

The Socratic Spirit

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I MUST CONFESS at once that I do not know what philosophy is. This sometimes embarrasses me before the innocence of students, but not before those who have come to realize that the things by which we live are the things about which we know least. We do not know what life is, or what knowing is, or what truth and goodness are. Or if we do know we cannot say, like St. Augustine who confessed that he knew what time was until he began to think about it. Philosophy seems to be one of those primordial things by which we are all tintured, of which we cannot get rid however hard philosophers themselves have tried, and of which the most varied, and at times, the most fantastic ideas have been entertained.

Perhaps the reason for this is that philosophy is so eminently concerned with itself. Physics is not primarily concerned with itself but with bodies, mathematics with the abstract properties of figures and numbers, rather than with themselves. When they get worried about themselves they share the embarrassment and become philosophical. Philosophical thought must ask itself what philosophical thought is. Thought about thought becomes philosophical thought. And the fact that the nature

of thought is itself a problem suggests that the problem is insoluble. There is a query about itself incarnate in the very pursuit of the problem, and any solution would proliferate the data to be dealt with. We come up against the mysteriousness and questionableness of human being itself. If man had all the answers to the problem of himself he would cease to be man. We are concerned about being human, and the best that we can do is to learn to live with the concern and not hope to dispel it. Aquinas remarked that he knew most about God who knew that he knew nothing about him. I suspect that this noble darkness also envelops his image, man, and that if we ourselves have any title to dignity and divinity we shall find the grounds of it in our obscurity. Suspect the philosopher who can tell you what you are as you would suspect the theologian who professes to make plain the ways of God. Thought must always issue in a certain divine skepticism or be a curse to itself. Our civilization is polluted by resolving reality into a series of problems the solution of which we hold to be certain, instead of being seen as a togetherness of mysterious beings who escape their own grasp. Philosophy throws us back on faith and hope, and discredits the hopes

that would make hope unnecessary. There would be no charity, and therefore no civilization, where everything lay open to the reason of the rationalists, and the infallible planning of the future. It is better to touch the ultimate roots of irony in ourselves than to be caught in the ironies by which history revenges itself on our pretensions.

I cannot, therefore, tell you what philosophy is, and had I the sureness of touch of some of the Zen masters I should simply laugh at myself—a supreme feat—and walk off the platform. But I can perhaps attempt a second best, and talk a little about that ironical comedian on whom our Western tradition in philosophy is founded. I can talk about Socrates, the perennial philosopher. This would also be a Socratic exercise in knowing ourselves. For whether we are aware of it or not we are all Greeks and Semites. Athens and Jerusalem have put out roots in Cape Town and much of what seems most natural and evident to us was sweated out against nature and usage in the streets of Athens and the footpaths of Palestine.

But when we come to ask what this Socrates was like it is not so easy to return an answer. In the first place, like Jesus and the Buddha, he wrote nothing. Let us say that he wrote on persons, not on paper. One of the dicta reported by Stobaeus runs: "Socrates, being asked why he didn't write, answered, 'Because I notice that paper costs more before it is written on.'"

Now this writing on persons is a peculiar process. Thus Jesus wrote on the Evangelists who recorded in their words the echoes of his words in them, echoes which have resounded down the ages but behind which we can never get. We can never get to an original Jesus prior to them, and there seems to me to be no good reason to try. Remove the echoes and you do not get the original in its pristine purity. You get nothing. There is no atomic objective fact to be recovered and you know the stone by the ripples. You are rocked by them and you report the motion. The Buddhistic tradi-

tion is very similar: four centuries of memory, tradition and accumulation before anything is written down, much of which you can attack with critical acid, but which somehow continues to hold the essential and the only available truth about Gotama. The precipitate which would be left if you use the acid would need a marvellous chemistry to come to life again, because the life is precisely the accumulation which you have washed away.

