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CHAPTER FIVE

Active partnership:
Socrates and the Art of Seduction

Tomas did not realize at the time that metaphors are dangerous. Metaphors are not to be trifled with. A single metaphor can give birth to love.

Milan Kundera (1984)

What is marriage but prostitution to one man instead of many?

Angela Carter (1984)

One of the more bizarre achievements in Socrates’ philosophical career is his successful seduction of the most beautiful woman of Athens: the hetaera Theodote.¹ When hearing from his companions that Theodote’s beauty is “beyond words”, Socrates proposes that they go see this lady for themselves, for evidently mere hearsay does not suffice to fully know such beauty. In the course of this visit, Socrates smoothly seduces the courtesan into a genuine Socratic conversation on the topic of how to hunt for friends and how to incite desires in others. At the end of the encounter, Theodote desires Socrates to stay with her and to come back to her as often as he can. But Socrates declines for he is a busy man with lots of “girlfriends”. She come and visit him. She will, she says, but he should welcome her. Socrates closes the conversation with the enigmatic words: “I will, unless there is some dearer girl with me”.

¹ An early version of this chapter has been presented at the Europaeum Classics Colloquium in Bologna (November 2008) and at the Letterensymposium Lust & Verleiding (November 2008). I have benefited greatly from feedback by Angelo Giavatto.
This encounter, reported in Xenophon’s *Memorabilia* (III.xi), has provoked a variety of reactions from scholars, ranging from outright disgust\(^2\) to delight for finally showing us a Xenophon capable of complexity and irony. By and large the episode appears to challenge common preconceptions of Xenophon’s Socratic work as pedestrian and prone to apologetic overkill, as its paradoxical nature does not straightforwardly fit in with the overall didactic strategy of the *Memorabilia* and reminds us more of the delicate irony of Plato’s Socrates than its Xenophontic counterpart.

A range of interpretations has been proposed,\(^3\) all of them somehow focusing on what may be termed a role reversal, or in any case a paradoxical relation, between Socrates and Theodote.\(^4\) However, a very elementary fact that tends to

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\(^{2}\) KIERKEGAARD (1841), XIII.120.


\(^{4}\) Several interpretations focus on the role reversal between Theodote and Socrates: in terms of the economy of looking, i.e. how Socrates gains control by becoming the object of the gaze and of desire (GOLDHILL (1998)), or in terms of erotic irony, i.e. how Socrates by pretending to be in love makes the object of his amorous attentions fall in love with him (HADOT 1995, DORION 2006). This “erotic irony” is understood as an extension of Socrates’ dialectic irony, his disavowal of knowledge that provokes his interlocutor to answer his questions. However, as Xenophon’s Socrates openly professes to be a teacher and never avows ignorance the way his Platonic counterpart does, this type of irony or pretending is virtually absent in Xenophon’s Socratic works. (DORION 2006, KIERKEGAARD 1841, VLASTOS 1991, NEHAMAS 1998, 45). Some other interpretations that read the episode as a demonstration of the principle of self-restraint (ἐγκράτεια), highlight Socrates’ capability to resist the courtesan’s physical beauty and his own physical desire (E.g. NARY (2004), DORION (2003)), sometimes in contrast to Pericles who was not capable of such control when confronted with Aspasia (E.g. TILG (2004)). This ἐγκράτεια as celibacy may be too limited for Xenophon’s didactic purposes. Although Xenophon’s Socrates does acknowledge a soul/body-opposition (E.g. *Mem*. IV.i.2), he rarely does so to the extent that the realm of the body and the physical is dismissed as secondary, subservient or hostile to that of the soul—with the exception of his notorious speech in *Symp*. VIII.6-41. (See HINDLEY (2004) and THOMSEN (2002) for a discussion of this speech.) As Xenophon’s Socrates gives much weight to the proper care of the body and actually shows relatively little interest in the soul as an independent entity, scholars are still divided over the question if and to what extent Socrates actually propagates absolute celibacy. See e.g. THOMSEN (2002) and HINDLEY (2004) for subtle and balanced accounts of Socrates’ erotic doctrine in Xenophon’s works. See BUFFIERE (1980), 404ff. and THORNTON (1997), 103 for more anti-hedonistic interpretations of the Socratic sexual attitude (at least as far as same sex contacts are concerned), and VLASTOS (1991) and DOVER (1978) for the sublimation doctrine. The key-passages are the mentioned speech in *Symp*. VIII where Socrates declares the superiority of “love of soul” over love of body and the programmatic passage in *Mem*. Liii.8 where Socrates is said to avoid sexual relations (ἀφροδίσια) with beautiful people for fear his self-control may get compromised.
be overlooked in readings of the Theodote-episode is that this is a dialogue on \textit{φιλία} and \textit{χάρις}—two terms that evoke ideals of long-term reciprocity—instead of, say, \textit{ἔρως},\textsuperscript{5} desire, that in Classical Athens is clearly conceptualized as an asymmetrical bond, between an active and a passive partner, and hence allows more easily for a reading in terms of role reversal.\textsuperscript{6} If Socrates’ concerns in this episode lie overtly in the interpersonal realm, what exactly is the significance of a role reversal? What is the point in reversing the roles in a reciprocal engagement?

In the previous chapter we have seen how in Xenophon’s representation, the demarcation between commercial sophistics and Socratic \textit{φιλία} is organized along the opposition \textit{between the short and the long term}, between the immediate gratification impersonated by the businessman and sophist on the one hand and the ideology of \textit{ἐγκράτεια} practised by the estate manager, the philosopher and anyone who grounds his conduct in an understanding of the long-term good on the other hand.

In this chapter we shall elaborate on a related opposition central to Xenophon’s moral thought: the active/passive-dichotomy. To Xenophon, for interaction to qualify as moral exchange it not only needs to be embedded in a long-term order of things; moral exchange requires \textit{active participation} by both exchange partners. This ideology of active partnership is contrasted with forms of exchange that reduce both partners to passive consumers: business transactions, sophistic demonstrations of knowledge and prostitution—as opposed to estate management, philosophical dialectics and Socratic \textit{φιλία}. Throughout Xenophon’s Socratic works, this principle of active partnership is articulated and shaped through a series of terminological inquiries and paradoxical metaphors: the demolition of the “euphemistic” use of \textit{χάρις}—

\textsuperscript{5} In contrast to Plato’s treatment of the paradoxical relation of Socrates with erotics (beauty, desire, seduction, love), in Xenophon’s \textit{Memorabilia} \textit{ἔρως} hardly seems to be a significant concept. In the few isolated discussions of erotic desire and sexual contacts in the \textit{Memorabilia} the term used is \textit{άφοροδίσω}, the context invariably being \textit{ἐγκράτεια}. (I.i.1, I.i.2, I.iii.8, I.iii.15, I.iv.12, I.v.1, II.1.3, II.1.4, II.1.5, II.ii.4, IV.v.9).

\textsuperscript{6} \textsc{Dover} (1978) and \textsc{Foucault} (1984), followed by \textsc{Halperin} (1997) and \textsc{Winkler} (1990) remain foundational works. A recently reappraisal is offered by \textsc{Davidson} (2007) who criticizes \textsc{Dover, Foucault} and \textsc{Halperin} as overly “phallocentric” in their undue emphasis on penetration as an intrinsically unidirectional act.
vocabulary, the imagery of hunting, the semantic field of desire and seduction and the metaphor of magic charms. All these fields prescribe a clear-cut divisions of roles, between a pursuing and acting partner and a passive partner undergoing pursuit and treatment. All these fields are reformed by Socrates to underscore the point that all moral dealings with fellow persons require active partnership.

1. **The Socratic Principle:** *pay it forward*

The principle of active partnership is latently present in two passages discussed in the previous chapter: in Socrates’ recounting of Prodicus’ myth of Heracles and in his encounter with Antiphon the sophist. In his debate with Antiphon on the topic of fee taking, Socrates manages to disambiguate his interaction with fellow-Athenians by drawing an analogy with the exploitation of physical beauty: a sophist is to a philosopher as a prostitute is to an honorable ἐρώμενος. Sophists and prostitutes deliver to everyone (τῷ βούλομένῳ) for pay; philosophers and ἐρώμενοι carefully select honorable partners and make them their φίλος. The analogy with erotics is, as we have argued in the previous chapter, not only chosen for its moral charge, but also because it highlights something about exchanges: the opposition between commercial or commodified sex and erotics embedded in long-term bonds is a socially accepted distinction between seemingly isomorphous exchanges. It illustrates clearly how things can *look* the same but *in reality* be very different—a suitable analogy to dissociate Socrates from the sophists.

