and even the way to go to Larissa.

1. Knowledge by Acquaintance and Knowledge-about

Let us start from the *Meno*. Concerning knowledge of Meno and that of the road to Larissa, it is often argued that they are some kind of acquaintance or direct experience, the so-called 'knowledge by acquaintance',[1] with the additional claim concerning Plato's view on knowledge (for instance knowledge of virtue, which is the subject in the *Meno*) that one cannot attain it, as long as one remains in the realm of propositions, however many seemingly true propositions may be accumulated: to attain knowledge it is essential to have direct experience comparable to seeing Meno or travelling to Larissa. For example, as to knowledge of Meno, it is argued that any description one may receive by hearsay is insufficient to know Meno, unless one has seen him with one's own eyes. If one has had an immediate experience of him, on the other hand, this experience seems to guarantee knowledge about him.

However, is it really the case that if one has got a direct acquaintance of Meno, one comes to know Meno? The answer depends partly on what kind of cognition we

[1] e.g. Bluck (1961) 32-3, 213-14. Also cf. Ebert (1973) 172-5; Irwin (1977) 315 n.12; Hare (1982) 32.

understand by 'direct acquaintance'. Emphasis in epistemology on 'direct acquaintance' or 'immediate experience', of which Russell makes the most in his philosophy, goes back to William James and further back to John Grote.[2] There is, however, some difference in its content between Russell and James (or Grote). Russell presents direct acquaintance in contrast with 'knowledge by description' and takes it as some awareness of sense data, such as a certain colour and shape (while we look), and a certain sensation of hardness (while we press), whose existence we are not doubting.[3] For James, on the other hand, 'Experience, from the very first, presents us with concreted objects, vaguely continuous with the rest of the world which envelops them in space and time, and potentially divisible into inward elements and parts'.[4]

However, their understandings of 'direct acquaintance' or 'immediate experience' have in common the following characteristics, in contrast to another kind of epistemic state, which James calls 'knowledge-about', and Russell 'knowledge by description': [5]

(1) Knowing things involves experiencing them.
(2) Knowledge of things by acquaintance is epistemically basic and provides an infallible epistemic foundation for knowledge about things.
(3) Knowledge about things is more articulate and explicit than knowledge by acquaintance with things.
(4) Knowledge about things is causally removed from knowledge of things by acquaintance, by processes of reflection, analysis and inference.

Now, as far as (1) is concerned, acquaintance seems compatible with Plato's high-standard concept of knowledge, according to which knowledge is the state in which one can give a reason or an account.[6] However, when we look at (2) to (4), doubts begin to arise. As to (3) and (4), what Russell and James call 'knowledge of (*or* by) acquaintance' is rather raw material for knowledge-about, and it is doubtful whether Plato counts such inarticulate cognition as knowledge. Even (2) should be taken in the sense that acquaintance provides raw material for knowledge-about, with

[2] Grote (1865) 60; James (1885) 31 (=James (1909) 11-12); James (1890) 221 and note.
[3] Russell (1912) 7.
[4] James (1890) 487.
[5] Martens (1992) 239.
[6] Cf. e.g. *Men*. 98A, *Phd*. 76B, *Smp*. 202A, *R*. 531E.

acquaintance specified there never being at the level of articulateness required for Platonic high-standard knowledge.

It may be still argued, however, that Platonic acquaintance, comparable to seeing Meno or travelling to Larissa, is such a privileged kind of experience as to provide some infallible epistemic foundation for knowledge-about, constituting the highest stage of knowledge. But exactly what kind of cognition did Plato understand by 'seeing Meno' or 'travelling to Larissa'? Does it have anything in common with whatever is intended by interpreters who argue that Plato's ideal knowledge is realized by acquaintance?

2. Knowing Meno

In [T1] above, Meno may have been of the opinion that just simple acquaintance with him enables people to gain knowledge enough to let them know clearly that he is beautiful, wealthy and noble, whereas if one does not see him, one is totally blank about him. Now, it is a common consensus among interpreters that when Meno presented the so-called Meno's paradox (*Men*. 80D), he had in mind [T1] and the principle that supports it, i.e. 'one cannot know what something is like if one doesn't know what it is' (71A5-7, B3-4).[7] Certainly, if acquaintance and knowledge are taken along Meno's understanding of [T1], i.e., acquaintance as a matter of seeing with the physical eye and knowledge as a matter of this kind of experience, the paradox will make sense: someone, who has got that experience of something, will not need to search after it in order to know it, and someone, who has not got the experience, will not be able to search, because he or she is blank about it (Socrates' version in 80E). But is this also Plato's view?

Socrates calls the paradox 'a contentious argument', commenting that one should not be persuaded by it (80E2, 81D5-6). It may be argued that Socrates' intention in this comment does not lie in pointing out the unsoundness of the argument, but rather in arguing that the only way to allow for the possibility of enquiry and discovery under this condition is to accept Recollection: Socrates intended to highlight the necessity of Recollection. However, the text of 81D-E itself is in clear opposition to this line of reading. Socrates there makes a clear contrast between the contentious argument and Recollection, and says that the reason why one should not be persuaded by the former is that it makes one lazy, while the latter makes one actively engage in enquiry; he says he trusts that Recollection is true (81D-E). This suggests that the argument of the paradox is

[7] e.g. Canto-Sperber (1991) 662.

indeed unsound,[8] and this in turn suggests that it is wrong to take 'knowing Meno' in [T1] as a matter of seeing or not seeing (complete blank).