The simple reason for this is the persons are not things. They have a different kind of being and duration. They create their own time, historical time, which is different from physical time. A man is not held within his own boundaries like a stone or a table. He speaks and his words return upon him to tell him what he thinks and feels and is. Sometimes they return after a thousand years, for the lives of each of us will be completed only with history. Our being is a being-with-others, and if Descartes laid the emphasis on the "I think" and "I imagine," it might be more fruitful to pay attention to the "we think" and "we imagine." We are saturated with others to our innermost recesses and exist, so to speak, in the mirrors which reflect us. We think, therefore I am, and all thinking is "political." *Sumus ergo cogito.*

Socrates had many mirrors. However poor the quality of the glass I am venturing to be another, and all I can reflect is reflections—reflections in Plato, Aristotle, Euripides, the Cynics, Xenophon, Stobaeus and others, each with his own warp. Like the Evangelists, each saw something different, and seized on a different facet. One cannot take a God's-eye view and unify the pictures. The rather prosy Socrates of a cavalry colonel like Xenophon, full of piety and sententiousness, is very different from the Socrates of Aristophanes' *Clouds*. What objectivity can we get? Not the objectivity at which we aim in the sciences of matter, because we do not have to do with an object but with a subject. The true Socrates is something different from the true diplodocus. We shall rely most on him

who extracts the maximum of meaning for us, and if that involves some idealization, must we not say that it is very significant that a man should have had that in him which could be idealized? The historical Socrates is not the Socrates that was but the Socrates who is, and his *ipsissima verba* are those which he still speaks.

Perhaps I have said enough for you to discern how much I am relying on Plato. I have never set much store on the attempts to sort our Socrates from Plato, to define two "I's" when we have to do with a "we." How shall we say where the master ends and the pupil starts, or separate a husband and wife? Ideas do not have such clear-cut termini, but always extend beyond themselves, and their implications return upon them. That is why so much original thought does not pretend to be more than commentary. Perhaps Plato is Socrates to the extent that he had the imagination to transform him. It is not a question of preferring an imaginary to a real Socrates but of realizing that the imaginary is sometimes the real. A man loves a woman because her imagination has transformed his possibilities. He feels real in her presence. In human relations love is often the condition of objectivity and I think that Plato loved Socrates with the *amor amicitiae*, a union of intelligences.

I should add that this is a case of *ignotum per ignotius*. I wonder whether we know less "objectively" of any great man than we know of Plato. We do not even know his name, for Plato is a nickname, very close to Fatty. At least as much as Shakespeare he lives only in his works. For he is for us in what his own mind and imagination have created in his works, and since his works are largely the commemoration of Socrates, we know and judge him by the Socrates which he has recreated. We judge the mirror by the quality of the reflection. In such obscurity are our origins, both Greek and Christian, wrapped. That is why they are still a light for our feet, for they reflect the hu-

man condition, and the perennial condition of philosophy.

What I have said has already been an exercise in the Socratic spirit, an attempt to meet the paradox which confronts you when you try to put together the two dicta: Know yourself, and, I know nothing. Taken together, do they mean that when you know yourself you know that you know nothing?

Personalities are unique. That is why they are always surrounded by a certain mystery. They escape the effort of generalization with which science is so much concerned, and the attempt to classify people, and hold their essence in a dossier. That is why race classification is so repugnant. The humanity, the common humanity of all of us, reflected in Socrates, was something unique. "I don't want to talk generalities," says Alcibiades in the Symposium.

Perhaps they will hold of other people as well, whereas the core of the matter is that Socrates is unique. There is and was nobody like him. You can find common ground between Achilles and Brasidas, or between Pericles and Nestor and Antenor and there are other instances where you can compare people. But our friend here is so unusual in what he does and says that you will find nobody with whom to compare him.

In being himself he is being all of us, and personalism is stamped on Western philosophy from its inception. It is often said that Greek philosophy produced no adequate conception of that person. Perhaps. But it did more. It took its roots in the extraordinary personality of Socrates, and thus achieved the marriage between rationality and mystery which is endemic in our tradition. It has led us to appreciate that rationality is itself a mystery, and to see that truth itself is inherent not so much in propositions as in persons. Truth lies in a certain fidelity to ourselves, a fidelity which enabled Socrates to accept execution cheerfully, so that courage and death become united to the idea of truth. In this

way the road was opened to a Christian *philosophia* which held that Truth was a Person, a person who was divine because he was John Smith, who was killed because John Smith did not comprehend himself, and did not know that he did not do so. If the Logos is the Light it is a light that darkens the eyes, and is comprehended in incomprehension. It is in this direction that the Socratic ignorance leads us.