In the case of sex, the demarcation between commodified sex and sex in the contexts of long-term relations was widely supported in popular morality. The precise *ideological underpinning* of such demarcations, between prostitute and beloved boy, between sophist and philosopher, depends on larger ideological issues. To Xenophon’s Socrates, the differences hinge on the **Principle of Active Partnership**. If we attempt to map the parts of the sex-

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7 Xen. *Mem.* I.vi.13 ff. See Chapter Four, Section I.
8 Explaining the analogy merely by pointing to the “social stigma” of prostitution is in a sense question-begging: *why* should prostitution be stigmatizing if being a boy-lover is not?
wisdom-analogy, we see how Socrates destabilizes traditional divisions of roles: if the sophist Antiphon is compared to a πόρνος, a male prostitute who sells himself to anyone; Socrates is, in a rather off-hand way, cast in the role of the ἐρωμένος, the beloved object of seduction. In traditional terminology, Socrates, as the ἐρωμένος, is the passive partner—a paradoxical phenomenon that we are acquainted with from Plato’s Socrates⁹ and that serves the didactic purpose of preparing the conversation partner for an active role in philosophical dialectics.

In Xenophon’s Socratic works this protreptic move not only functions on a methodological level. On the level of contents as well, the Principle of Active Partnership is firmly embedded in the larger didactic program in the Memorabilia, that is all about self-mastery, physical endurance and self-sufficiency. Not only does the foundational principle of self-mastery, ἐγκράτεια, entail an opposition between long-term goods and short-term interests (as Prodicus’ myth has it); ἐγκράτεια also dictates how to “deal with” or “use” (χοησθαι) the world around us, and other persons in particular: by active partnership, actively investing in a well-functioning reciprocal relationship by taking initiatives, by “paying it forward”.

An example we have already encountered is the mother, the paradigmatic φίλος who practices the imperative of active partnership to the extreme:¹⁰ making maximum investments in an insecure future by nurturing a child who does not know her yet, is not aware of her generosity and is not capable to guarantee that he will ever reciprocate the favor. A mother’s χάρις is not a reaction to a preceding gift or favor, but unconditional as there are no expectations of return in the short run and only very insecure ones in the remote future. Although the case of the mother is an extreme example, other relationships work along similar lines:

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⁹ Edmonds (2000), 271. Cf. Halperin (1990). The most notable example occurs in Plato’s Symposium, where Alcibiades accuses Socrates of “deceit” (ἀπάτη) as he “pretended to be an ἐραστής, but turned out to be rather the object of desire” (Pl. Symp. 217-8) and at the end of the Charmides where the desirable young Charmides has turned into the pursuing party, desiring the company of Socrates, his midwife. Cf. Reece (1988), 69-70. See section 5.1 below.

¹⁰ See Chapter Two Section 1.
If you want your neighbor to help you in times of need, display good intent (εὐνοία) and offer help (εὐνοϊκῶς βοηθεῖν) to him first; if you attach value to the goodwill (εὐνοία) of your travel companions and shipmates, be attentive (ἐπιμελεῖσθαι) to them. The common denominator is the notion of active partnership: if you want a good neighbor, be a good neighbor; if you want a friend, be a friend. Taking the lead breeds εὐνοία, precisely because it signifies εὐνοία itself.

Similar examples recur when Socrates advises Chaereocrates to make his brother Chaerephon an asset instead of a liability by making Chaereocrates aware of his latent knowledge of the principle of active partnership, as the principle, whether with neighbours, ξένοι or other φίλοι, is very simple: make the first move (II.iii.14: πρότερος εὖ ποιεῖν). If you want to be invited to dinner by an acquaintance, you should invite him first. If you want your friends to look after your property when you’re out of town, attend to theirs first. If you want a ξένος to receive you when you’re abroad, receive him first when he comes around. Taking initiatives is, it is suggested, an imperative in all kinds of reciprocal relationships.

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11 "Well then, said Socrates, do you want to be pleasant to your neighbor, so that he may give you a light for your fire when you need it, and both contribute to your success and give you prompt and friendly help if you meet with any misfortune? –Yes, I do. –Take the case of a fellow traveler or fellow voyager, or anyone else you might meet: would it make no difference to you whether he became your friend or your enemy? Do you think you ought to concern yourself with the goodwill of people like these? –I do think so."

12 See Chapter Four Section 3.2. This appears to be a motive under the Minor Socratics. E.g. DL mentions a conflict between Aristippus of Cyrene and his friend Aeschines of Sphettus. Aristippus makes the first move towards reconciliation; (frg. 112 B Mannebach) Cf. 112 A (= Plut. Cohib. ir 14,462d-e), 112 C (= Stob. 4,27,19). A similar story is attributed to Euclides of Megara who attempts to assuage a conflict with his brother. Stob. 4,27,15.

13 Xen. Mem. II.iii.11-14. See Chapter Four Section 3.2; cf. Section 5 below.
Socrates expects this strategy to work, because Chaerephon is φιλότιμος (II.iii.16):

(2) Xen. Mem. II.iii.16-17

οὐχ ὡς φιλότιμός ἐστι καὶ ἐλευθέριος; τὰ μὲν γὰρ πονηρὰ ἀνθρώπα ἀνθρώπων οὐκ ἂν ἄλλως μάλλον ἔλοι σὲ ἡ δοθής τί, τοὺς δὲ καλοὺς κἀγαθοὺς ἀνθρώπους προσφιλῶς χρώμενος μᾶλλον ἂν κατεργάσαι. καὶ ὁ Χαιρέκρατης εἶπεν· Ἐὰν οὖν ἐμοῦ ταῦτα ποιοῦντος ἐκείνος μηδὲν βελτίων γίγνηται; — Τί γὰρ ἄλλο, ἐφη ὁ Σωκράτης, ἐπεὶ οἱ κινδυνεύσεις ἐπεδίδεια σὺ μὲν χρήστος τε καὶ φιλάδελφος εἶναι, ἐκείνος δὲ φαῦλος τε καὶ οὐκ ἄξιος εὐεργεσίας; ἄλλ᾽ οὐδὲν οἴμαι τούτων ἔσεσθαι· νομίζω γὰρ αὐτόν, ἐπεὶ δέ κατεργάσαι ἐκείνου ἐπεὶ τὸν ἀγῶνα τοῦτον, πάνυ φιλονικήσειν ὅπως περιγένηται σου καὶ λόγω καὶ ἔσω εὐ ποιών.

Socrates predicts that kindness towards Chaerephon (προσφιλῶς χρώμενος) will provoke a combat de générosité (II.iii.17), framing the offering of service and counter-service in terms that recall athletic competition (II.iii.17: φιλονικήσειν). Once more this is a metaphor that represents a Socratic twist. First of all, it dispels Chaerecrates’ worry that taking the initiative to restore their φιλία by doing good to Chaerephon is a waste of generosity. The competition metaphor enables Chaerecrates to reframe this issue: worst case scenario is that Chaerecrates will have displayed himself as “a good person loyal to his brother” (χρηστός τε καὶ φιλάδελφος), which is not a waste at all—a reflection of the well-known Socratic principle that it is always better to be

14 “Don’t you see what a noble and generous nature he has? Low types of humanity are most likely to be won over by a gift; but the best way to influence truly good people is by courtesy. Chaerecrates said, Supposing that I do what you recommend, and he shows no improvement? – In that case, said Socrates, you will simply run the risk of demonstrating that you are a good and affectionate brother, and he is a bad one who doesn’t deserve to be treated kindly. But I don’t want to suppose that anything of the sort will happen. I think that when he once realizes that you are challenging him to this kind of contest, he will be very keen to outdo you in kindness both spoken and practical.”

15 The dismissal of gift-giving (as merely a means to seduce baser men) may strike us as odd as it all of a sudden introduces a distinction between immaterial services (to which the imperative paying it forward applies) and material gifts that are coveted by κακοί. In part, this dismissal can be understood as material gifts are more easily commodified than immaterial favors: it takes a gentleman to appreciate a friendly disposition. Another aspect of this dismissal may be the fact that the phenomenon of δωροδοκία, bribery, is an available paradigm for “befriending” people.
harmed than to harm someone else.\footnote{E.g. Pl. Gorg. 508e.}

The competition metaphor indicates that in well-functioning reciprocal relationships, where both partners are virtuous gentlemen, there will be an ongoing competition of generosity. This implies that the Socratic maxim of “taking the lead” and “paying it forward” does not only express a strategy for initiating φιλία, but also reflects a rule of conduct to sustain an existing φιλία-relationship. In a healthy reciprocal relationship both partners alternately take initiatives in conferring benefits on the other. Within such a relationship, favors and gifts are never regarded as a mere reaction to “antecedent graces”; rather, each event in the never-ending chain of reciprocity is viewed as a new manifestation of generosity that strengthens the bond between the partners, that moves up the standards and that amplifies the expectations on both sides. Moreover, equality between partners is not so much a point of departure in φιλία, but a result of an evenly matched competition: if one of the partners “wins”, the resulting φιλία-relationship will be asymmetrical, i.e. between a morally superior party and an inferior party who is irredeemably indebted; if both persist to challenge each other, the result will be a balanced bond.\footnote{See Chapter Six for asymmetrical φιλία-bonds.}

2. Amazing Grace: Looking as a Reciprocal Endeavor

2.1. The Look of Love: χάρις and Display

The imperative of Active Partnership recurs in the Theodote episode. From the outset of this dialogue on the art of friendship, the idea of active reciprocity is hinted at by Socrates’ use of χάρις-terminology. Together with the hunting metaphor employed later in the dialogue, the use and analysis of the term χάρις becomes Socrates’ most important vehicle to destabilize conventional role divisions and to shape a notion of reciprocity as a mutually active endeavor.