Now, in [T1] two verbs γιγνώσκειν and εἰδέναι are used, and when Grote first introduced the distinction between knowledge of acquaintance and knowledge-about, he was guided by the contrast between γνῶναι, noscere, kennen, connaître, on the one hand, and εἰδέναι, scire, wissen, savoir, on the other. He took the former group of verbs to represent knowledge of acquaintance and the latter knowledge-about. So did James.[9] However, it is doubtful whether this kind of division is appropriate to interpret Plato's position.[10]

Let us look at the following result of Lyons' studies on Plato's use of cognitive vocabulary.[11] 'The alleged difference between γιγνώσκειν and εἰδέναι ("… οἶδα = *know by reflection*, γιγνώσκειν = *know by observation*" …) will not do for Plato'. It is true that in many cases the 'fact' expressed by the dependent clause of γιγνώσκειν is a matter of 'observation'. However, '[in] the "tenses" in which εἰδέναι can be used it seems to be used no less readily than γιγνώσκειν for 'facts' that could be described as the result of "observation"'.[12] Lyons detects that the nouns that represent the states represented by εἰδέναι, γιγνώσκειν and ἐπίστασθαι are respectively ἐπιστήμη, γνῶσις and τέχνη, with their relation being that εἰδέναι (*or* ἐπιστήμη) includes both γιγνώσκειν (*or* γνῶσις) and ἐπίστασθαι (*or* τέχνη): εἰδέναι (*or* ἐπιστήμη) is neutral as between γιγνώσκειν (*or* γνῶσις) and ἐπίστασθαι (*or* τέχνη) in positions in which all three are possible.[13]

However, there is some difference in the use of these verbs. 'The most characteristic positive difference between the distribution of γιγνώσκειν and that of εἰδέναι and ἐπίστασθαι is the relative frequency of occurrence of γιγνώσκειν with a personal noun as object'.[14] In this case the sentences of the type with γιγνώσκειν as verb and a personal noun as object might be accounted for in terms of a notion of 'acquaintance with'. However, it is to be noted that this 'acquaintance with a person' represented by γιγνώσκειν allows for the possibility of grading. 'Alcibiades' declaration in the *Symposium* (with reference to Socrates: 216d) "… οὐδεὶς ὑμῶν τοῦτον γιγνώσκει" is clearly not accounted for in the simple terms

[8] Kanayama (2005b) 67.
[9] Grote (1865) 60; James (1890) 221.
[10] For the following argument cf. Kanayama (2005b) 61-2.
[11] Lyons (1963) 179 n.2.
[12] Lyons (1963) 206.
[13] Lyons (1963) 198; also cf. 178-9, 195, 220, 223.
[14] Lyons (1963) 199; also cf. 179, 204, 206.

of having or not having made the acquaintance of Socrates; of being able to identify him correctly as Socrates'.[15] A person who γιγνώσκει someone else can more than merely identify him/her, being able to provide information about him/her: 'it is here that the possibility of grading occurs within γιγνώσκειν'.[16]

Socrates says that it is impossible for someone, who does not know (γιγνώσκει) at all who Meno is, to know (εἰδέναι) whether he is beautiful, wealthy or noble. Lyons' studies suggest that this statement can be understood at various levels, according to different grading within γιγνώσκειν. It is especially significant that the three adjectives attachable to Meno, 'beautiful' (καλός), 'wealthy' (πλούσιος) and 'noble' (γενναῖος) (71B6-7), allow for different interpretations: i.e., external vs. internal.[17] When Alcibiades said in the *Symposium* that nobody among you knew Socrates, he had in mind Socrates' internal self. In his view most people see Socrates' outer appearance and think that they know his inner self, as a result downgrading him, just as Meno compared him to an electric ray (80A).[18] On the other hand, if appearance or the packaging is good, we very often transfer good impressions we receive from it to the product itself, in accordance with the phenomenon Louis Cheskin, a renowned marketing psychologist, called 'sensation transference'.[19] Thus people like Meno tend to get more credit than they deserve. This is the reason why it is necessary for the dead to be judged naked of all the outer splendours (*Grg.* 523B-E, also cf. *Chrm.* 157B-C).

What is distorted by the package is not limited to the judgement of those who are attracted by it. The soul of people covered with the nice package may be distorted also. They tend to have the opposite qualities in their inner selves, just because they have been adored and as a result spoiled. This applies exactly to Meno, just as Socrates says to him in 76B4-5, 'When you talk, Meno, even someone blindfolded would know that you are beautiful and still have lovers'. This is a very suggestive remark.

First, contrary to the previous statement in [T1] that one cannot know whether Meno is beautiful unless one knows Meno himself, one can know whether he is beautiful, even without knowing him.[20]

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[15] Lyons (1963) 200.
[16] Lyons (1963) 201.
[17] Kanayama (2005a) 59 and 72 n. 24; Kanayama (2005b) 66. External: esp. *Grg*. 523C; internal: *Euthphr*. 12A, *Ly*. 218C, *Grg*. 512D, *Cra*. 403E-404A, *Phd*. 116C, *Smp*. 182D, 203E, 209B, *R*. 361B, 409C, 521A, 547B, *Phdr*. 279B, 279C, *Tht*. 142B, 143E, 185E, 208B, *Lg*. 705B, 841D.
[18] Kanayama (2005b) 64-5.
[19] Cf. Gladwell (2005) 160.
[20] Sedley (2004) 26 n.41.

But secondly, the kind of knowledge unnecessary in order to know whether Meno is beautiful is merely knowledge through perception. When it comes to knowledge that can be reached by rational enquiry, the story is different. For Socrates continues, 'Because you do nothing but give orders in a discussion, as spoiled people do, since they are tyrants as long as they are in their prime' (76B7-C1). Socrates could know that Meno is (externally) beautiful, making the following reasoning: Meno does nothing but give orders; it must be just because he is spoiled and has the tyrannical soul; he must have become like this because he is beautiful in his prime. Socrates knows here not only Meno's outer self but also his inner self. And this is exactly to know somebody, according to Alcibiades in the *Symposium* (216D-E). Thus, in a use of 'knowing' which is different from Meno's or ordinary people's, the statement in question in [T1] is true, and it is truly the case that unless one knows Meno's inner self (that he has the tyrannical soul), one cannot know whether he is beautiful, wealthy or rich (that the contrary is the case, as far as his inner self is concerned).

Thirdly, to reach this conclusion Socrates must have employed the method of hypothesis. Or rather we should say that the method of hypothesis is the method that was extracted from procedures Socrates used to employ in his everyday inferences, just as in this case. We can detect the following correspondence between [M] reasoning here employed and [H] reasoning later employed in the *Meno* by the method of hypothesis, concerning the teachability of virtue:[21]

[H1] A man isn't taught anything other than knowledge (87C2-3).
[H2] If virtue is some sort of knowledge, it is clear that it will be teachable (87C5-6).
[H3] Virtue is itself something good (87D2-3).
[H4] If good, then beneficial (87E2).
[H5] If something is beneficial, it must be wisdom (88C4-5).
[H6] Virtue, being beneficial, must be some sort of wisdom (88D2-3).
[H7] Since virtue is knowledge, it is teachable (89C3-4).

