

Crafting Workable Tradition

By John Albert Dragstedt

Men of Athens! You killed the sophist, Socrates, because he had taught the tyrant Critias. Thus spoke Aeschines, one of the canon of the ten Attic orators. Hypereides, another canonized orator, says he was killed for his logoi. This was two generations after a certain Polycrates wrote an attack on Socrates shortly after the trial. Xenophon refers to a number of apologies for Socrates, in addition to the ones by Plato and Xenophon himself. But it was the founder of workable tradition, Socrates who “handed over” the basis for an intentional community of conversant enquirers open to wonder. If the goings-on around Plato’s apology seem very much those of a show trial, one must consider that the stipulations of the amnesty of 403 BC after the defeat of the oligarchic coup (the so-called “thirty tyrants”) made it a capital offense to name such tyrants as Critias, Charmides and Aristoteles who appear in Plato’s dialogues – to say nothing of the regal democrat, Alcibiades.

In order to be worthy of lampooning by – not just Aristophanes but – Eupolis and Ameipseas, Socrates must have been a major public presence and noted as one who attacked the architects of the Athenian empire; Themistocles, Aristeides and Pericles as we recall from the Meno’s conversation with Anytus. And, indeed, in *The Republic*, no possibility exists for anyone to be just as the citizen of an empire, so Socrates claims in Plato to be the only one in Athens really doing politics, conducting or attempting to conduct conversations with those who are willing and not addicted to imperial power.

Thucydides, in trying to diagnose the pathology besetting Greece at the outset of the Peloponnesian War, looks to the breakout of civil strife on Corcyra as a test-tube expression of the precipitous descent into nihilism characterizing civilized Greece. The axis of terms changes: that is, the values attaching to moral dispositions. To quote: “Reckless audacity came to be considered the courage of a loyal supporter; prudent hesitation, specious cowardice; moderation was held to be the cloak for unmanliness; ability to see all sides of a question, incapacity to act on any.” Thucydides is in fact signifying here the four cardinal virtues: courage, wisdom, moderation and justice to

which Plato's Socrates devotes his attention to defining. If one says that speech is product of society, one must say also at the same time that society is product of speech, as well. These virtues are realities without which a society must slither into the nihilism of Thucydides' Corcyraeans. They are not mere stipulations concerning conventions about word use, but concepts. But empire tends to make their exercise without social effect, under conditions where there is no longer social pressure calling citizens to account for their speech. However radical Athenian democracy purported to be in giving administrative power to the very simplest of citizens, nevertheless, such a citizen had to undergo an audit, a rendering of account for his behavior in office at the end of his year. That aspect seems decisively absent from Ronald Suskind's conversation with the functionary at the White House: "We're an empire now. We create our own reality." He left to Suskind and us to bring into words the imperial achievements. The fate of empires to flounder into speechless brutality was one experienced by Socrates' generation in any case, and Plato makes mention of it in the 7th Letter.

The dialogue, Menexenus, which Aristotle knew simply as "the funeral oration" presents a Socrates performing one of the ritual eulogies of soldiers who have died on campaign. The unqualified praise of an Athens which always stood for justice and fair dealing with neighbors reduces Platonists and historians to perplexity, so wildly incompatible does it seem to be with what Socrates elsewhere (The Meno) says of the morality of the Athenian empire. But nothing Socrates mentions depends on Athens having an empire: on extorting two-thirds of state expenses from "allies" for the sake of Pericles' Parthenon and Erechtheum. For Pericles, in his funeral oration, one dies for Athens as a lover of its beauty. For Socrates, as a friend of its justice. Thus, the whole point of Plato's exercise is that this hypothetical Socrates is praising the dead who have fallen in a war with Corinth five plus years after his trial and execution. The just Athens is one which would allow Socrates his place among its citizens and he would still be alive in 394 BC, when the Corinthian war was beginning.