The apparent “role reversal” between Socrates and Theodote is most strongly suggested by the shifting application of the verb πείθειν. At the very outset of the dialogue, the narrator introduces Theodote as follows:

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\footnote{E.g. Pl. Gorg. 508e.}
\footnote{See Chapter Six for asymmetrical φιλία-bonds.}
Theodote is pictured as someone ready to "keep anyone company" (συνεῖναι) who "persuades" (πείθειν) her. Both verbs συνεῖναι and πείθειν are verbs commonly applied in the sexual realm, denoting "having intercourse" and "seducing". The verb πείθειν, seducing, reflects the fundamentally unidirectional character of the situation. Theodote is emphatically characterized as the object of seduction, a position that yields certain expectations: visitors may expect that Theodote will respond to overtures without initiating them and Theodote herself expects her visitor, Socrates, to seduce her. However, at the end of the dialogue, when Theodote suggests that Socrates to become her "co-hunter of friends", Socrates replies:

"Εάν γε νῃ Δί', ἔφη, πείθῃς με σύ.

Here it is Socrates who claims the position of the object of seduction, a role reversal underscored by Theodote's taking on the role of pursuer (willing to visit Socrates instead of the other way round) and Socrates' playing the part of the object of seduction that plays hard to get. This is not only a matter of playful role reversal between the allegedly most beautiful woman of Athens and the notoriously ugly Socrates who manages to outbid her, but also a destabilization of prevailing morality: an adult male citizen is not supposed to indulge in coquetry.

This is a destabilization of traditional role-divisions that is foreshadowed in Socrates' opening question:

18 "At one time there was in the city a beautiful woman called Theodote, who was the sort to consort with anyone persuasive (...)"
19 For συνεῖναι, see also the Antiphon episode (Mem. I.vi.13). Cf. Chapter Three Section I.
20 "‘I will, believe me,’ said Socrates, ‘if you persuade me.’"
21 See Goldhill (1998), for an interpretation of the Theodote episode as a challenge to the conventional role of vision in the construction of citizenship: “Socrates confuses the modes of exchange—words, teaching, gratitude, desire, vision—by which a citizen is placed.” (123). A problematizing reading of the gaze in Xenophon’s Symposium is offered by Gilhuly (2009), 98-139.
(5) Xen. Mem. III.xi.2-3:22

παυσαμένου δὲ τοῦ ζωγράφου, Ὡ ἀνδρείς, ἔφη ὁ Σωκράτης, πότερον ἡμᾶς δεὶ μᾶλλον Θεοδότη χάριν ἔχειν, ὥτι ἡμῖν τὸ κάλλος ἑαυτῆς ἐπεδείξεν, ἢ ταύτην ἡμῖν, ὥτι ἐθεασάμεθα; ἢ ἕνεν ταύτη ὄφελμοσυνή ἐστιν ἢ ἐπίδειξις. ταύτην ἡμῖν χάριν ἐκτέουν, ἤ ἕνεν ἡ θέα, ἡμᾶς ταύτη; εἰσόντος δὲ τινος ὅτι δίκαια λέγοι, Ὁὐκοῦν, ἔφη, αὕτη μὲν ἤδη τε παρ’ ἡμῖν ἐπαινοῦν κεφαλαίες καὶ ἐπειδὼν εἰς πλείους διαγγείλωμεν, πλείω ὄφελμοσυνή ἡμῖν ἢ ἔσχε τε ἡμῖν ἐπεἰ διὰ τὴν ἐπίδειξιν ἐπιθυμοῦμεν ἄφασθαι καὶ ἐπειδὼν εἰς ἀπελθόντες ποθῆσομεν. ἐκ δὲ τούτων εἰκός ἡμᾶς μὲν ἐθεασάμεθα ἐπίδειξις ἡμῖν ἢ ἔσχε τε ἡμῖν ἐπιθυμοῦμεν ἄφασθαι καὶ ἐπειδὼν εἰς ἀπελθόντες ποθῆσομεν. ἐκ δὲ τούτων εἰκός ἡμᾶς μὲν ἐθεασάμεθα ἐπίδειξις ἡμῖν ἢ ἔσχε τε ἡμῖν ἐπιθυμοῦμεν ἄφασθαι καὶ ἐπειδὼν εἰς ἀπελθόντες ποθῆσομεν. ἐκ δὲ τούτων εἰκός ἡμᾶς μὲν ἐθεασάμεθα ἐπίδειξις ἡμῖν ἢ ἔσχε τε ἡμῖν ἐπιθυμοῦμεν ἄφασθαι καὶ ἐπειδὼν εἰς ἀπελθόντες ποθῆσομεν. ἐκ δὲ τούτων εἰκός ἡμᾶς μὲν ἐθεασάμεθα ἐπίδειξις ἡμῖν ἢ ἔσχε τε ἡμῖν ἐπιθυμοῦμεν ἄφασθαι καὶ ἐπειδὼν εἰς ἀπελθόντες ποθῆσομεν. ἐκ δὲ τούτων εἰκός ἡμᾶς μὲν ἐθεασάμεθα ἐπίδειξις ἡμῖν ἢ ἔσχε τε ἡμῖν ἐπιθυμοῦμεν ἄφασθαι καὶ ἐπειδὼν εἰς ἀπελθόντες ποθῆσομεν. ἐκ δὲ τούτων εἰκός ἡμᾶς μὲν ἐθεασάμεθα ἐπίδειξις ἡμῖν ἢ ἔσχε τε ἡμῖν ἐπιθυμοῦμεν ἄφασθαι καὶ ἐπειδὼν εἰς ἀπελθόντες ποθῆσομεν.

This brief but very dense exchange reads as a paradox, though one not easily deconstructed. Socrates evidently demystifies something that is essential to Theodote’s practice and self-definition, for it is only with some reluctance that Theodote draws an inference that she herself finds somewhat surprising.

The exchange revolves around χάρις and the way the act of displaying and looking should be constructed in terms of χάρις. Theodote shows “as much of herself as decency allows” (ἐπιδεικνύειν ἑαυτῆς ὅσα καλῶς ἔχοι)23—a phrase that immediately thematizes issues of visibility and vision. As the visibility of women in Classical Athens is subject to careful negotiation, and women are supposed to live secluded from sight, at least from the company of men outside the family, the sight of a woman is erotically charged.24 Within the limits

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22 “When the painter had finished, Socrates said: ‘Gentlemen, ought we to be more grateful to Theodote for letting us see her beauty, or she to us for looking at her? I suggest that, if the display has been more to her advantage, she ought to be grateful to us, and if the sight has been more to ours, we ought to be grateful to her.’ Someone said, ‘That’s right.’ ‘Well then,’ he went on, ‘she is already enjoying the tribute of our admiration, and when we have spread our report, she will benefit still further. On the other hand, we are now desirous of touching what we have seen; we shall go away with our emotions titillated; and when we have gone, we shall feel an unsatisfied longing. The natural inference from this is that we are performing the service and she is receiving it.’ ‘I must say,’ said Theodote, ‘if that’s how it is, I should have to be grateful to you for looking at me.’”

23 Mem. III.xi.1. GOLDHILL (1998), 114: “[F]or Xenophon to describe Theodote as showing ὅσα καλῶς ἔχοι, is to mark the fine line of propriety.”

24 DAVIDSON (1997), 127ff; GOLDHILL (1998), 114. This forms a marked contrast with male nudity. As GOLDHILL remarks, a man’s body is displayed openly in gymnasium and assembly: “[H]is status is formed in the gaze of the citizens. (…) Within the idealized (male) discourse of propriety, a woman who is properly controlled—in all senses—is not open to the gaze of men,
imposed by status and propriety, women are endowed with the power to manage their desirability by manipulating their visibility, carefully regulating exposure and invisibility.\textsuperscript{25} Theodote is staged as a lady in command of the situation: it is up to her to decide how much she is willing to display, and to walk the fine line between “the extreme exposure of the brothel prostitute and the complete invisibility of the decent lady”.\textsuperscript{26} Her displaying herself becomes a favor to which the spectator can respond with gratitude for what he is allowed to see.