[M1] Those who have the tyrannical soul are internally ugly[22] and externally beautiful.

[21] Here I don't enter the question of what proposition/ propositions is/are regarded by Plato as hypothesis/hypotheses.
[22] As to the state of the tyrannical soul, cf. *R*. 577E, 579D.

[M2] If Meno has some sort of the tyrannical soul, he is internally ugly and externally beautiful.
[M3] Meno does nothing but give orders.
[M4] If people do nothing but give orders, they are spoiled.
[M5] If they are spoiled, they have sort of the tyrannical soul.
[M6] Therefore, Meno, being spoiled, must have sort of the tyrannical soul.
[M7] Since Meno has sort of the tyrannical soul, he is internally ugly and externally beautiful. (76B4-C1)[23]

Thus, fourthly, it is important in consideration to rely on this kind of enquiry by the mind itself, enquiry by means of hypotheses, which Socrates in the *Phaedo* (99Eff.) calls 'enquiry in *logoi*'. In the *Gorgias* (523-524), which was written just before the *Meno* with its actual dialogue being referred to at 71C, the true judge like Minos is said to get stripped of bodily clothes to know whether the dead person is just or not, and to see the soul of the dead who are also without any bodily clothing. It is crucial for the judge to become the mind itself if he doesn't want to be deceived by the packaging of 'beautiful bodies, noble lineage and wealth' (σώματά τε καλὰ καὶ γένη καὶ πλούτους 523C5-6), the very characteristics that constituted Meno's wrapping.[24] Even though 'even someone blindfolded would know that you are beautiful and still have lovers' is a concession, there is certainly a sense in which the state of being blindfolded helps to grasp Meno's nature, especially because Meno's wrappings are so gorgeous as to confuse judgement.

However, fifthly, this does not mean that any and every perceptual information should be rejected. 'Even' (καὶ) in 'even someone blindfolded' (76B4) suggests that the state of being blindfolded (rational enquiry without any help of perception) is a second best. Perceptual information is useful as a source to judge a person's inner state, if one is not misled by it. In fact, Plato's dialogues are full of such vivid images of people as to allow us to recognize their emotions, intentions and characters: in the *Meno* itself Meno's abrupt question that opens the dialogue (70A), his exultant enumeration of various kinds of virtue (71E-72A), Anytus' spite against sophists (91B, 92B), his anger ignited against Socrates (94B), his morose roaming

[23] [M1] to [M7] can be read in 76B4-C1, some of them implicitly, as follows. [M1] in 76B8-C1 ('externally beautiful' in ἐν ὥρᾳ, and 'internally ugly' implicitly in τυραννεύοντες). [M2] as an implicit supposition in 76B5-8, to lead to the conclusion that Meno is beautiful and still has lovers. [M3] in 76B7, [M4] in 76B7-8, [M5] in 76B8, [M6] in 76B7-8 ('have sort of the tyrannical soul' rather implicitly in οὐδὲν ἀλλ' ἢ ἐπιτάττεις), and [M7] in 76B5-8.
[24] Kanayama (2005a) 58-60.

about in the near distance where he could hear the dialogue between Socrates and Meno, but not near enough to be able to hear Meno's statement *sotto voce* referring to Anytus' smoldering hatred (99E). Impressions can be used as clues for right judgement, although they can also confuse our judgement, just as perception prompts recollection (*Phd*. 75B), though it very often distracts the approach to knowledge, as is repeatedly stated in the *Phaedo*. The best course is to carry out rational enquiry, making use of perceptual information without being misled by its dazzling effects, under the firm guidance of the mind itself.

However, against this interpretation the following objection may be raised:

> In [T1] Socrates asks Meno whether someone, who does not know at all (τὸ παράπαν) who Meno is, can know whether he is beautiful etc. (71B). 'At all' suggests a complete blank about Meno, and seems to be incompatible with the interpretation of this paper, which tries to read here the stage where one knows Meno's outer self but not his inner self.

But suppose people have fallen into such error as to think that a person whose appearance is beautiful, like Meno, is beautiful in his/her inner self, or that a person whose appearance is not beautiful or ugly, like Socrates or Theaetetus, is ugly in his/her inner self. Then, do they know *at all* Meno, Socrates or Theaetetus? Plato or Alcibiades in the *Symposium* will say that they don't know *at all* Meno, Socrates or Theaetetus. Socrates blames himself in 71B2-3 as not knowing about virtue *at all* (τὸ παράπαν). He is not blank about virtue, but his standard of knowledge is so high that he cannot help regarding himself as not knowing *at all* about virtue. According to Meno's standard of knowledge the line dividing the state of 'knowing' and that of 'not knowing at all' lies between seeing and not seeing, while according to Socrates' the dividing line lies between being able to say the true nature and not.

3. The Robbery Case

What we have seen concerning knowledge of Meno can be observed concerning the robbery case in the *Theaetetus*. When matters at issue in court are described in [T3] as what can be known only by seeing, should this act of seeing be taken immediately to lead to knowledge? The answer to this question will influence our interpretation of what Plato demands for knowledge. Interpreters usually take seeing to be just the act of seeing who robbed whom of what, by being at the scene of the robbery, and suppose that the act of seeing directly leads to knowledge.

However, it is necessary to note that what is here to be judged is not merely what actually happened but rather the *truth* of what happened. Of course, it may often be the case that 'the truth of what happened' (τῶν γενομένων τὴν ἀλήθειαν) and 'what happened' coincide with each other, but there can be some cases where the truth of what happened is not known by mere eyewitnessing. Plato focuses on the question of whether jurors are justly persuaded (δικαίως πεισθῶσιν 201B7), i.e. the question of just verdict. Then, there occur cases where the jury has to take into account the intentions of those involved and some other factors. Let us see the following laws, which were actually employed in Athens:

> If a man kill another unintentionally in an athletic contest, or overcoming him in a fight on the highway, or unwittingly in battle, or in intercourse with his wife, or mother, or sister, or daughter, or concubine kept for procreation of legitimate children, he shall not go into exile as a manslayer on that account' (Demosthenes 23.53; tr. by A.T. Murray)

> If any man while violently and unjustly seizing another shall be slain straightway in self-defence, there shall be no penalty for his death (D. 23.60; tr. by Murray with the translation of ἀδίκως changed from 'illegally' to 'unjustly').