Let us go back to the well-known passage in Plato's Apology where Socrates explains his vocation to the judges before whom he was appearing on a capital charge of impiety. It is a court drama, and perhaps I may be permitted to call this fact to the attention of some of our analytical philosophers who are so keen on eviscerating philosophy and purifying us from emotive statements. If Plato is our greatest philosopher it is also because he was a poet and a dramatist, and has preserved the rationality of Socrates for us in this medium. Socrates, too, was always asking, what do you mean? and, what do I mean? and the answer in the last resort was not a logical clarification of terms, but the historical and existential answer of death. Philosophy in the last resort is not a matter of clarification of language but of life and death. Marx follows Goethe in holding that in the beginning is the deed. He was right against those who get lost in words, but he would have been more right if he had remembered that at the origins of his own tradition was a man who did not separate word and action—virtue is knowledge—and a Logos whose creativity is inseparable from his truth. Still, in restoring drama to philosophy, Marx still walks in the light of Plato, and of a Socrates who was a doer of the word and not a hearer only.

But let us get back to the Apology. Socrates is explaining his *vocation*, his calling to a certain way of life and thought. He tells his judges that it is a calling by God, the occasion of which was as follows: His admirer, Chaerophon—a bit of a simple enthusiast—asked the oracle of Apollo at Delphi whether there was any man wiser than Socrates and the god

answered, no. What, asked Socrates, could the god possibly mean when he himself was aware that he knew nothing? Surely it was incumbent on him to see if he could not point to a man who was wiser than he. Let him therefore converse with others and test their wisdom.

I went to a man with a reputation for wisdom, thinking that there, if anywhere, I might prove the response mistaken and say to the oracle: "This man is wiser than I, but you said I was the wisest of men." In my examination of him (and I need not mention him by name, but it was a politician with whom I had this experience), and in my conversation with him, I discovered that he was considered wise by many people, and above all by himself, but that he was not. The result was that I made an enemy of him and of many who were present.

This was the beginning of the Herculean labors of a lifetime, in which he found a little wisdom only among the artisans, and about which he finally concludes:

Gentlemen, in actual truth it seems to me that the God only is wise, and that in this oracle he says that human wisdom is of little or no worth. And apparently he speaks of Socrates here, and takes me as an example by using my name, just as if he would say: that man among human beings is most wise who like Socrates has learnt that in reality his wisdom is worth nothing. So that is why I go around even now searching and examining at the God's command, any man whether citizen or stranger, whom I think to be wise, and whenever he does not appear so to me, I come to the God's assistance and point out that the man is not wise. And as a result of this activity I have no leisure to pay any attention worth speaking of either to the city's affairs or to my own, but am in the depths of poverty owing to my service to the God.

One should take his in connection with the midwifery passage in the Theaetetus

where Socrates explains that like his mother, Phaenarete, he is a midwife, but of souls, not fruitful himself but capable of bringing truth to birth from other people, and exposing their misconceptions. The latter activity was what made him unpopular. People cling so closely to their egos, and so divinize them in their pride, that they regard the undermining of their certainties as an offense against God, and accuse those who undermine their certainties of offending against God. Blasphemy is not an offense against God but against the communal *amour propre*, and Socrates was condemned on a charge of blasphemy because he was faithful to the god. He is not the only man of whom it has been said: he blasphemeth.

One should notice that Socrates' account of his vocation shows him moving among people as they pursued their ordinary avocations: politicians, poets, coopers, potters, armorers, and, in Xenophon, courtesans. This accounts for the union of philosophy and life in his personality. There is wisdom implicit and hidden in all ordinary human contacts. One sees him at the beginning of the Republic paying a social call on the old businessman Cephalus, and out of the interchange of civilities there arises—the Republic! It is obedience to the God which makes him a social being, and the divine reference lies behind his sociability. Philosophy arises from the people and returns to the people, and from ordinary conversations to which it returns its words touched by Apollo.

There is no suggestion of the ivory tower in the beginnings of our philosophical tradition. It started in the Agora and I wonder how philosophers brought it upon themselves to be regarded as out of this world. Plato has already broached the question in the Republic where he asks why we should think it so funny to suggest that philosophers should pay a major part in public life. Perhaps it is because we do not realize how extraordinary the ordinary is, and do not recognize the footsteps of Apollo mingling with our own. Our familiar

words are strange when Socrates asks what we mean by them. Justice, courage and honor are illuminated by an immutable light, but we must go on using the same words.

But perhaps the fault lies also with the philosophers who go whoring after strange words. Plato keeps calling attention to the simplicity of Socrates' language. In the Symposium Alcibiades says.