The magic of seduction is immediately gone when Socrates makes the economy of looking and the connection between looking and lusting explicit.\textsuperscript{27} Socrates bluntly “recalculates” who is doing a favor to whom and deduces that Theodote is not doing her spectators a favor at all as she arouses ἔπιθυμία and πόθος in them, states of mind that are generally negatively qualified in Classical Greek ethos for the implied loss of control and agency;\textsuperscript{28} moreover, Theodote does benefit from them spreading the news of her beauty.\textsuperscript{29}

Socrates’ recalculation of what is really beneficial, ὠφέλιμος, is well in line with Socrates’ general didactic strategy in the Memorabilia in which he teaches his companions to look beyond the appeal of short-term gratification and to envisage their real long-term interests and goals.\textsuperscript{30} But in this situation, there is more at stake: the proper use of χάρις-vocabulary in the economy of seduction.

\textsuperscript{25} Ultimately, this unilateralness of the gaze of course reinforces the object-status of women and boys. \textsc{Steiner} (1998): “[W]ithin the realm of visual representation, depicting a body in a manner that emphasizes its ‘to-be-looked-at-ness,’ which codes its appearance for strong visual and erotic impact, turns that body from subject into spectacle, and constructs it as the passive and powerless object of the unseen viewer’s gaze.”

\textsuperscript{26} \textsc{Davidson} (1997), 127.

\textsuperscript{27} \textsc{Davidson} (1997), 128.

\textsuperscript{28} \textsc{Davidson} (2007), 23 ff.; \textsc{Faraione} (1999), 29 and 29n.121.

\textsuperscript{29} \textsc{Azoulay} (2004a), 405. See \textsc{Goldhill} (1998), 116 for the observation that the word spreading the news of Theodote’s beauty goes against the Periclean adage that a good citizen woman is someone not spoken about. Theodote’s fame emphatically marks her as a non-citizen woman, the category not addressed by Pericles.

\textsuperscript{30} See Chapter Three.
2.2. Erotic χάρις

As we have seen in Chapter One, the noun χάρις typically figures in an order sustained by long-term reciprocities where in the long run givers of favors (χάρις) are receivers of gratitude, i.e. favors reciprocated (χάρις). Moreover, we have seen that within this worldview beauty is experienced as a mutual delight: a boy or a woman's physical attractiveness (χάρις) afflicts the perceiver with attraction (χάρις) to the object of his attraction and causes an experience of delight (χάρις) in the perceiver: χάρις is grace, attraction and pleasure at once. As such, χάρις is a quality that cannot exist without its perception; χάρις-exchanges depend upon perception, on seeing the grace of things, and typical use of χάρις-vocabulary presupposes internal focalization, the point of view of participants in a successful interaction.

χάρις plays a central role in the way seduction is constructed. To pass for an act of seduction, of πείθειν, it is of vital importance that the seduced party has the choice to consent or decline:31 satisfaction of lust without the consent of the object of seduction is simply brutal force, βία. If the object of desire lacks choice and the autonomy to decline, then there is no seduction but coercion or prostitution.32 If the object of desire is courted with flattery, gifts and marks of attention and (s)he is free to decide whether or not to reciprocate this kindness, (s)he is being seduced33 and (s)he has the choice to respond to the lover’s gifts and marks of attention by yielding to the lover—literally “gratifying”, χαρίζεσθαι, a central term in the Greek erotic lexicon. χαρίζεσθαι, a denominative verb derived from χάρις,34 denotes the act of bestowing χάρις on someone.35

31 Cf. the incompatibility of χάρις and ἀνάγκη in Chapter Two Section 4.
32 Contrary to modern conceptions, in Classical Athens money and the delivery of services for pay is commonly framed in terms of slavery and coercion. Whereas we may feel that there is an element of autonomy or choice in accepting pay, in Classical Athens fees often represent asymmetrical and exploitative labor relations. Cf. COHEN (2006), VON REDEN (1995).
33 The commonplace of the thankless boy in Greek elegy reflects precisely the fact that an object of seduction is supposed to be free to decline and that the boy has a possibility of not returning the favors of his seducer at the price of having a reputation of thanklessness. See DAVIDSON (2007), 38ff.
34 The active form χαρίζω is rare in Greek sources before Philo and the Christian authors.
35 LATACZ (1966), 105-7. χαρίζεσθαι refers predominantly to the eromenos gratifying the erastes. Cf.
Hence, the terms χάρις and χαρίζεσθαι serve to define the situation in terms of seduction, consenting and responding to favors—as opposed to sexual contacts that lack this freedom of response and the theoretical possibility to say no, such as prostitution and other forms of coerced sex.\footnote{Cf. HINDLEY (2004), 134: “It is the opposite of forcing oneself upon an unwilling boy (…)”.} Moreover, the term suggests that we are not talking about isolated sexual acts but about erotic encounters within the context of a relationship, embedded in a system of long-term reciprocal exchange in which generosity, gratitude and grace prevail.\footnote{DAVIDSON (2007), 47: “Sexual charis stand for a particular construction of sex as part of a gracious exchange (…)”.}

At the same time, the term also has euphemistic potential in two ways. First of all, in an erotic context, the use of χάρις-vocabulary may be felt, even by participants in the situation (who focalize internally), to be a mere verbal veil. Whereas in non-erotic contexts the instrument of gratification is made explicit with a noun in the accusative case (e.g. χαρίζεσθαι τινι δῶρα, “to gratify someone with a gift”), in erotic contexts it is predominantly used absolutely, with an implied object: specific acts of sexual gratification. In such situations, χάρις-vocabulary still serves to prescribe an internal focalization of events and people may still perceive requests and acts in terms of long-term relations, but...
there is less méconnaissance, the veil is thinner, as the concrete dimension of the exchange is never completely misrecognized but always present and unambiguously implied. The social function of χάρις-vocabulary diminishes to politeness and a face-saving device. A lover asking a boy for “gratification” comes close to the modern-day equivalent of walking a girl home and inviting oneself for a “cup of coffee”: you both know that you are not talking about a cup of coffee, but you both have the implicit escape clause that sometimes a cup of coffee is just a cup of coffee.

Secondly, on a more systemic level, in line with the more general méconnaissance common in social exchange as we have seen in Chapter One, in erotic contexts χάρις-terminology is euphemistic in its emphatic propagation of reciprocity in a situation where there is a clear asymmetry and a rigid division of roles: emphasis on reciprocity serves to conceal that, whereas the object of desire does have the power to lend or withhold consent to his or her suitor, he or she never has the power to control the terms of the exchange and actively become a subject of desire and pursuit. In an erotic context, the term χαρίζεσθαι facilitates misrecognition of the power balance by suggesting an equal distribution of agency.

This is why, in erotic contexts, we encounter a very ambivalent attitude towards χάρις. On the one hand, χάρις embodies the grace that the lover “gracefully” begs for:

(6)  Theognis 2.1319-1322

Ο μαί, ἐπεί τοι δῶκε θεὰ χάριν ἰμεόεσσαν
Κύπρις, σὸν δ’ εἴδος πᾶσι νέοισι μέλει,
τῶνδ’ ἐπάκουσον ἐπῶν καὶ ἐμὴν χάριν ἔνθεο θυμῶι,

But see DAVIDSON (2007), 47: “Sexual charis (...) is never merely a euphemism for buggery or frottage, though sometimes, of course, that is exactly what charity meant in practice.”

E.g. HOIGARD & FINSTAD (1992) record that numerous prostitutes prefer street prostitution (an unambiguous sale of the body) to hotel prostitution that mimics free encounters and that, hence, requires more time and effort: hotel encounters appear to be more respectful towards the person, but require more effort of euphemization, as prostitutes need to talk to their customers and pretend to be interested in them as persons.

“Boy, since the Cyprian goddess gave you a beauty that arouses desire and all the young men are obsessed with your looks, listen to these words of mine and take them to heart as a favor to me, knowing that love is hard for a man to bear.” (transl. GERBER).
Chapter Five

γνοὺς ἔρος ώς χαλεπὸν γίνεται ἀνδρὶ φέρειν.