The democratic Chaerephon then elicited from Apollo at Delphi the claim that no one was wiser than Socrates, which might have been taken to mean that all Athenians are equally unwise; but Socrates interprets it to mean he is wisest and that wisdom is

knowledge of the good and beautiful. It is his arraignment of civic leaders on these issues, which he refers to as the concealed inspiration of his accusers. Would he be told nowadays to respect diversity and that the good and beautiful are relative terms stipulating “values” determined by cultural proclivities? But such calls for diversity presuppose and are parasitic upon the unity that a society has achieved already and is in a position to do such calling, since only a unity can emit such a cry for diversity. To be sure, the Socrates of the Republic would not have been requiring definitions of the good and beautiful in so far as they preside over and above the visible and intelligible realms, but the response to the invitation to an enquiry would be diagnostic of the degree of penetration of sophistry into the deliberations of even such foes of sophists as Anytus.

In The Apology Socrates mentions as charges advanced against sophistic intellectuals, along with their concerning themselves with things above the world and atheism, that they make the stronger argument weaker. He never responds to that charge, and it really formulates the intellectual task of “exhausting the available means of persuasion,” as Aristotle puts it; since if both litigators are equally armed in this regard, the truth itself has sufficient inner strength to prevail.

As intellectual stance, short of being a theory of sophistry, one may instance Gorgias’s triplet: “Nothing is. If it were, it couldn’t be known. If it could be known, it couldn’t be communicated.” Just to look at the argumentation against the ability of speech (*logos*) to communicate will enable the point to be made that the alternative to sophistry is dialectic. So, for Gorgias *logos* is caused by the sense organs taking in data which make *logos* revelatory. It isn’t that *logos* makes the data revelatory. The model is thus of an individualistic origin of speech, which does indeed run into total inability to explain the everyday reality of human discourse, and thus why there ever was in evolution any advantage in a vocal apparatus which is, for example, endangered by fish bones being lodged in it, an outcome spared less articulate primates. The recent proposal to separate off Gorgias and Thrasymachus from the ranks of sophists on the grounds that they were genuine teachers of the craft of rhetoric need not detain us, since what matters is the consequent devaluing of speech as a locus of truth. And that is what Plato has Socrates confronting as the decisive political question. Robbing mankind

theoretically of the capacity to deliberate and possibly say the truth about the future can have only the direst consequences.

Reflecting on their previous conversation in which Socrates has seen his hypothesis of ideas as basis for determinate speech destroyed, Parmenides notes, in the dialogue named after him, that without suchlike ideas the power of conversation (dialectic) which they have been deploying all along would have been impossible, since they would have had nothing common upon which to fix their attention as communication proceeded. No positive model of speech or location of some organ of linguistic competence survives Parmenides' dialectic, though one might feel that Socrates' introduction of time as the day which is one and many was worthy of less brutal dismissal than Parmenides accords it. "We are a conversation." As Hoelderlin writes: "And hear of one another." No inconcussible foundation exists, then, upon which to stake out terrain from which to drive out the gods, if not with pitchforks or with strings and quarks, since we must always find the logos as such at work prior to any individual attempt to control it as a mere tool of communication.

Aristotle gives credit to Socrates for induction and definition as significant contributions. But one must feel that Aristotle lacks the urgency concerning definition as the indispensable weapon against sophistry as a universal threat in Plato's experience. It was never that sophists were convincing as such, but that they destroyed to begin with the seriousness of all speech as access to truth. As doctors have drugs, sophists have words as weapons. Socrates could proclaim the necessity of being boring, of always saying the same things about the same things, whereas the verbal performers could display their eloquence all the way to the Sicilian expedition, or other military follies.

One might feel that Plato intends the dialogue "Phaedo" to represent Socrates' philosophical legacy as assignment of outstanding tasks. After his autobiographical rejection of his talent as an investigator of nature, he leaves as an account of cause, his "simpleminded" (as he has it) version whereby, for example, beauty is some sort of cause of beautiful things. Efforts to concretize the causal relationship without such an identity relationship don't distinguish logically between presuppositions and causes.