The case of homicide 'in a fight on the highway' in the former law corresponds to 'what happened to people who have been robbed of their money' in [T3], and the case of 'violently and unjustly seizing another' in the latter law to 'having suffered some other acts of violence' in [T3]. When these laws are applied, those who killed others may not be regarded as ἀδικεῖν ('doing unjust things', D. 23.54).

Lysias' *On the Death of Eratosthenes* presents us with an interesting case of the former law, with Euphiletus being prosecuted for murder by the relatives of Eratosthenes, whom Euphiletus, catching in intercourse with his wife, killed. Euphiletus states his case to the jury (*dikastas* 1.1), fifty one men known as *ephetai* of the Delphinion, saying that he had no motive of enmity or of gain, but only tried to fulfill the injunction of the law, by killing the adulterer. What happened in the bedroom is clear to everyone, but the truth concerning his motive and the justice of the deed is hidden, which is why Euphiletus says that he will tell the truth, setting forth all the things that have to do with him from the beginning, omitting nothing (1.5). What was important in this case was not what he did, but whether he was telling the truth or a lie when he said that he had no motive of enmity, and whether

what he did was just (1.37). It becomes then necessary for the jurors to know both Euphiletus' inner self and his intentions working behind the scene, and also what the just is, in order to reach the just verdict.

Cases Plato describes in his dialogues, one in the *Euthyphro* (the case of Euthypro's father killing a slave) and the other in the *Apology*, are also such cases where the truth of the matter is sought after. Especially in the latter case Socrates repeatedly refers to the truth (*Ap*. 17B8, 20D5, 28D6, 33C2), explaining his intention concerning each of his actions. But even though Athenians must have witnessed Socrates talking with people in the Agora, they could not know the truth of what happened in Socrates' case there and were led to the unjust verdict.

Here in criminal cases, too, what is needed in order to know the truth is such enquiry in *logoi* as is described in the *Phaedo*. This consideration reveals the intention of the people involved, by throwing off the package that hides their inner selves, just as was the case with judgement by Minos, Rhadamanthus and Aeacus (*Grg*. 523C-524A). In the *Gorgias* (523E) Socrates says, 'the judge must be naked, being dead, seeing (θεωροῦντα) the soul itself with the soul itself'. Although the Greek verb itself is different, here too the act of seeing is mentioned as a necessary condition for knowledge, just as in [T3]. The surface meaning of 'seeing' in [T3] is seeing with the physical eye, but it seems possible to read here the seeing with one's own mind, i.e. without any bodily hindrance on the side of the observer as well as on the side of people observed. Theaetetus proposes 'true belief with *logos*' as a candidate of the definition of knowledge, just after finding that true belief itself does not constitute knowledge (201C-D). Why 'with *logos*'? It may be because Theaetetus saw the necessity of *logos*, which can cover arguments in court, in finding the truth. If so, this can be counted to his credit as the result of consideration with his own mind and as another child born from Theaetetus, who was called 'beautiful' by Socrates (185E), just because he could beautifully attribute consideration of *koina* to the soul itself (195D-E). Here the standard of 'beautiful' Socrates employed is clearly different from that of Meno.

4. The Journey to Larissa

Then, how about the journey to Larissa [T2]? Interpreters in general count knowledge of the road as 'knowledge by acquaintance',[25] but this naming should not mislead us. In our daily experience it is one thing to have a single acquaintance with a road through the first journey, and quite another to get to know the way so well as

[25] e.g. Bluck (1963) 260; Hare (1982) 32.

to be able to be an expert navigator. Direct acquaintance (or immediate experience) was, for Russell, a matter of being aware of sense data, whereas for James immediate experience was something that presents us with 'concreted objects, vaguely continuous with the rest of the world which envelops them in space and time, and potentially divisible into inward elements and parts'.[26] Meno was such a concreted object, and the road to Larissa will also be such an object with immense complexity, for the distance between Athens and Larissa is about 350 km, the distance of 13 days walk if one travels 150 *stadia* a day (i.e. about 28 km a day).[27] When one is acquainted with a small thing, one may be able to perceive it as a whole, but in the case of things like a road, which includes towns, cities and regions, it is usually impossible to perceive it as a whole from one vantage point.[28]

The verb employed in [T2] for the knowledgeable guide is ἐπίστασθαι. As we have seen in Lyons' studies, the state represented by it is that of τέχνη. Plato refers in his dialogues to a great number of τέχναι such as ἀστρονομική, αὐλητική, γεωμετρική, γεωργική, ἡνιοχική, ἰατρική, ἱππική, κεραμική, κυβερνητική, λογιστική, οἰκοδομική, σκυτοτομική, στρατηγική, τεκτονική, ὑφαντική, etc.[29] If we choose out of them one τέχνη that is akin to the one possessed by a travel guide, it will be κυβερνητική, whose job is safely to lead the ship by sea. The road to Larissa is probably by land, but 'to Larissa or anywhere else you like' in [T2] suggests that the destination can be e.g. Sicily, the place Plato went to, just before writing the *Meno*. In order to take travelers there safely, the guide will certainly need some understanding of κυβερνητική as well, and also ἀστρονομική, just as Socrates says in the *Republic* (488D) that the true pilot (κυβερνήτης) must pay attention to the time of the year, the seasons, the sky, etc., if he is really to be the ruler of a ship. Plato may have required of the knowledgeable guide much more than such scholars as Hoerber expect. Let us see the following comment by him:[30]

> The example of the 'road to Larissa' (97A-98C) is particularly peculiar; for the 'knowledge' described in the example neither is related to universal principles nor can claim any insight into cause (αἰτίας λογισμός)—two characteristics which Plato associates with ἐπιστήμη— and the odds are stupendous against

[26] James (1890) 487.
[27] Cf. Herodotus 5.53.
[28] Blaut (1991) 56-57.
[29] Lyons (1963) 142.
[30] Hoerber (1960) 91.