Here we see the recurring idea that charm or physical attractiveness (χάρις) is a gift (δῶκε) from Aphrodite: the goddess has done the boy the favor (χάρις) of desire-rousing charm (χάρις), a force that makes many young men be affected by the boy’s looks (σὸν εἶδος πᾶσι νέοισι μέλει). The pun on χάρις is repeated and amplified in the second half, where the speaker urges the boy to listen to his words and take them to heart “as my χάρις”. The possessive pronoun makes the χάρις ambiguous between a favor from the speaker to the boy (“listen to my words and put my χάρις, i.e. my wise words, in your heart”) or a favor from the boy to the speaker (“listen to me and do me a favor”). Moreover, the speaker suggests a reasonable connection (ἐπεί) between the gift of the Cyprian goddess and his appeal to the boy: since the Cyprian goddess has given you the favor of beauty, you must do me a favor in turn, for desire is hard to bear; or: “you are beautiful, give me pleasure.” χάρις is here represented as a quality circulating in an order of things sustained by deity; hence the boy is urged to “participate” in this long-term order of things and do the speaker a favor: the boy is to comply with his wishes and to gratify (χαρίζεσθαι) him. χάρις-vocabulary is used to strengthen the case of the lover, but at the same time functions as a thin verbal veil that serves to give a sexual request a refined and cultivated outlook.

On the other hand, there is a discourse where male lovers emphatically represent themselves as a victim of desire (and definitely not a coercing lover who uses βία), fallen prey to the deceitful force of χάρις. In Greek literature, χάρις is often represented as a coercive force capable of persuading men to do things they maybe should not, i.e. a force capable of seducing (πείθειν) men. In Hesiod’s Works and Days we see a similar link between the aesthetic (and here fatal) χάρις of the object of desire and the economy of χάρις where beauty

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41 MacLachlan (1993), 68: “The repetition of the word in the same position in both hexameters underscores the fact that the pleasure requested (charin 1321) is in fact the possession of the boy’s desirable body (charin 1319).”

42 See Section 3.3.

43 The archetype is perhaps Hera who, while seducing Zeus, wears earrings “glittering with χάρις” (Hom. Il. 14.183), to make him fall asleep—a favor (χάρις) of Hypnos to Hera who promises him to “always remember” the favor (χάρις).
circulates as a gift from the gods. The gift is ambivalent from the start, as it is designed by Zeus as a punishment for Prometheus. Zeus orders the gods to make an evil gift to men as price for the fire (ἀντὶ πυρὸς δῶσω κακόν)—“a gift in which all be glad of heart while embracing their own destruction”:\(^{44}\) woman. To this gift of Zeus the gods in turn each attach a gift (δῶρον ἐδώρησαν)—hence her name Pandora,\(^{45}\) and each gift contributes to Pandora’s nature as an evil embraced by men, a destructive force that men willingly yield to: a shameless mind, and deceitful nature, the likeness to a modest girl, a beautiful outfit and jewellery, lies and crafty words.\(^{46}\) Amongst these gifts, is the gift from Aphrodite:

\[
\begin{align*}
(7) & \quad \text{Hes. W&D 65-67} \\
& \quad \text{kai χάριν ἀμφιχέαι κεφαλῆ χουσέτην Ἀφροδίτην} \\
& \quad \text{kai πόθον ἀργαλέον καὶ γυιοβόρους μελεδώνας}.
\end{align*}
\]

Aphrodite’s contribution is attractiveness (χάριν) and cruel longing and limb-loosening sorrows (πόθον ἀργαλέον καὶ γυιοβόρους μελεδώνας) poured over (ἀμφιχέαι) Pandora’s head. Here, Aphrodite’s gift is not described as sheer physical beauty, but it is also characterized in terms of the effects of Pandora’s beauty on men: she will *attract* them, rouse painful longing in them and bring them worries. A couple of lines further on, the necklaces of gold hung around Pandora’s neck are described as gifts of the divine Graces (οἱ Χάριτες) and Persuasion (πότνια Πειθώ)—\(^{48}\) clearly hinting at the intended effect of Pandora’s adornment. “The power of *charis* resides in its unerring ability to provoke a response.”\(^{49}\) Here we see how χάρις participates in an ideology of exchange and gift giving which is problematic from the outset: the “gift” Pandora is given by Zeus as an act of vengeance in return for an act of theft by

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\(^{44}\) Hes. *W&D* 57-8.


\(^{46}\) Hes. *W&D* 60-79.

\(^{47}\) “and golden Aphrodite to shed *grace* upon her head and cruel longing and cares that weary the limbs.” (*transl.* Evelyn-White)


\(^{49}\) MacLachlan (1993), 37. Loew (1908), 23.
Prometheus, and Pandora’s χάρις is a gift attached to her by Aphrodite designed to amplify the efficacy of Zeus’ revenge. The efficacy of the revenge is ultimately dependent upon the effect Pandora has on the men who gaze at her beauty.

2.3. Hetaerae and prostitutes

How does this reflect on Theodote? It should be noted that at no point in the dialogue is Theodote’s profession explicitly defined or named. This is not to say that Xenophon’s representation does not provide the ancient Greek reader with clear clues as to the status of the lady: the fact that unlike most women she is mentioned by name,50 her economic autonomy, the fact that her encounters with men are not regulated by male relatives, all leave little doubt as to her professional occupation.51 In fact, her emphatic presentation as an object of seduction already serves as a marker of her status, for to be an object of seduction presupposes a freedom of response that is the privilege of Greek boys and those women who exceptionally do exercise some autonomy (however compromised) in the erotic sphere: courtesans. Theodote is one of those few women who do have χάρις, for she only “keeps company” with those men who “persuade” her.52

Theodote is one of the few women to participate in the system of erotic exchange that allows for a framing in terms of χάρις. Moreover, to Theodote’s self-definition as a hetaera this framing is essential,53 as the language of


51 Athenaeus XII 5535c (cf. 5743) lists Theodote explicitly as “the Athenian courtesan” (τὴν ἀττικὴν ἑταίραν).

52 As the elegists notice, the terminology of χάρις and πίστις simply does not apply to regular women, the faithful wives of Athenian citizens, for they lack the autonomy that makes such behavior meaningful: Παιδός τοι χάρις ἐστίν· γυναικὶ δὲ πιστὸς ἑταῖρος | οὐδείς, ἀλλ' αἰεὶ τὸν παρεόντα φιλεῖ. (Thgn. 1367-8). This of course reflects masculine discourse on ideal wives rather than reality.

53 Davidson (1997), 117-125; Kurke (1997). Cf. Peschel (1987), 19-20; Harvey (1988), 249; Calame (1989), 103-4; Dover (1989), 20-21. Kurke makes the important observation that the presentation of the hetaera is delicate and indirect and that the term “hetaera” is never used except in contexts of ridicule (and of external focalization): “This suggests that “hetaira” is a term of derision, applied by those outside the aristocratic symposium to mock the sympotic equality of
reciprocity is an indispensable ideological tool for framing the art of the courtesan as distinct from the occupation of the πόρνη, the unfree brothel worker who inhabits the world of commercialized sex and commodified bodies. This may be illustrated by two comic fragments by Anaxilas.54

(8) Anaxilas fr. 21 (K-A)55


prostitute and elite participant (hetairos).” (113) For the democratic framing of prostitution (“the somatics of Athenian democratic ideology”) see HALPERIN (1990), 88-104. Traditionally, the distinction between the hetaera and the prostitute is explained away in terms of differences in “status”. This is begging the question of how differences in status are constructed in the first place. Cf. COHEN (2006) who objects against reifying the distinction between courtesans and prostitutes and who places the hetaera-pornê-contrast against the backbone of a broader Hellenic tendency to understand phenomena in terms of antitheses. COHEN argues that the ideological distinction between hetaera and pornê is best explained in terms of labor conditions as a contrast between free and unfree (slave) labor. KURKE (1997) and DAVIDSON (1997) concede that in terms of acts it may not always be easy to distinguish the prostitute’s occupation from the hetaera’s way of life; but a prostitute’s relationship with her customers was conceived of as categorically different from a hetaera’s relationship with her φίλοι. It is precisely in ideological issues such as these that discursive strategies, such as applying the framework of gift exchange, are of vital importance. See McCURU (2003), 9-24 for cases in which the same woman is referred to as both hetaera and pornê.

54 DAVIDSON (1997), 124-5 points out that more is involved in the hetaera’s (and customers’) misrecognition of the transaction, as public prostitutes who worked in brothels were charged with pornikon telos (the “whore-tax”) and subjected to income limits and other legislation. Cf. Aesch. 1.119; Poll. 7.202. KURKE (1997) argues that the hetaera—pornê-distinction is an invention of elitist discourse (i.e. the context of the aristocratic symposium) that shields itself from the public sphere, whereas egalitarian discourse applauds the universal availability of pornai as a democratization of sex. The hetaera—pornê binary functions along the same lines as the opposition between metals and freely circulating interchangeable money, “to define and differentiate the sympotic world from the public space of the agora” in elitist discourse. Cf. SIMMEL (1978), 376-7 on the “ominous analogy” between prostitution and money, both reduced “to its purely generic content”, “the indifference as to its use”, “the lack of attachment to any individual because it is unrelated to any of them”.