Philosophers of science have been disappointed and even repelled by Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics*, but perhaps some of their dismay may be alleviated by considering these treatises as responses to Socrates' challenge. A modern philosopher of science in a quest for causes would look to events, which would be sufficient (but not necessary) conditions for their effects; would precede temporally their effects and be bound to their effects by natural laws. One pictures the cue-ball on Kant's billiard table carrying out Newton's laws of motion as an event-vehicle or event-causer. But Aristotle's causes (or 'reasons for blame') don't come from some picturing or any picture or representation, but from a conversation or deliberation and are formulated as answers to the four kinds of question that yield knowledge: does a certain something happen to something? (so does eclipse happen to the moon?) Why does that something happen to our something? (Why does the moon suffer eclipse?) Does eclipse exist or happen? What is eclipse? These four questions can be rendered untechnically and casually as the that, the why, the if something is and the what something is. A similar closeness to conversation is revealed by the terms for the four kinds of cause. The "what it was all along;" the "what things being so made it necessary that this thing be;" the "what primary things put it in motion;" and "for the sake of what." An extraordinary linguistic effort to avoid manufacturing a technical vocabulary like formal, material, efficient and final causes! It seems proper to dialectical philosophers like Plato and Aristotle that they avoid making up a private language as if it were a kind of refutation of the unspoken but primordial claim of philosophy to be rendering a purer meaning to the words not of the tribe but of the society, under Heraclitus' admonition that the *logos* is common.

Aristotle accords brief mention to induction as the other source of knowledge alongside demonstration. But instead of discussing rules and regulations for extracting inductive knowledge – some analogue to Mill's methods, he immediately turns to a discussion of the centrality of the middle term as the target of discovery. The decisive question becomes: is there within human speech a vehicle for conveying the identity relationship, which lack caused Socrates to abandon natural science for *logoi*, arguments in which he despaired of anything more interesting than that beauty is the cause of beauty. Aristotle to the rescue points to the middle term as the inner logic of all

scientific inquiry: of any and all of our four questions. Not who? (won the Oscars) or even Why is there something rather than nothing? Since one wouldn't know what would count as a cause. As an answer to such a question Aristotle would respond to Socrates by syllogizing: all beauty is appearance of wealth. All jet-setting academics exude beauty. Therefore they exude the appearance of wealth, valid only if the term 'beauty' has remained unaltered from major to minor premise. It must withstand the flux of time and of neurosynapses. And we have merely an argument, not a demonstrated truth until our premise uniting beauty and wealth is anchored in the immediate truth of a principle. Then one would have a full logical display provided by the interweaving of species and genera, of a truth with necessity. This may be taken as an example of workable tradition contributing to a society of speakers able to give an account of their speech.

Why does Aristotle devote so much attention to geometric proofs in Book One, surely the most implausible aspect of his theory? Syllogistic reasoning can only be dragged into Euclid with forbearance, given that the mental effort goes largely into inventing the diagram, especially in the Thales proof of the angle in a hemisphere being a right angle. The model in presence of scientificity was Plato's involving mathematics. In any case, Aristotle quickly produces examples of biological knowledge in Book 2. If you have the answer to how an animal moves, gets water, gets food, eliminates waste and reproduces, you can claim knowledge of that animal based upon principles even if they aren't mathematical axioms.

Since we have mentioned John Stuart Mill, it may be useful to notice how alien his nominalist Empiricism is to the generation of a working tradition. Since a society is composed of individuals, according to him the laws governing the society must be reducible to the laws governing the individual. This reductionism is incompatible with dialectic. It allows the subject-object divide to arise and render the concept of truth indeterminate: the myth of the adequation of subject and object arises; of the becoming "equal" of the extended and non-extended. This is part of the decorative 'tradition' of one classic work reminding us of another, despite their incompatibility and

unworkability. The tradition that can survive barbarism is a working one, not a decorative one.

The power of Plato and Aristotle is such that philosophers keep returning to them, as music lovers to Bach and Mozart; nor is the philosophical tradition any more able to think them away than is the musical tradition able to imagine excising Bach and Mozart. So how can we account for the apparent ease with which the Hellenistic schools were able to dominate public space, pushing the Academy and Lyceum into the shadows for 500 years? Now Epicurus advises us to “Flee tradition (*paideia* in Greek) hoisting full sail!” The skeptics have a list of quibbles about the reliability of sense data but are devoid of further significance. But the Stoics construct a doctrine negating universals on grounds of materialism and their proliferating terminological inventiveness achieves a certain domination of the terrain of discussion. They might seem to have a positive relationship to some sort of tradition, whereas skeptics and Epicureans could only regard a tradition as an assemblage of snares and illusions. And it is the Renaissance of Stoicism in the 16th century which is so important in the tangling up of incomplete traditions, that characterizes the paralysis or paresis of modern attempts to generate an intellectually fecund orientation to the philosophical past. So Platonism can stand for a certain error of hypostatizing, and Aristotelianism, for the authoritarianism that only talks but never listens, even to nature itself.