> any opinion on the journey being fortuitously correct without any 'knowledge' based on a reliable source.

This remark arouses the following questions:

(1) Does the knowledge of the road to Larissa really have nothing to do with universal principles?
(2) Cannot the knowledge of the road to Larissa claim any insight into cause or explanation?
(3) For Hoerber the success of 'correct opinion' in 97A-98C appears to lie in a simple fortuitous event of lucky success which can be achieved even without careful preparations. But is this correct?

Now concerning (3), how much preparation distinguishes non-fortuitous success from fortuitous success? For example, does Plato regard a detailed map as a reliable source for a long distance journey, if it is available? The availability of such maps in Plato's time may be doubted. For example, Fine seems to be skeptical when she says concerning first-hand understanding necessary for knowledge, 'In the case of a route, this first-hand understanding may require traveling along it (a not implausible claim in Plato's day, when there were no detailed road maps)'.[31]

However, first, how detailed should a map be to be an effective map? For 'the principles of cartography … emphasize the importance of abstracting from the real world to create simple displays that make task-relevant information salient'.[32]

Second, were there really not detailed maps available in Plato's day? It is true that we do not have such maps preserved from ancient Greece, but it is mainly 'due to the perishable or reusable materials on which maps were drawn', i.e. wood or more rarely bronze engraving,[33] or vellum or papyrus.[34] There are in fact remarkable surviving examples of ancient maps, maps on the reverse of the coins from Ionia, 'depicting the physical relief of the hinterland of Ephesus, an approximately 90 square miles', dating from between 394 and 334 BCE, and showing ranges, valleys, rivers, their tributaries, and ridges, with stippling as a likely attempt to show surface phenomena of vegetation and the forests.[35] Detailed maps

[31] Fine (1992) 225 n.42 (=Fine (2003) 63 n.42).
[32] Hegarty et al. (2009) 171; also cf. Klippel et al. (2010) 84.
[33] Dilke (1985) 21.
[34] Johnston (1967) 86.
[35] Johnston (1967) 86, 89, 91-2.

are supposed to have been necessary items in Plato's day too, 'particularly for fiscal, military and navigational purposes'.[36]

According to Plutarch, *Nicias* (12.1) and *Alcibiades* (17.4), Athenians drew rough maps of the island of Sicily and of the adjacent seas and continents in their euphoric mood just before the Sicilian expedition, 415 BCE, which suggests that people in Athens around the time of Socrates had an easy access to map-like images.[37] An interesting case is that of the map which Strepsiades finds besides a number of mathematical and scientific instruments in Aristophanes, *Clouds* (206-17). In the map he sees Athens, Euboea and Sparta, and makes such a stupid comment as that he can't see any jurymen on their benches in Athens or that Sparta is so near that it's better to get it to be a very long away from him, showing comically exaggerated lack of understanding of the map's reduction of scale.[38] It should be noted that the map was described as one of the remarkable items found in Socrates' Think Shop. Maps must have attracted the attention of intellectuals around that time.

When Alexander went on an expedition to the east, he was accompanied by specialists called 'bematists' (βηματισταί), i.e. 'people who measure by paces'. Their task was to record such material as place names, distances, and descriptions of landscapes, the native flora and fauna and customs.[39] Information they noted down must have contributed to map making. The measuring technique of bematists is supposed to have existed earlier even in Herodotus' day, as is testified by the exact record of distances along the Royal Road in Herodotus 5.52.[40]

However, did appropriate maps become a guarantee for successful journey? The road between Larissa and Athens must have been the road Meno took when coming to Athens, and was soon to take again to return home in order to prepare for the campaign to Persia, depicted in Xenophon's *Anabasis*, with one thousand hoplites and five hundred peltasts. This expedition ended in his death and the disaster for Greek mercenaries (*An*. 1.2.6). In such expeditions whether an army had a reliable guide, who wouldn't betray, was a matter of life and death, and they did everything to secure such a guide with intimidation as well as with money.[41]

Maps show a bird's-eye view, which is similar to a god's-eye view, but of course it is inferior to the latter. Gods can watch different and even distant things

[36] Johnston (1967) 92.
[37] Dilke (1985) 25; Netz (1999) 59; Purves (2010) 114 n.51.
[38] Purves (2010) 114.
[39] On "bematists", see e.g. Fraser (1996) 78-86.
[40] Fraser (1996) 79.
[41] Xenophon, *An*. 1.3.14, 16-17; 2.3.6, 14; 2.4.10; 3.1.4; 3.2.20, 23-24; 4.1.21-25; 4.2.1, 5, 9, 23-24; 4.5.1; 4.6.1-3, 17; 4,7,19-20, 26-27; 5.5.15; 6.3.11, 22; 6.4.23; 7.3.39-40; 7.4.14.

simultaneously from a single point of view. They have not only a panoramic view of the whole, including all things, but also a microscopic view of detail in close-up, as is suggested in Homer's address to Muses, 'you … know all things (πάντα), while we hear only fame and do not know even a thing (τι) [i.e., a thing in close-up]' (*Il*. 2.485-486).[42] When Zeus wakes up beside Hera and takes in at a glance the whole situation of the fight between the Trojans and the Greeks, he zooms in at once on Hector lying wounded on the plain (*Il*. 15.4-13). And in the *Iliad* (22.136-164), when the chase of Achilles after Hector running away around the citadel was narrated as a race of life and death, the scene was depicted with double focus of a bird's-eye view and a zoom-in view, with gods as spectators having both views.[43]

In contrast to gods who can simultaneously take both a macroscopic and a microscopic view in an instant, human capacity is limited. Even when people have a panoramic view by means of a map, it is not equal to actually seeing every detail of the landscape. To quote from a handbook for navigation, 'Just because you can see something on a map, don't assume you can *actually* see it. When you look at a hill, for instance, you see only the portion of its map picture that is toward you and not hidden by something else'.[44] Still, when knowledgeable guides are not available, maps are useful and necessary for safe travelling.