55 “And if someone [even when saying moderate things?] does service to those in need of something as a favor, from her companionship she has been called a hetaera—and you now happen to have come to desire, not a pornê (as you say), but a hetaera. (b) Really? (a) She is someone honest then? (b.) Yes, by Zeus, and refined.”
Here speaker A tackles the difference between a πόρνη and a hetaera in terms of the proper “name” for each (τὸ ὄνομα). Speaker B seems to be referring to a lady as a πόρνη (ὡς λέγεις), but according to speaker A, person B in reality (ὡς ἀληθῶς) turns out to have come to desire a hetaera. The lady in question should be addressed with the name “hetaera” (ἑταίρα τοὔνομα προσηγορεύθη), if she meets the condition that she is moderate or speaks moderate things (μέτρια) and that she serves (ὑπουργῇ) those who are “in need of some things” (τοῖς δεομένοις τινῶν) as a favor (πρὸς χάριν). When these conditions are met, a lady is not a prostitute for pay, but someone whose company (ἑταιρία) one can enjoy. Isomorphism is clearly acknowledged as the speakers discuss whether a particular lady is to be called a hetaera of a prostitute. At the same time, the company of a hetaera is constructed as radically different: the sexual acts, euphemistically referred to in terms of serving (ὑπουργέω) and needs (δέομαι), are conferred as a favor (χάρις) in the context of company (ἑταιρία) of a lady who is moderate (μέτρια, perhaps as opposed to promiscuous; or speaks moderate things), straightforward (ἁπλῆ) and refined (ἀστεία).

However, this demarcation line is fragile and liable to contextual negotiation, as another fragment by Anaxilas, the famous fragment 22, demonstrates. There, in the middle of an invective of greedy and treacherous hetaeras (ἑταίραν in line 1), the speaker suddenly refers to the hetaeras as whores (τὰς πόρνας), who may just as well be called Theban Sphinxes:

(9) Anaxilas fr. 22 (K-A)

Σφίγγα Θηβαίαν δὲ πάσας ἔστι τὰς πόρνας καλεῖν,

56 I follow the punctuation of SCHWEIGHAUSER (1801).
57 There is a textual problem here: ms A reads μέτρια λέγουσι; CE reads μέτρια λέγουσα καὶ ὑς. The conjectures by BLAYDES (1905), 146 μετρίως ἔχουσα <χρημάτων> and MEINEKE (1970), 267 καὶ μέτρι' ἔχουσα <χρήματα> are interesting.
59 In Xen. Oec. Lxiii, discussing bad uses of wealth, Socrates adduces the example of someone “buying a hetaera who makes him worse off in body and soul and estate”, with ἑταίραν as direct object with πριάμενος. This seems to confirm the point made by KURKE (1997) that the term “hetaera” is predominantly used in a derogatory way.
60 “It is not too much to call all these whores Theban Sphinxes, as they speak nothing plain, but only riddles, how they ‘desire’, and ‘care for’ and ‘enjoy company’.”
Here the distinction between prostitutes and hetaeras is crushed and reduced to verbal chitchat: a hetaera is simply a whore and may be called "Theban Sphinx" because of her mystifying chatter about "desiring" (ἐρῶσι), "being committed" (φιλοῦσι) and "keeping pleasant company" (σύνεισιν ἡδέως). Talk about ἐρῶσι, φιλία and συνουσία is demystified as mere euphemisms, as babbling (λαλοῦσ') farfetched things (ἀπλῶς οὐδέν, perhaps even duplicitous or insincere—note the opposition with ἁπλῇ in T 8!), talking in riddles (ἐν αἰνιγμοῖς), as if-talk (ὡς). The bottom line is: behind the refined verbal veil a hetaera is simply a whore—just as man-devouring and treacherous, i.e. greedy and promiscuous. Whereas the speaker of T 8 takes much trouble to make a linguistic distinction and to decide which of the two “names”, hetaera or prostitute, the lady deserves, the speaker of T 9 cancels the distinction between hetaera and prostitute as merely verbal.

Socrates has his own characteristic ways of dealing with mystifying chatter: pretending to be literal-minded. When Socrates notices the sumptuous wealth in Theodote’s household, he cannot help but wondering about her source of income.

(10)  Xen. Mem. III.xi.4-5

Εἰπέ μοι, ἔφη, ὦ Θεοδότη, ἔστι σοι ἀγρός; — Οὐκ ἔμοι ἔμοιγ’, ἔφη. —Ἀλλὰ ἅρα οἰκία προσόδους ἔχουσα; —Οὐδὲ οἰκία, ἔφη. —Ἀλλὰ μὴ χειροτέχναι τινές; Οὐδὲ χειροτέχναι, ἔφη. —Πόθεν οὖν, ἔφη, τὰ ἐπιτήδεια ἔχεις; —Εάν τις, ἔφη, φίλος μοι γενόμενος εὐ ποιεῖν ἐθέλη, οὕτως μοι βίος ἔστι.

Theodote carefully describes relationships with her visitors in terms of φιλία:

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61 As CARTLEDGE (2002), 160 points out, this passage is revealing about what the normal and openly recognized sources of a rich Athenian’s wealth were: a large farm, a tenement house, and skilled slave craftsmen.

62 “So he now said, ‘Tell me, Theodote, have you got a farm?’ ‘Not I,’ she said. ‘Well then, a house that brings in money?’ ‘Nor a house.’ ‘Perhaps you have some slaves who work at a craft?’ ‘No, none.’ ‘Then how do you support yourself?’ ‘If anyone gets friendly with me and wants to be generous, that’s how I get my living.’”
her source of income consists in her φίλοι who “treat her well” (εὖ ποιεῖν). From a reductionist approach, Theodote’s talk of friendship is euphemistic (“being just good friends”), a “verbal veil”. The function of χάρις-terminology is to demarcate the profession of the hetaera from the seemingly isomorphic profession of the brothel-worker: the hetaera does not “sell” “sex” or “her body” to a “client” but she is an autonomous subject who “gratifies” “friends” who do her “favors”, as opposed to the πόρνη, the prostitute, who derives her name from the verb πέρνημι, “to sell”, and who represents the world of commerce and commodification hostile to seduction and consensual gratification. Against this backdrop, even Theodote’s name, “god’s gift”, bears a programmatic ring: from the outset, the courtesan’s business is located within an economy of long-term gift exchange between φίλοι.

The Anaxilas-examples above show that there was a general awareness of isomorphism of χάρις-exchanges and commercial transactions; moreover, there was an acute awareness of the linguistic frailty of the demarcations. This

63 NARCY (2004), 228n.2 notes that εὖ ποιεῖν is normally construed with a participle or a complement (e.g. a personal pronoun in the accusative case). The absence of both may be taken as an indication that the phrase is used euphemistically. However, it may be argued that the complement is already implied in (be it in dative case) φίλος μοι γενόμενος as well as in οὗτος μοι βίος ἐστι.
64 GOLDHILL (1998), 117.
65 DAVIDSON (1997), 120: “References to clients and prices and payments and sex are carefully avoided. The talk is all of friendship and favours.”; KURKE (1997), 112: “(...) the impulse to mystify economic relations for sex generates the category of the hetaira within the framework of gift exchange. (...) the hetaira gratified her patron πρὸς χάριν, “as a favor.””
66 KURKE (1997); DAVIDSON (1997), 120-3.
67 According to AZOULAY (2004a) the name Theodote evokes the myth of Pandora; his glossing of “Pandora” as “don de tous [les dieux]” (404) seems a problematic interpretation of a πᾶν-composite. The gloss “All-Gifts” for Pandora is unique for W&D 81-2; in other occurrences of the name (e.g. as epithet for the goddess Gaia), the meaning is active “Giver of All”. VERNANT (1974), 74; ZEITLIN (1996), 60.
68 Cf. Chapters One and Two. Attic Comedy and Oratory testify how reductionism and demystification were available options, especially in the case of χάρις in erotic contexts: one of the issues at stake in the trial against Timarchus was to establish that Timarchus was prostituting himself instead of being engaged in a long-term relationship (FISHER 2001, 36-52); moreover several jokes in Attic Comedy are based on the fragile (“merely lexical”) demarcation of honorable sexual encounters and commercial sex. E.g. the Socratic authors represent Aspasia as a hetaera, a respected lady and the mother of some of Pericles’ children; Eupolis fr. 98 represents one of these sons (Pericles the younger) as “the whore’s son” (τὸ τῆς πόρνης κακόν). Cf. Chapter One Section I. Moreover, the appropriation of the long-term order by the institution
leaves scope for Socrates to renegotiate Theodote’s status. Theodote obviously has grace and charm, χάρις, as she is the most wanted woman of Athens and artists are eager to have her posing. But in asking which party ought to “have more χάρις”, i.e. to “be more grateful” (μᾶλλον χάριν ἔχειν) in this ἐπίδειξις, Socrates frames the process of display and looking in terms of a reciprocal engagement and thereby not only deconstructs the mechanisms of exposure and revealing, but also potentially destabilizes Theodote’s identity as a courtesan. The active/passive distribution of θεραπεύειν, “doing favors”, may have to be reconsidered for if we are really talking about χάρις, instead of payment-in-disguise, there is no reason to suppose why the spectator alone should “owe gratitude”.