The editor of the Atlantic, in presenting his “anxious, twitchy, phobic (somehow successful) life” tells us what he has tried: individual psychotherapy, family therapy, group therapy, cognitive-behavioral therapy, rational emotive therapy, acceptance and commitment therapy, hypnosis, meditation, etc., and ends with Stoic philosophy. The Platonic-Aristotelian account of truth as the unity of concepts expressing the unity in nature or the separation similarly expressing a negation in nature must be rejected by a consistent materialism. The material reality of Stoic truth allows of validation through accretion of power. Spiritual exercises enable one to master one’s emotions – which are all fallacious judgments, and replace them with non-self-destructive stances. So knowledge is power, as the Stoics and their followers have it. No, says Plato. Knowledge, if arduously achieved, will only clarify a decision regarding whether one should seek

power. It has been pointed out that in the *Laws*, no mention is made of the Peloponnesian War, but much of the Persian Wars. Perhaps the dramatic time of the dialogue is the interval after the War, but before the transfer of the treasury of the Delian League to Athens, and the commencement of the Athenian Empire in 454 BC. The Spartan and Cretan interlocutors are able to listen to the Athenian guest-friend hold forth on constructive politics only because Athens has not revealed its Imperial appetite, and concomitant loss of deliberative wisdom in the quest for the glory of power, culminating in the moral wreckage of the 30 Tyrants and execution of Socrates, the diagnostician of the ills of Athenian democracy, as if he were thereby an oligarchic supporter.

But do Plato and Aristotle offer a way of life? Maybe the unexamined life is not livable for a man, but perhaps the examined one is even less so. Aristotle lists three eligible lives: the philosopher, the political, and the squandering kind. The first two correlate to unchangeable being and changeable respectively, whereas the third seems devoid of account. But the political – or polis-building kind may include all the productive ways citizens had of self-realization through art or crafts, as they were therewith building community. But the Stoic might say to Aristotle that his student, Alexander destroys cities (Thebes, Tyre), so far is he from granting them any ultimate warrant. You, Aristotle, may be ravished by the wonder elicited by the subtle dependencies manifested by some critter washed up near the Hellespont, and the Lyceum is welcome to recruit on that basis. We, the Stoic porch, offer salvation from the anxiety of indeterminacy, as we show that the appearance of deliberation is illusory.

Chrysippus, the indispensable Stoic, was famed for having cited almost the entirety of Euripides' "Medea" in his attack on the conventional understanding of deliberation. Her lines, cited throughout antiquity, as she has resolved to kill her children in order to cause maximal grief to Jason, are "And I understand what sort of evil I intend to do, but self-assertion (or 'sense of self' *thymos*) is stronger than my deliberations, which is precisely the cause of the ills for mortals." Medea's sense of self-worth rejects picturing herself in the unheroic role of a discarded wife frittering away a dishonored existence, and this picturing preempts all the conceptual work in her

deliberating. The Stoics conclude that the deliberating was really just rationalizing a choice made by the leading element (the hegemonikon) of her soul, and the speech competence/organ (separate from the hegemonikon) had merely a decorative role. The Socrates of Republic, Book 4, could never admit this lining up of self against logos, but would speak of a spitefulness picturing itself as self, through expressing its power as appetite. Recall the vignette of Leontius in Republic, Book IV unable to resist the shameful appetite to gaze upon rotting corpses. His deliberations have failed to save his self-respect, so he draws upon the rhetorical stance of blaming his eyes in their shamelessness for a choice which seems to discredit his self's ability to rise to the challenge of logos, of deliberation. He blames his eyes for his failure to give priority to concept over picturing, salvaging what he can of his tremulous self. Socrates could agree with Aristotle that representation always accompanies acts of reason: one represents a major premise above a minor premise, but picturing will not help speech give an account of itself. Standing firmly in the battle-line is not identical to courage; nor is walking with dignity identical to moderation; nor is returning a borrowed sword identical to justice. The task carried on by Socrates was to penetrate such representational thinking to the logos in presence, ultimately as definition versus representation.