His conversation is just like those little hollow images of Silenus, the satyr, that you can open on a hinge. When you listen to him speaking you think he is talking tripe. His conversation is enclosed in a rough hide like a satyr's. He talks about pack donkeys, and blacksmiths, and shoe makers and tanners, and it seems as if he is always saying the same old thing in the same old way, so that if you are stupid and don't know him, you feel like laughing. But when you open the argument and look inside, you see the sense in it. In fact he has a divine intelligence full of echoes from another world, and of great reach. It contains everything that a man must know to be a nobleman, in the real sense.

In the Gorgias, Callicles complains:

You keep talking about food and drink and doctors and nonsense. I am not speaking of these things.

But in fact it is Plato's intention in the Gorgias to show that it is Callicles who is living in the ivory tower, or the dream world. Perhaps, too, that is why Socrates can sometimes sound so prosy in Xenophon and in some of the collected dicta. It required a Plato to open the Silenus. Let us hope that it is inherent in our tradition to return sometimes to plain words and to plain people, and to plain good writing. I was once informed by a kindly young colleague that I was more of a literary man than a philosopher. I am glad that so much of Plato has rubbed off on me, and that I have at any rate something in common with

David Hume; nor am I altogether distressed when the verbal barbarities of Hegel return to the soap-box in the Communist Manifesto. When Aquinas says: *quod Deus est, quod Deus est aeternus, quod Deus est sua aeternitas*, you don't have to run to a dictionary though you must open your ears to a trumpet-blast.

But sophistry is always just round the corner, and the charge of Socrates against sophistry is that it is the denial of conversation, the conversation to which he was called by the god. Philosophy arises from the ordinary occasions of life. It is inherent in the *polis*, and in that sense all philosophy is political. That is why its essence lies in dialogue. There is something divine in dialogue, but the charge against the political sophists like Thrasymachus and Callicles is that they don't converse but spout. They deluge you with a bucket of water. Polus charges you like a polo pony—the pun is Socrates'. Notice how Socrates manages a sophist. He insists in engaging in conversation rather than in competitive oratory or display. What he then does is simply to display the grounds of, or to uncover the assumptions of, any friendly conversation. The Republic is implicit in any two men talking. The content of the dialogue is implicit in its manner. Politeness burgeons with the polity, and it is a politeness which roots in a common humility before a reality of which we are ignorant and which we will find only by mutual aid. That is why a recognition of ignorance is the foundation of philosophy, and of all decent social relations. The foundation of sophistry is egoism, and the will to dominate. The tyrannical state of Republic IX is the explicitation of a rhetorical display, as the Gorgias make clear; and because it is the ruin of human relationships, it is the ruin of language. A tyranny is a polity in which words become meaningless because the fabric of friendship has been destroyed. This egoism, of which Augustine was later to say so much more, is a sort of self-divinization—an

idolatry Augustine was to call it—by virtue of which we seek to lay down the law for others. Like Xerxes or Periander we think ourselves divine, and Apollo gives way to the Furies which are hidden in the lowest strata of the soul.

We should notice how interested Plato and Socrates are in the way we talk. They are connoisseurs of language. The Symposium is a study in the way different people talk. The Phaedrus is a discourse about discourse, demanding from the writer that he have a knowledge of psychology, cosmology, theology—all of which are inseparably connected, a remarkable statement indicating again a deep awareness of the connection between human discourse and the divine discourse. The Gorgias is a study of the moral and political implications of rhetoric and sophistry. Here the connection is made clear. Language is a way in which we influence people, and everything depends on whether we wish to exercise our will to power over them, or to enlist them in a common search for truth. In the first instance, we know what we want; in the second, we know that we don't know. All speaking is political speaking and rhetorical sophistry is a tyrannical way of speaking. It makes a society in which liberty is threatened. An analysis of language must always conclude, therefore, in political analysis, and the teacher of language bears responsibility for the quality of liberty in his community. That is why Shelley could say that the poets are the true legislators. Of the language of the rhetorician Socrates would say what somebody said of Gibbon, that his was not a style in which you could tell the truth.