3. **The Hunter Hunted: Role Reversals and the Paradox of the Hetaera**

3.1. Hunting without violence

Meanwhile, Socrates has already managed to lure the very subject matter of his conversation with his companions, Theodote, into the discussion. From xi.4 onwards, Socrates addresses Theodote directly as the dialogue turns to a discussion of friendship, for to have (κεκτῆσθαι) a flock of friends (φίλων of pederasty and the transactions with hetaeras could be problematized when compared to the civic institution of marriage. Apollodorus’ *Against Neaera* is concerned with the demarcation between transactions with courtesans and the institution of marriage linked to the reproduction of the city (the long-term order). Cf. Gilhuly (2009), 29-57.

GOLDHILL (1998), 115: “The gaze, for Xenophon’s Socrates, even—especially—when directed by a man at a beautiful woman, is not a unilinear process of objectification.”

Cf. NARCY (2004), 229: “C’est son statut de courtisane, dans ce qu’il a de différent de celui d’une prostituée, qui est menace par cet aveu. Si une hetaera se définit comme une femme “qu’il faut persuader pour obtenir un rendez-vous”, la réponse obtenue par Socrate revient à dire que “persuader” n’est qu’un euphémisme pour “payer”: que, en un mot, la différence entre courtisane et prostituée n’est qu’une fiction.”

THEΟΣΡΕΠΕΙΕΙΝ, “to benefit”, “to confer a service” is frequently used in erotic contexts for the “care” and “attention” the lover offers his beloved, and hence is the counterpart of χαρίζεσθαι. Both evoke the long-term order (THEΟΣΡΕΠΕΙΕΙΝ is al used in contexts of the care for one’s parents, gods and land) and both have a capacity towards euphemization. Cf. GOLDHILL (1998), 116.
ἀγέλην) is a greater boon (κτῆμα) than livestock.\footnote{Xen. Mem. III.xi.5.} In valuing friends over livestock, Socrates introduces the animal imagery leading up to the hunting metaphor that will figure in the rest of the dialogue, as the next question is whether friends are acquired by mere chance, τύχη, like a fly (μυῖα) that accidentally lands on one, or by some knack (μηχανή).\footnote{Xen. Mem. III.xi.5.} The image of the accidental fly prepares for the first hunting metaphor, as Socrates supposes that Theodote’s hunting methods are probably more fitting (προσηκόντως) than those employed by the spider who also hunts for a living, but who uses a net (θήρατρον) to catch whatever flies into it\footnote{Xen. Mem. III.xi.6.}—obviously not a method suited to catch friends, for friends are elected, not caught indiscriminately, as Socrates will expound in xi.10-11.

It should be noted that the spider weaving a web is not exactly a prototypical case of hunting. The image is quickly dismissed, as friends are the most valuable prey (τὸ πλείστου ἄξιον ἄγρευμα) that cannot be caught without skill (οὐ ἀτέχνως), for even relatively low-value prey (τὸ μικρὸν ἀξιόν), as for instance hares require many skills (πολλὰ τεχνάζουσιν). An elaborate description of hare-hunting follows, specifying the three types of hounds that are trained for hare-hunting: one type specially adapted to hunt them at night, another pack of hounds trained for tracking them by scent, and a third pack to catch them in pursuit. Moreover, in case the prey still escapes (ἀποφεύγουσι), it will be driven into nets.\footnote{Xen. Mem. III.xi.7-9.}

The hunting metaphor has a history in Greek erotic literature for obvious reasons: it vividly captures the essence of erotic pursuit, in which the subject of seduction and courting (usually an erastes) is pictured as a hunter who pursues (διώκειν), and the object of courting (usually an eromenos) is imagined as quarry that flees (φεύγειν).\footnote{E.g. Pl. Symp. 184ab, Sappho 1,21, Theognis 1287-1294, 1299-1304, 1355; Anacreon 417, Pindarus fr. 127, Meleagros 116, Rhianos 5.1. Cf. Schnapp (1997); Koch-Harnack (1983); Dover (1978),
asymmetry in erotic pursuit: seduction is imagined as involving an active party that takes the initiatives and a passive party that is expressly not supposed to initiate contact but that does have room to consent to advances or decline them.

As metaphors are dangerous, Socrates makes plain that there is a crucial difference between hunting lovers and hunting quarry: friends cannot be caught and kept with violence (βία) (for that would not be seduction!). This too is a theme prominent in popular Attic culture: vase paintings of pederastic courtship depict subject and object of pursuit face to face, exchanging animal gifts, i.e. hunting game (frequently a hare), evoking the metaphor of courting as hunting while at the same time redeeming the metaphor from its aggressive elements and incorporating it in a χάρις-economy. The object of courtship is “hunted” with gifts, i.e. “seduced”, not coerced with violence. One can refuse a gift (“flee”) and choose not to reciprocate if one is not willing to enter into a relationship with the giver—entirely in the spirit of φιλία and χάρις.

3.2. Mem. II.vi: hunting “friends”

Hunting a lover is an obvious metaphor, but can one hunt for friends as well? The metaphor of friend-hunting, as distinct from erotic hunting, recurs elsewhere in Socratic literature, where the friendships involved invariably seem to have a sexual component to them. Does this mean that in these contexts

84 ff.; HUPPERTS (2000), 43, 119 ff. The metaphor is also common in Socratic literature: e.g. Pl. Prot. 309a (Socrates pursuing Alcibiades), Phaedrus 241, Symp. 182e.

77 DOVER (1978), 84.

78 The passive party is expected to play out this freedom of response: as hunting is a sport, a challenging quarry raises the value of the capture, the hare being a notorious example for being swift and cunning—qualities that emphatically come to the fore in Socrates’ description of the hare hunt. Cf. DOVER (1978), 87. In the Cynegeticus (5.33), the mere sight of the hare and its flight is said to be so charming that it makes one forget the person one covets.

79 III.xi.11. Cf. Mem. II.vi.9ff. where for similar reasons even hare-hunting is dismissed as a method suited to catch friends.


81 This image is made explicit in Plato’s Sophist 222d where erastai are said to hunt their eromenoi using gifts as hunting weapons.

φιλία serves as a euphemism for erotic pursuit, or are the hunting methods discussed universally applicable to all types of φιλία-relationships including erotic ones?

First of all, it should be emphasized that the term φιλία in no way precludes relationships with erotic motives: as we have seen, one of the three types of friendship distinguished by Aristotle, the φιλία διὰ τὸ ἡδύ, clearly includes pederastic relationships. Moreover, in Plato’s Lysis, even if the very setting suggests that some of the dialogue partners may have erotic motives when they discuss the topic of φιλία, the examples of φίλος move quite easily from bonds between pals (Lysis and Menexenos) and φιλία between would-be lovers (Hippotheles desiring Lysis) to φιλία between parents and children. As we have seen, neither the noun φιλία nor φίλος dictates a specific relationship type nor the presence of specific emotions (although in some situations, φιλία-bonds may be compatible with sentiments of love and attachment); φιλία merely characterizes a particular aspect of relationships, i.e. its long-term reciprocal dimension, be it within the family, in business, politics or in erotics.