The completely deterministic system of the Stoics cannot formulate such a task. Logos is the material set-up of the universe, and words are found as roots like radishes or rutabaga: material etonyms which the speech organ combines. Though Medea's deliberations were ultimately unable to sway her appetite, while they were in play they presupposed the modalities of possibility and necessity called upon by anyone envisioning a course of action as a causal sequence. Thus it is the children who offer the poisoned clothes, since their very status as potential hostages will render the gifts more likely of acceptance. An actual possibility leading to a necessary chain of events. But these modalities are so embedded in ordinary language that it is impossible to extirpate all words implying ability and necessity. This is a strength of Aristotle's logic, which comes from speech, not imported from outside by representation. Of course, Aristotle's modal logic may then resist formulation, but one wants to say, so much the worse for formulae. We have to be able to speak of some one having an art as truly endowed with

a property, whether he is exercising it or not at any particular moment. The Stoics sacrifice truth for consistency by importing a definition of the implication symbol from representation through irrational strength of will, by decision. One must decide what relationship is to be expressed by the implicator, a temporal sequence, a connexion of events, a combination thereof or something else. The abandonment of speech necessitates living with the paradoxes that if it didn't rain, the implicator cannot be denied whether the streets are wet or dry.

Stoicism has always had an appeal to soldiers under a chain of command, since for the military indeterminacy is associated with the slack and undisciplined civilian world; but one might ask how a teaching so wildly incompatible with everyday experience could have held center stage for 500 years, vanishing rapidly only after the time of Marcus Aurelius. Engels writes of Christianity as a vulgarization of Stoicism, and St. Paul, to be sure, does cite a Stoic author, but the Gospels have more to do with freedom than with adaptation to a world of materialist determinacy. But for the Stoics, the elimination of ideas and universals was the primary philosophical task to be achieved at any cost. And, granted, in crafting our workable tradition the accomplishment of Stoic propositional logic must be brought along – but in a status of subordination to a term logic, which, by being given with speech itself, retains its relationship to truth and the good. Propositional logic has no relationship to the truth and the good.

The system of Stoicism was evidently demolished by Plutarch and Alexander of Aphrodisias, but the Platonic tradition stressed mathematics to such a degree that the quadrivium (and trivium) are now specifically granted to the Platonists, since the Stoics always included empirical crafts (medicine, architecture) in their educational program. The actual logical display of a Euclidean proof involves at least the implications of propositional logic. Aristotle's presentations, indeed, seem extraneous to the work of the proof. Clearly, there is no basis for denying the utility of propositional logic for the purpose of establishing consistency, but it becomes the basis for denying authority to the Platonic/Aristotelian tradition through forced nominalist interpretations of terms, reducing term logic to a special case of propositional logic, as if the mediation of a

middle term could be represented by symbols. This abstracting of logic from speech and deriving it from representation provides the basis for the Stoics' denial of any authority to logos as speech, and consequent reduction of the philosophic community over time to source of unbinding decoration without informing power.

To resume our narrative: after the middle Platonist and revived Aristotelian demolition of Stoicism as an all-encompassing system, one notes the concern to generate a competing all-encompassing unity of the demonic Aristotle, master of knowledge of the demonic forces of nature, with the divine Plato, presiding over the Greater Mysteries of mind and mathematics. Some kind of deification of Euclid led the Neoplatonists into a method of modeling philosophy on deductivity from axioms, in the way that Euclid formed his definitions with regard to their later employment in proofs, rather than with regard to the immediate apprehension of students, and the living relation to logos struggled under the compulsion of system building. Nevertheless, a continuity in the curriculum of at least 12 Platonic dialogues as trivium plus quadrivium and Aristotle's works was maintained as a pedagogic ideal. Then the reevaluation of the Stoic teaching or its rediscovery provided a terrain on which to unleash the power of nominalist flattening. So Descartes advised that one get one's training in logic from mathematics (not from Aristotle, that is). The method of deducing logically from axioms pushes the invention or discovery of those dogmata, as the Stoics termed them, into the realm of the speechless. One takes the drug hellebore to subdue this "context of discovery," as the logical positivists call it. A celebrated mathematician is said to have made productive use of methamphetamines. The account this approach gives of itself is fecundity within the terms agreed upon. So Euclid presents five requests which, if granted, enable him to generate fascinating arguments. He never claims practical applicability to space, for which he has no word.