Herodotus relates the story of Aristagoras of Miletus visiting Cleomenes at Sparta in diplomacy, with a map of the known world engraved on bronze (5.49). Herodotus himself is critical of the mapmakers who depict Ocean running like a river round a perfectly circular earth, making Asia and Europe of the same size (4.36). But this does not necessarily mean that he downgraded maps. Rather he must have thought there could have been different types of maps with more accuracy.[45] When he supplies in detail the information for the Royal Road, after depicting Aristagoras' account with a map (5.51-52), he must have had a clear vision of the Royal Road either on a map in front of him,[46] or in his so-called cognitive map. He is conscious of himself as an enquirer who has direct experience of various roads, so as to be able to relate minute details without relying on hearsay.[47] Although Aristagoras may have been a superior enquirer relative to the mapmakers referred to in 4.36.2, he is still not exact enough and is inferior to Herodotus. It is

[42] Purves (2010) 4, 6.
[43] Cf. De Jong and Nünlist (2004) 70; Purves (2010) 55-57.
[44] Fleming (2001) 39.
[45] Dilke (1985) 57; Branscome (2010) 9.
[46] Branscome (2010) 22 and n.59.
[47] Purves (2010) 121.

Herodotus himself that is the real enquirer or historiographer, as is shown by his improvement of Aristagoras' roughly correct estimate of the time taken to travel from Ionia to Susa from three months to three months and three days (5.54).[48] Aristagoras' explanation with recourse to the map was only a spatial demonstration from above, whereas Herodotus includes in his explanation detailed accounts of such landmarks as gates, rivers, and boundaries, stations, as well as the distances between them, and the time to take (5.52-54).[49] Herodotus gives priority to ὄψις, γνώμη and ἱστορίη (2.99). For him it is essential to engage in navigation. It is sometimes inevitable to rely on hearsay, but on such occasions he tries by all means, through his own experience, to confirm what he learned from others (2.142-143).[50]

According to research in spatial knowledge, people acquire survey knowledge of the environment through long-term navigation and extensive exposure to routes that connect diverse locations. Because 'Spatial knowledge is critical to our interactions with each other and to our interactions with the physical world, indeed to our very survival',[51] even small children have the ability somehow to construct a higher survey. Especially because infants have very low eye-level, a couple of feet high above the ground, and cannot see with their physical eyes beyond lots of barriers obstructing their view, it is essential for them to cultivate spatial cognition through toy playing with miniature landscapes on the floor, which is cross-culturally observed. The basic ability to solve mapping problems in toy and air-photo form is actually possessed even by three-year-olds.[52]

What leads to detailed spatial knowledge is not simple map-learning though this may be an easy way to estimate straight-line distance and relative location. It is actual navigation experience that fosters these two abilities as well as the abilities to estimate route distances and to orient oneself.[53] A significant thing is that people who have obtained sufficient navigation experience and reached a high level standard of spatial cognition have a form of survey knowledge in which the environment becomes 'translucent'. They can 'look through' opaque obstacles in the environment to their destination, having a kind of 'survey knowledge from a perspective within, rather than above, the represented environment'.[54] They may be said to have acquired a bird's-eye view which they can maintain even when

[48] Branscome (2010) 10, 21-23, 27-28, 31.
[49] Branscome (2010) 22, 31.
[50] Purves (2010) 121.
[51] Taylor and Tversky (1996) 371.
[52] Blaut (1991) 59-65, 67.
[53] Thorndyke and Hayes-Roth (1982) 560-4, 586.
[54] Thorndyke and Hayes-Roth (1982) 586.

navigating on the ground. They are thus allowed in a sense both vertical and horizontal grasps of the environment, i.e. what Homer depicts as the possession of gods.

Concerning the road from Ionia to Susa, Herodotus must have had the pride of an expert equipped with this kind of double focus view. However, if Herodotus was self-conscious of himself as a real master of enquiry (ἱστορίη), so must Plato have been as a philosopher (lover of wisdom). Just before writing the *Meno*, he travelled to Italy and Sicily; he must have had on the road several occasions to think about what kind of knowledge is necessary for a safe journey. He must have had occasions to reflect on philosophical enquiry through navigation, to which he often compares investigation in philosophy.[55]

The verb Plato used in [T2] for 'walking' in 'someone … goes there [to Larissa] by walking' is βαδίζειν. This verb is employed one more time in the *Meno*, concerning the slave boy (*Men*. 82Bff.), when he reached a dead end, by taking the route of choosing the edge twice or three times as long as the original edge of the square in his attempt to answer the question of constructing a square twice as large. Exploring diagonal routes was beyond his imagination. Concerning his ἀπορία or ἀπορεῖν (literally 'losing the passage', i.e. being at a dead end, 84A7, B1, 6, C5, 10), Socrates asks Meno:

> Do you realize, Meno, what point this boy has now reached by walking (βαδίζων) on the path of recollection? (84A3-4)

The slave boy, who conducted wayfinding geometrical enquiry horizontally on the ground, could not look through various barriers to the diagonal, whereas Meno and Socrates could have a vertical perspective and locate the boy in a map-like image from above. In this image, each step of the construction of the searched square must be set side by side as the Royal Road, just like a sequence of frames, with some branch routes leading to the dead ends the boy fell into.

Now, suppose Meno and Socrates change their perspectives from vertical to horizontal in the field of geometry and stand together with the slave boy. Even so, they will be able to see translucently four diagonals, which have not yet been drawn,

[55] Cf. Plato's use of ὁδός and similar expressions in *Ly*. 213E, *Phd*. 66B (ἀτραπός, *R*. 435D, 504B-C (περίοδος), 532E, *Phdr*. 272B-C, *Tht*. 147C, *Sph*. 218D, 237B, 242B, *Plt*. 258C (ἀτραπός, ἐκτροπή), 265A-B, 266E, 267A (ἐκτροπή), 268D, *Phlb*. 61A-B, *Criti*. 106A, *Lg*. 803E. Cf. also e.g. *R*. 516E, *Tht*. 200E7-201A2.

as the destination, among the layers of squares so far drawn on the original square. This was the very thing that the slave boy could not do.