Liberty requires dialogue. That is why the concern with liberty in our own generation has led to so much emphasis upon dialogue. Socratic dialogue, however, rests upon the confession of ignorance. Thrasymachus in the Republic *knows* what justice is, and the implication of his style is the despotic state, because he thinks he knows what all people want—power! If we want to estimate the relevance of the

Socratic spirit to our modern world we should look at the spirit of certainty which has pervaded the latter. The doubt of Descartes is a revolt against uncertainty, and the beginning of a state of mind for which only clear and certain knowledge will have any value. Theology is banished to the arcana of brute faith. He even wished to construct an ethic, the *morale définitive*—which would have mathematical certainty. Hobbes banished theology from the realm of true ratiocination, because the only exact statements we can make are about the movements of matter. True, these statements have enabled us to put a man on the moon, but have also given rise to suspicions of our lunacy. The Cartesian spirit gave rise to the dogmatic certainty and confidence of the Victorian scientists and rationalists, behind which lies the motive of power over nature. It is instructive to read again a Victorian popular best-seller like Laing's *Modern Science and Modern Thought*. Against them were pitted the religious fundamentalists, who also *knew*. In perspective, it was a family quarrel. Socrates would have diagnosed both parties as sophists, and I wonder whether it has been sufficiently noticed how close is the connection between the rise of modern science in the seventeenth century, and the rise of Puritan fundamentalism, and Catholic puritanism. The theme of Puritanism and the rise of capitalism has, of course, been well discussed. Science made us the masters and possessors of nature through the technology which made capitalism possible. Power over things gave some men power over others, and being right about nature gave the former a certainty about the rectitude of the moralisms by which they entrenched their social status. They must be right about God because he confirmed them in power, and here lies their affinity with the fundamentalists who thought that they had God in their pockets. Is there really a wide gap between the epistemological certainty which Descartes found in the awareness of his ego, and the certainty of their salvation

and the unambiguity and finality of Scripture speaking in the individual heart of contemporary religionists? Both rest on the individualistic premise, and on the claim of men to exert their will to power because they *know*. To that extent, both display, on the Platonic analysis, a sophistic animus. The ego is in the center, buttressed with final announcements.

I shall mention, what is not often mentioned, the element of patriotism in the make-up of Socrates. He died rather than flout the laws of his country. His patriotism is closely connected with his critique of sophistry, and with the memory of the repulse of the Persian attack on Greek liberty. The thinking of the Persians was power-thinking, despotic thinking, therefore sophistic thinking. The Greeks held the Persians at Marathon, and Salamis and Plataea. Of what use was this if power-thinking infiltrated again with the sophists? It is useless to beat Xerxes in battle if his spirit infiltrates again through the egoism, and that means the lawlessness, of the sophists. It was a Greek who said to Xerxes that his people recognized only one master, and that was the law. Salamis was a battle against "wealth and fancied power." But the battle was not yet over and could be lost on the home front. One had to contend against the *adikaios logos*. To love your country and to love liberty is to carry on the fight against wealth and fancied power, and the rhetoric with which it imposes itself. It is to defend language against the Babel of politicians. It is to defend the *polis* against the eruptions of the political and religious forum. It is to talk with, not to talk at. It is to be a community and not a collectivity devouring each other's hearts. Patriotism is the inner dialogue, the mutual friendship, and not a bawling across the frontier at the ego on the other side. Riches and power, as Socrates says in the Republic, and Thucydides demonstrated in his history, do not defend your country. They sell it down the river.

Socrates had as little sympathy as Aristophanes with the condition that pro-

duced a Cleon, and he needled it with the same instrument, humor. Socrates is the great comedian of philosophy. When Alcibiades enters the banquet he asks why Socrates has not been seated next to Aristophanes. What they both had was a love of freedom, and a love of laughter. These loves are closely connected. As Werner Jaeger remarks:

Later Greek philosophy defined man as the only animal capable of laughter, though he was usually described as a talking or thinking animal; thereby they placed laughter on the same plane with thought and speech, as an expression of intellectual freedom.

Aristotle regarded *eutrapelia*, a civilized playfulness, as a virtue, the *eutrapelos* being the man who is the happy mean between the *bomolochos* or hearty buffoon, and the *agroikos*, whose mother's milk went sour. Silenus and Dionysus as well as Apollo are to be found in Socrates. The classical spirit combined both. Perhaps that is why Plato depicts Socrates, amid the spilled wine at the end of the Symposium, arguing that a good dramatist should be a master of both tragedy and comedy. His own life combined both because freedom requires both. Courage and truth may be linked with death, but so may laughter. That Socratic spirit, St. Thomas More, joked on the scaffold. The Athenians did not censor the ribald and outspoken comedies of Aristophanes, because they recognized the role of comedy itself as a censor. It was a guardian of freedom. Let us say that if immorality, including political immorality, is well acted you don't need immorality acts.