The culmination of this triumphal march of speechless deductivity is attained in the status of "Formal Logic" in Kant, who runs term and propositional logic together, apparently because they both present deductivity. Speech and the development of consciousness within it play no role in Kant, and for this he must be praised for such a demonstration that there exists no path from such a "formal" logic to logos as speech.

The ideological individualism and ethical rigor follows consequentially. Kant had read the “Phaedo” at least, but had even less of a relationship to Aristotle, “that prince of Empiricists.” Rather than being the “total grinder” himself, it was the Enlightenment thinkers who had ground up society into possessive individuals, though one may have to stick ‘moral sentiments’ on them to provide the axiom that yields such an empirical notions as a nation as the sum of citizens, politically speaking. But the cause and nature of wealth is the labor process supporting society, economically speaking, and it is Hegel who grasps this contradictory reality of an antagonistic labor market sustainable only by a state of philosophical bureaucrats whose esprit de corps enables them to dismiss the temptations provided by the revolving door into the so-called private sector, with the resulting lament: Who will regulate the regulators themselves? But at the heart of this construct of Hegel’s is a purely positive view of labor: Under the auspices of previous modes of production, whether slave or feudal, labor had the final cause or purpose of freeing society from the immediate grip of nature. The more granaries one could fill, the more liberated society would be from the threat of lean years. But under capitalism, the working-class works its way into ever greater dependency, creating an ever widening polarization with social power accruing to the owners of the means of production rather than to philosophical bureaucrats, with ever more dire consequences for the social fabric. But Hegel’s conceptualizations at least elevate him above nominalistic interpreters of social reality, Smith and Ricardo, enabling him to formulate the prerequisites for a state which would be rational: able to sustain itself through an antagonistic labor process, if only that process could be rendered benign and life-supporting in its results.

Marx clearly saw his work as a corrective and supplement to Hegel, rather than an independent philosophy with its own principles. Aided by a fortuitous reading of Hegel’s Logic, he was in a position to generate a “Critique of Economic Categories” or “System of Bourgeois Economics displayed critically.” It is at the same time display of the system and, through the display, critique thereof. So we are presented with Capital itself as the social agent enslaving mankind to its will to reproduce itself, and accomplishing a selection of just those Stoic minds that will accept the axioms of the capitalist mode of production as the preconditions for rational thought, understood as deductivity from axioms To challenge them becomes unreason, the irresponsible

whining at the determinism of TINA, *there is no alternative*. Marx's sneer at philosophers who have merely interpreted the world, as if it were a sacred text, touches the Hellenistic philosophies but hardly the Aristotle of the Politics, Ethics and economics. And Aristotelian modalities pervade Marx's own work. Labor power is an actual potential, effectively quantified for market purposes not by a mythic mainframe, but by society's golden voice: a social theory of value, with society able to reject what it no longer wants, however much labor time be expended. None of this is the "precision in the dream," of a minor post-Ricardian or any kind of Ricardian. And Marx's achievement as revealing Political Economy and even more so Economics as the alienated discourse of Capital as agent makes straight the way for mindful deliberation about production. So the oxymoron 'Marxist Economist' must be banished. His display (Darstellung) that production under the guidance of capital must lead by its very development of ever more capital-intensive labor processes under the whip of competition to a decline in the rate of profit which no "animal spirits" of investors can surmount. Hence, the maintenance and flourishing of culture rather than of competition requires altering a mode of production which engenders the barbarism specific to imperialism, whereby a citizen cannot do "the things of himself" in the Republic's account of justice, or even know what they are, as he gives support perforce to the looting and polluting of the planet. As capital accumulates into ever bigger amounts, it becomes a negative-externality socializing device, beyond the grip of Hegelian bureaucrats, as the functions of the state itself become targets of profit-taking through privatization. Marx could not foresee the obstacle to deliberation posed by the high-tech sophistry of capital invested in means of communication. A truth emergency! to the point that trust in suchlike tribunes of public discourse becomes diagnostic of short-term memory loss. True, the hope that bourgeois society was not simply doomed was never based upon confidence in the virtues of workers, but upon their increasing awareness of a common enslavement overcoming the atomization effected by the nature of the production process. Just as Socrates attempted to maintain discussion with those citizens of the Athenian Empire who could still prescind from power concerns in their thinking and simply think, so Lenin's party sought to do analogous work under the altered conditions of the capitalist barbarism of the Great War, conceptualizing the path to the worker's state, under the guns of imperialism.