According to Netz, in ordinary learning of geometry 'diagrams, as a rule, were not drawn on site. The limitations of the media available suggest, rather, the preparation of the diagram prior to the communicative act—a consequence of the inability to erase'.[56] This means that a series of figures which navigators of geometry diachronically draw in their actual demonstration are superimposed on one another as a synchronic drawing. If the slave boy were shown this type of diagram, he would be at loss to know where to focus his attention, whereas Meno and Socrates would be able to highlight each pattern, according to the order of demonstration.

5. Kinship of All Nature

Socrates says to Meno concerning the boy, 'If someone asks him repeatedly these same things in many ways, you know that in the end he will know (ἐπιστήσεται) about these things as exactly as anyone else does' (85C10-D1). The noun corresponding to ἐπίστασθαι was τέχνη according to Lyons, which suggests that by being repeatedly asked, the slave boy will become able to have a cognitive map of the whole field of geometry including many regions, one of which concerns the geometrical proof that the diagonal is the answer sought after.

'Cognitive map' is a metaphorical expression. If it gives an impression that it is a coherent whole that reflects spatial relations among elements, it is certainly misleading. Rather, 'people's internal representations seem to be more like *collages*'.[57] Accordint to Tversky, 'collages are thematic overlays of multimedia from different points of view. They lack the coherence of maps, but do contain figures, partial information, and differing perspectives'.[58] Collage is a kind of chunk, and 'chunking underlies many aspects of human learning'. In learning we divide information into a small number of chunks, i.e. 'collections of elements having strong associations with one another, but weak associations within other chunks'.[59]

However, when dealing with Plato's epistemology, it will be more appropriate to employ Plato's own vocabulary. The corresponding concept is 'kinship'. Plato refers to it when he introduces Recollection:

[56] Netz (1999) 16.
[57] Tversky (1993) 15.
[58] Tversky (1993) 15.
[59] Gobet et al. (2001) 236.

> For since all nature is akin (συγγενής), and the soul has learned all things, nothing prevents a man, after having recollected one thing – what men call 'learning' – from discovering all other things, if he is brave and does not weary of the searching. For searching and learning are, as a whole, recollection. (*Men*. 81C9-D5)

'Akin' (συγγενής) suggests family connection, where children from the same parents are related with one another as belonging to the same family, and the parents and their siblings are again related with one another as coming from the same parents. If you go up this way, you may arrive at a mythical hero as the ancestor of all the citizens. Under him a hierarchical structure of networks of family trees subsists, and this kind of network is taken to be meant by the kinship of all nature.

Geometry, as a τέχνη, has certainly this kind of kinship structure. If the slave boy 'is brave and does not weary of the searching' (81D), embarking on proving that the diagonal is the answer sought after, he will certainly have recourse to Proposition I.34 of Euclid's *Elements*: In parallelogrammic areas the opposite sides and angles are equal to one another, and the diameter bisects the areas.[60] And this proposition, then, is proved by means of (comes from) Common Notion 2, and Propositions I.4, 26, 29. And e.g. proposition I.29 again comes from Postulate 5, Common Notions 1, 2, and Propositions I.13, 15. The slave boy thus will explore networks of geometry, ascending to the common ancestors (definitions, postulates and common notions), from which all the propositions below are derived. When the slave boy has internalized this kind of hierarchical structure of networks, he will be regarded as having reached knowledge, by tying the right opinion down by reasoning the explanation (*aitias logismos*), which is recollection (98A).

When having attained this stage, he will be able to navigate easily in the field of geometry. It may be instructive here to quote Netz' remark concerning such an expression as *nenoēsthō ti sēmeion meteōron to B* (… 'Let some elevated point be imagined, B.') in Euclid's *Elements* (book XI.12):[61]

> In the Greek mathematical context, you see a certain diagrammatic configuration and train your mind's eye to see beyond the visible (which I translate with 'imagine').

[60] Heath (1956) 323.
[61] Netz (2009) 25.

In solving a geometrical problem, one needs to be able to do this seeing-beyond. Wayfinders of geometry can see by this seeing-beyond translucently the distant destination as well as patterns leading to it, beyond what meets the eye.

6. Stereotypes versus Forms

It's now time to take stock. We humans are navigators in this world, gradually constructing a map-like understanding of our environments after we were born. However, it is often the case that our cognitive map gets distorted, due to such factors as hierarchical organization, perspectives and reference points.[62] For instance, although San Diego is east of Reno, we tend to think that it is west of Reno, just because we first store the relative locations of the states, and then store cities by the state that contains them, inferring the relative locations of cities from the locations of their superset states, California and Nevada. We easily fall prey to categorization or stereotypes, which confound our judgement just as Meno's stereotype idea about beauty distorted his judgement, and as lots of people may have been misled by Meno's beautiful appearance.

However, if it is through such reference frameworks as hierarchical organization that distortions in our cognitive maps arise, it is also through these frameworks that our cognitive maps are adjusted. If we continue wayfinding search and adopt wider reference frames, distorted judgement never fails to give rise to inconsistencies. The route that we thought would lead to the destination may turn out to be a cul-de-sac or return to the same place as we started. But what seems apparently to be a failure should not be regarded as a failure, as Socrates kept emphasizing in his service to Apollo, making Athenians aware of their own ignorance (*Ap*. 22E-23C, 29D-30B). The failure can become an opportunity to seek anew. It teaches us in a new trial that we need not enter the same fruitless path option again.[63] And then if we continue to explore new territories and examine each path, we will never fail to adjust our cognitive maps relative to wider reference frames, as long as we keep brave and do not get weary of the searching (*Men*. 81D); we can locate in a wider network of routes the road that led in our previous navigation to the dead end or to the same place again. And this may finally lead to the systematic knowledge of all the routes of the environment.

Thus, even if we start without knowing what to search for, we can approach somehow the destination, as long as we continue to go. Meno's argument that

[62] Tversky (1992) 132ff., and Tversky (1993) 15-17.
[63] Wiener, Büchner and Hölscher (2009) 162.

unless we know what to search, we cannot start enquiry is nothing but a contentious argument coming from his laziness. That is why Socrates says that he would contend at all costs both in word and deed that people will be better, braver and less lazy, if they believe that one must search for the things one does not know, rather than if they believe that it is not possible to discover what they do not know and that they must not search for it (*Men*. 86B-C).