Socrates was executed because the politicians and the pietists didn't like to be made ludicrous, and Socrates made them ludicrous in the attempt to plumb his own ignorance. Wisdom has a sense of fun because it recognizes its ignorance. It recognizes the incongruity of our claims to certainty, and the irony of the human situation. That is why it roots in humility, which gives us an eye for the incongruities of

human pretensions, especially the pretensions to know the mind of God. When Augustine founded the *polis* of God on humility he was being Socratic as well as Scriptural. How seriously pride takes itself! How majestic is the Satanic conclave, the cabinet meeting if you like, in Paradise Lost. Or as Nietzsche, who was more Socratic than he realized, remarked: Satan fell by force of gravity.

In this way it is ignorance which safeguards not only wisdom but also science and liberty. It keeps the horizons open, and prevents us from clinging to ideas; and perhaps that is why Plato, in the Republic, says that even the special sciences unrelated to the wisdom by which we love the good, remain at the level of pure belief. And here I may remark that belief is almost the opposite of faith. Faith is the power which enables us to walk in obscurity whereas at any rate Cartesian science, which rebelled against obscurity, sought to make science the means of walking in security. Now you cannot have both security and liberty. To the notion of belief clings the shadow of the will to power both in science and in religion. That is why Cartesian science is dominative science. Belief involves the attitude that the truth is what you would "lie" it were. Descartes lied that science would make us the masters and possessors of nature, which means in the long run, that some men will become the masters and possessors of others. The religious believer, too, wants to walk in certainty, to excogitate ideas and images which will banish the obscurity. He maps out another world which is plastered with his answers to his fears, and his preconceived ideas and wishes. He is always asking whether his ideas are safe. A live idea is never safe because it makes us vulnerable. It opens on to an unfathomable reality of which we are not the masters. The believer believes that he possesses the truth, whereas the truth is a reality which possesses us. In belief we hold on to ourselves, in faith we let ourselves go, and perhaps the phrase "Christian belief" is a contradiction in

terms. Belief may be an enemy to science but faith is not, and when Socrates in the Republic warns the scientist that science itself must transcend its own tendency to become a belief — literally an *orthodoxy* — he was counselling its surrender to that wisdom which alone can secure its liberty, and transform it into an agent of freedom and not of fear to the human race.

This man of the city was also a mystic, and his mysticism was political and rational. The obscurity which he finds is an obscurity not of darkness but of light. It is the light of the intelligence not denied but pushed to its limit, going through language to what is beyond language, and through discursive discussion to what is plainly seen. Socrates poured no contempt on the gods of the city, but this lucidity made him the object of popular suspicion. Philosophers will be objects of suspicion to those who follow the gods of the city not because they teach any strange doctrine but because they are, or should be, men of plain conversation, for it is in plain conversation that the mysteries lie hidden. Like the *idiot*a in the famous dialogue of Nicholas Cusanus they should find their wisdom in the market place.

In the Symposium Diotima describes how you ascend from what you see and say there to a crowning vision of beauty, and with her speech, put in the mouth of Socrates, I can well conclude:

When you have seen this beauty, you will not concern yourself any longer with money or clothes, or with the handsome boys and youths by whom some of you are so overcome that you will endure hunger and thirst to be always in their

presence and to look at them. How are we to describe the happiness of the man who can see sheer Beauty, pure and unblemished, and look on the single divine essence instead of on a beauty which is corrupted with perishable flesh, and colour and impermanent clothing? Do you think that he will live a bad life if he always turns his gaze upwards and becomes immortally united with beauty? There he will look on Beauty with and in the apex of his soul, so that he will always bring forth true goodness instead of the parodies of it because he has pierced through the crust into the essence of truth itself. When he has given birth to and nurtured his real goodness, he will be the beloved of God, and if there is a man who can be clothed in immortality it will be he.

This is not *belief* in immortality. It is the faith of a free man accepting his dignity from the light of the divine obscurity and walking with others because he can stand on his own feet. I trust that there will always be philosophers willing to walk with him—I did not say imitate, but walk with him. There is a Hassidic story which tells that when Rabbi Noah succeeded his father, Rabbi Mordechai, his disciples noted that he did not always do as his father had, and asked him about it. "I act," he replied, "exactly as my father did. He never imitated others, and neither do I."

Socrates, too, was his own man and only in that sense can he be ours. And having made Jew and Greek finally bow to each other before a common vision of what it is to be a man, permit me to make my bow to you, and return to the Agora.