So it was back into Aristotle and Hegel that Lenin was thrown by the outbreak of the Great War, and collapse of leadership pretences almost throughout the movement calling itself Marxist. When he bursts out that no one has understood Marx, he is including not only himself but also Engels, to say nothing of the theoreticians of labor who were supplementing Marx with ethics from Kant, science from Mach, theology from the God-builders, et. al. To lead mankind to its next step, a leadership must have done all the home work required, and not merely to have won a popularity contest. Finally, Trotsky saw it as his major theoretical task to clarify the legacy of Lenin, and got as far as 80 pages into Hegel's Logic before being sidelined by developments out of his control. His admonition to his followers was to study dialectic, "nothing was more important than that." With the ending of exploitation, the genius of mankind would be released: "Aristotle, Goethe, Marx himself will just be the average."

The intent here has been to craft a tradition that one can work with in the sense of thinking freely, unaffected by ideological and faddish ends; and that has entailed a defense of Plato and Aristotle as the founders of the dialectical approach, which avoids depriving mankind of access to truth, the threat posed by the discord with the tradition created by the pretensions and uncritical acceptance of the Stoic teaching. As citizen of the leading imperialist polis of his time, Socrates experienced how Empire addles the wits of the citizens, requiring of them an ability to deliberate which they failed to provide, being unable to conceptualize alternative policies, and buffeted by the representations of fear-mongering demagogues. The empire is dangerous to give up. Truly, the only politics was to maintain the logos among such youth as could listen. The corruption of the best, Critias, Charmides and even Alcibiades, into the worst was his experience of empire. When one can only try to take refuge from a storm of hail behind a wall, it may have been legitimate for Plato to abandon such an empire for the grove of Academus. To the charge of Eurocentrism, one must aver that only the dialectical tradition had to fight it out with Sophistry, but so far from Athenians being a chosen people, as soon as Justinian closed the schools, then scholars were greeted in Persia, and the translations into Arabic thereafter should have disqualified ravings about a clash of civilizations. As for the charge of logocentrism perhaps one can only point to

the human condition. To be sure, linguists adopt the stance of a subject confronting objects, but they can't put away speech as they may put away their books. The logos is closer to us than is our own psychology. Only inside speech is anything outside speech. As much as to say that no prepositions master the dialectic of logos. Only within the logos is anything without the logos. The Stoics say "Wonder at nothing. Freedom is knowledge of necessity." A workable tradition is one whose ability is a specifically Aristotelian one: able to work and be worked into a liberating of mind which puts logos as hegemon (leader), in Theaetetus' formulation, rather than separating them Stoic-wise into two separate organs. We are free to wonder at the similarity of the great imperial generals, Pericles and Kimon, with two girls delousing each other: they are all engaged in neutralizing animals, which are in their way. The logos frees us to put girls and generals into a species of the genus: animal catcher. The primacy of logos over representation is illustrated by such definitional diaereses as those of Sophist and Politicus. The divisions must be led by concepts: a mere cranking out of distinctions in accordance with one's picturing of angler or sophist leads nowhere. The requisite anamnesis can only be driven by prior logos. Propositional logic prioritizes representations (leading to symbols) and it is a symbolizing of them which enables a deductivity which presents itself as rationality. But it is devoid of the commitment to good and truth about cause engendered by logos. It is useless to demand truth and good from propositional logic. Nothing gives what it does not have.

In conclusion, the decisive status of Plato and Aristotle must be maintained since it is their thinking that provides the basis for a community which lives by imposing the constraint upon members that they accept the adamantine bonds of the logos, and can pass the audit of providing reasons or causes for their claims. Reclaiming the right to think from universal sophistry is the work not of an individual alone, but of an individual armed with a tradition of accountable speech.