What is important in wayfinding is not to keep all the routes at hand. This will impede our working memory, to use the vocabulary of cognitive psychology. It is important rather to store in long term memory a detailed hierarchical organization of locations nested within neighbourhoods, neighbourhoods within larger geographic regions, and larger regions within more global features, so as to be able to retrieve promptly and efficiently patterns necessary to navigate; this is what distinguishes expert taxi drivers from novices.[64] What expert taxi drivers try to do first in their wayfinding activity is to find the route connecting the region of the start place and that of destination, and next to 'continue following a global plan until cues from the environment are encountered that trigger specific routes at choice points along a route'.[65] Experts are not influenced by inessential details, but act according to a few essential patterns retrieved from long term memory.

Too much information is very often the main source of our confusion and mistaken judgement. Interestingly enough, according to research in social psychology, we can form more correct opinion about someone's personality by dropping by his/her house and spending half an hour than by meeting him/her twice a week for a year.[66] It is not merely that we can learn much about people from the spaces they inhabit. By not meeting them face-to-face we are exempted from all the confusing and irrelevant pieces of information that can cause distortion. In this sense, it is truly the case that being blindfolded helps us to know what kind of person Meno is. What is important is the cognitive map consisting of such an appropriate hierarchical structure of networks as to enable us to grasp translucently what we are looking for, or to do 'seeing-beyond', concerning not only things in the present but also things in the future. Experts with a proper method are reported to be able to predict who among newlyweds will divorce and who will be still married fifteen years later, by analyzing an hour of their talking.[67] Expertise consists in being able to tell what will happen in the future (*Tht*. 178A-179B). Experts with the command

[64] Chase (1983) 399. 404.
[65] Chase (1983) 404.
[66] Gladwell (2005) 35-41, which is based on Gosling, Ko et al (2002) 379-98.
[67] Gladwell (2005) 21-24, which is based on Carrèr and Gottman (1999).

of the taxonomy of facial expressions can, seeing beyond outer appearances, grasp inner emotions and motivations, not only for humans but also even for horses,[68] just as Socrates could grasp inner emotions and intentions of his interlocutors, like Meno and Theaetetus, attributing to each of them tyrannical character and beauty, respectively. As to the latter he could predict his future as well (*Tht*. 142C-D)

To quote James again, experience presents us with 'concreted objects, vaguely continuous with the rest of the world which envelops them in space and time, and potentially divisible into inward elements and parts'.[69] Perceivable things, like Meno, the robbery case and the journey to Larissa, involve many confounding features, including stereotypes. Plato's Forms are not stereotypes. Stereotypes based on perceivable things rather belong to the realm of opinion (*doxa*). Patterns employed by experts, in contrast, which enable them to get rid of stereotypes are supposed to reflect the kinship of all nature (*Men*. 81D), which is supposed to consist in the interrelationship of Forms. In the *Republic*, in the context where Socrates declares that Forms are the objects of knowledge, he remarks:

> And the same account applies to just and unjust, good and bad, and all the forms. Each of them is itself one, but manifesting itself all over the place due to its association with actions, bodies, and one another, each of them appears to be many. (*R*. 476A4-7)

To know each of the Forms is not a separate thing from knowing where each of them manifests itself in its association with perceptible things and with one another. In Aristophanes' *Clouds* (225-234) Socrates looks *up* from the basket in the air, but this is not the proper direction to look, when experts have the bird's-eye view point. In the *Theaetetus*, Thales turns his eyes upwards, when staying on the ground (174A). But once philosophers place themselves high up in the air, their gaze is directed not merely upwards. When they consider, together with men with the small, shrewd, legal mind, what human happiness and misery are, and in what way it is proper for a human being to obtain the one and avoid the other, the head of those shrewd people swims when they look down from the high place, and they get lost (ἀποῥῶν) and stammer (*Tht.* 175C-D).

When they ascend high up in the air, their vista is widened to encompass the earth as a whole, not merely the tiny castle of kings compared to herdsmen (174D-E).

[68] Gladwell (2005) 21-24, concerning Paul Ekman and Ekman's teacher Silvan Tomkins.
[69] James (1890) 487.

Even if shrewd people have no difficulty in navigating in small neighbourhoods, once they are out of their territories they may get lost, finding their usual way lead to a dead end, or come back to the same place again, which was often the case with Socrates' antagonists. Stereotypes do not work anymore. Philosophers, on the other hand, who have been considering the question of justice and injustice themselves, the meaning of kingship, and human happiness and misery, are now able easily to navigate, making a connection between their insights into their nature and what they see in this world.

It is certainly through this kind of insight into the nature of beauty and justice that one can make correct judgement of Meno and the robbery case, with an assistance of some kind from the taxonomy of facial expressions. Then, how about the road to Larissa? It is possible to translate 'the road to Larissa' (τὴν ὁδὸν τὴν εἰς Λάρισαν *Men*. 97A9) as 'the way *or* method to go to Larissa'. The road to Larissa, which is far away from Athens, includes towns, cities and regions. Spatial knowledge lies in the ability to estimate straight-line distances, called 'Euclidean distances', route distances, the locations of objects in the environment, and to orient oneself.[70] In order to know the road, or way or method, to go to distant places, it is necessary to be versed in these four domains, and this in turn will need some kind of insight into the networks of Forms, at least of Forms to do with geometry and geography.

Of course, even philosophers can fall prey to stereotypes, because they are human beings, not immortal gods. But let us see what Sedley describes as the role of Forms:[71]

> "Because of the beautiful". Can these formal causes be other than vacuous?
>
> They can. There is an enormous value in knowing that the sunset is beautiful because of the beautiful and not because of, say, its colour. Only when you know what the genuine cause is do you know what it is that you have to investigate. If you want to understand what makes sunsets beautiful, don't be sidetracked into investigating the nature of colours.

Forms play the role of destination to be seen translucently in the distance. They do not allow us to be sidetracked and satisfied with stereotypes. We are travelers in this world, eager to navigate successfully. If we do not get weary of the searching, we

[70] Thorndyke and Hayes-Roth (1982).
[71] Sedley (1998) 127.

will certainly be able to continue improving our hierarchical structure of networks of concepts, taking into account more and more extensive reference frames, just to achieve the happiness that is humanly possible in this world.

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