Hence, in Mem. II.vi, a dialogue on the selection and acquisition of φίλοι, Socrates’ conversation-partner Critoboulus may have a very particular “friend with benefits” in mind, a boy he wishes to seduce to become his ἐρώμενος. It is

83 Chapter Three.
84 Moreover, parts of the argumentation about the proper object of φιλία in the Lysis resemble argumentation about the proper object of ἔρως in the Symposium. This has given rise to the so-called Pohlenz-Von Arnnim-controversy over the status of the Lysis, and more in general about the relation between φιλία and ἔρως: to Pohlenz (1916), 254 φιλία and ἔρως are kindred phenomena (Cf. Pohlenz (1913)), to Von Arnim (1914), 62 φιλία is perfect friendship free from desire and hence incompatible with ἔρως. He is followed in this by Wilamowitz (1920), II, 68 who finds Plato’s juxtaposition of φιλία and ἔρως misguided as according to him the two are “zwei grundverschiedene Verhältnisse”. Grube (1958), 92n1 suggests that in both the Symposium and the Lysis ἔρως is a species subsumed under the genus φιλία. See Bolotin (1979), 201-26 for a critical discussion of the Pohlenz-Von Arnim-controversy. Cf. Levin (1971); Hyland (1968) for an interpretation of the differences between ἐπιθυμία, ἔρως and φιλία in Plato as a hierarchical relationship with increasing degrees of reason; Cummins (1981) for the fundamental objection against Hyland’s methodology of expecting a rigid (or even technical) and stable use of vocabulary in Plato’s dialogues; Dirlmeier (1931), 58-71 for a distinction between φιλία and ἔρως in terms of ἔξως vs. πάθος.
85 Introduction Section 2.
86 Here I disagree with the semantic thesis of Konstan (1997), 53 ff., who claims that the noun φίλος denotes a distinct social category, analogous to our “friend”. See Introduction Section 2.
conceivable that to Critoboulus, the terms φιλία and φίλος function as euphemisms for more overtly erotic vocabulary—euphemisms because they alleviate some of the connotations of ἔρως: ones-sided, aggressive, invasive, unsettling, symptomatic for a lack of self-control. But even when Critoboulus uses φιλία-vocabulary only euphemistically, Socrates does not when he reflects on the methods of friend-hunting: whether deliberately or not, Socrates is taking the φιλία-vocabulary at face value, inquiring the implications and propounding guidelines that pertain to examples in the field of politics as well a business. Socrates is concerned with universally applicable rules of conduct that go for all kinds of φιλία-relationships, including those with an erotic interest without being confined to them.

Similarly, in the case of Theodote’s friend-hunt, Theodote’s use of φιλία-terminology may very well be euphemistic like her use of χάρις-vocabulary, central to her self-fashioning as a hetaera: Theodote wants us to regard her contacts with her “visitors” as relationships with φίλοι, partners in long-term reciprocal relationships with whom she exchanges favors, including sexual ones, on a voluntary basis. But to Socrates there are no euphemisms, no pleasant names for underlying realities that turn out to be different; if Theodote’s chooses to name her visitors φίλοι, than that is what they are, not only what they are named. Hence, in the rest of the dialogue we see Socrates playing along the language game while at the same time challenging this conceptualization of Theodote’s contacts in terms of φιλία, by testing the applicability of the terminology on the situation.

Understanding Socrates’ choice of words as mere euphemisms would be missing the point: this is a dialogue that investigates the nature of reciprocity, of φιλία, not of unilateral ἔρως. Rather, it is Theodote’s use of euphemisms that allows Socrates to “misrecognize” what she is actually talking about and to instigate a conversation about reciprocity.

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88 Cf. Chapter One, Section 1.
3.3. Who is hunting whom?

Still, there remains one thing to be explained: Theodote is not the hare, but the hunter. Socrates’ remarkable choice of the spider as the first image of the hunter has facilitated the surprising analogy in which Theodote is the hunter instead of the passive object of seduction.

This too has an analogue in popular conceptions: lovers often fashion themselves as victims of their whimsical objects of desire. They emphasize how they choose to “enslave themselves” to their boyfriends or how their boy-lovers exert erotic power over them—a pre-emptive pose that counters any charge that the lover abuses his superior position and that moreover protects the boys from the charge of slavish surrender. Often this paradoxical use of the hunting metaphor figures the victim “caught by the nets of desire”—which reminds us of the opening of the dialogue where Socrates analyzes Theodote’s ἐπίδειξις as more profitable to her than to the spectator, because her sight has the power to arouse ἐπιθυμία and πόθος in the spectator. Here, the metaphor of chasing game into hunting-nets (δίκτυα) pictures the subject of seduction, Theodote’s friends, as hunted down by desire or love. Along the same line, Socrates’ remarkable choice for the spider as an image of the hunter expresses the crippling effect of attraction on the subject of desire. Both are cases of victimization of the subject of seduction, but Socrates’ framing of the spider as a

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89 The most notorious example is the Cydias fragment quoted in Pl. Charm. 155d-e in a context that suggests a similar role reversal: Charmides is the predator, Socrates the prey. For the motif of victimization, cf. Pausanias in Plat. Symp. 183a, Xen. Mem. 1.2.11; the pederastic poems in “Theognis” Book II, e.g. lines 1235-8, 1305-10, 1337-40, 1341-50, 1357-60. FISHER (2001), 45; GOLDEN (1984) and (1990), 58-9. This contrary motion is not the dominant theme in Attic visual and literary culture; as such, it has escaped notice of KOCH-HARNACK (1983), DOVER (1978) and HUSS (1999). It does nonetheless have precedents, most notably in Plato’s Charmides (155D), but also in visual culture. See BARRINGER (2001), 70ff.

90 FISHER (2001), 45. The commonplace of the thankless boy in Greek elegy reflects precisely the fact that an object of seduction is supposed to be free to decline and that the boy has a possibility of not returning the favors of his seducer at the price of having a reputation of thanklessness. See DAVIDSON (2007), 38ff.

91 E.g. Ibycus fr. 2, Soph. fr. 932. Moreover, the image of erôtes as archers reflects the idea of pretty boys that “wound” their senior lovers. Cf. GOLDHILL (1998), 117n.34.

92 Cf. Mem. Li.ii.12 where kissing a pretty boy is equaled with having tarantulas inject maddening poison into one at a distance.
hunter gives an initial impetus to the role reversal that puts Theodote in the role of active hunter.\textsuperscript{93}

In making Theodote the hunter, Socrates endows her with the very agency implied by the autonomy that she herself claimed by using the vocabulary of long-term relationships: her position as object of the gaze as well as her role as object of \(\pi\varepsilon\iota\theta\varepsilon\iota\nu\) are both compromised by Socrates’ re-interpretation of the situation and his paradoxical use of the hunting metaphor.

### 3.4. The hunting sophist: a didactic turn

At the end of the dialogue, Theodote suggests that she is ready to visit Socrates instead of the other way round and Socrates has succeeded in reversing the roles: he has emerged as the “strange object of desire by demonstrating his mastery over the position of the desiring subject.”\textsuperscript{94} But what was at stake in the first place?

Let us briefly go back to the beginning of the episode where Theodote is introduced to Socrates by an informant who claims that her beauty is “beyond description” (\(\kappa\rho\varepsilon\iota\tau\tau\omicron\ \lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\omicron\)) (xi.1). To someone like Socrates the suggestion that Theodote’s κάλλος “beats λόγος” is of course an outright provocation and a philosophical challenge.\textsuperscript{95} The dialogue is staged as a battle between beauty and λόγος, celebrating the supremacy of philosophical dialectics over physical beauty.\textsuperscript{96}

\textsuperscript{93} In applying the hunting metaphor on Theodote’s situation, Socrates possibly cashes in on a tendency in the ancient Greek world to represent courtesans along the same lines as a male erastes. Not only do courtesans possess an economic autonomy that comes very close to that of the typical Athenian male, in New Comedy they are also frequently represented as aggressively hunting out their lovers—an easy target of ridicule, of course, for little could be so degrading as courtesans past their prime being forced to desperately chase “seducers”. FANTHAM (1986), 47-48; FARAOINE (1999), 156 ff.

\textsuperscript{94} GOLDHILL (1998), 121-2.

\textsuperscript{95} Cf. the sophistic catch phrase: ποιεῖν τὸν ἄττω λόγον κρεῖττω. E.g. DK80a21 (Ar., Rhet. II.xxxiv (1402 a 13–28)) Cf. NARCY (2004), 215. There is more at stake than “the classic problem of ecphrasis and beauty”: how can what is greater than logos be described adequately. GOLDHILL (1998), 114.

\textsuperscript{96} Cf. AZOULAY (2004a), 372-5. According to NARCY (2004), 221 this reflects a competition between Socrates and Theodote over Alcibiades.
Moreover, Theodote’s posing for her admirers is an ἐπίδειξις, a demonstration—the trade-mark of the sophist, rhetorical demonstration.97 The emphatic reframing of Theodote’s ἐπίδειξις in terms of the question “who benefits more” (ὁφελιμοτέρα, ὁφελήσεται) from the encounter harks back to Xenophon’s recurrent claim that the city in general and Socrates’ direct companions in particular have benefited (ὁφελεῖσθαι) from Socrates’ company,98 in contrast to sophistic demonstration that (it seems to be implied) benefits the sophist more than the pupil.

When Theodote asks Socrates how to apply the methods of hare-hunting to the enterprise of acquiring friends, Socrates suggests that the hunting dogs be substituted by “someone who will track and find rich men with good taste (τοὺς φιλοκάλους καὶ πλουσίους)”. This evokes an alternative use of the image of the “man-hunter”: the sophist: the hunter is not only a popular image of the lover, the ἔρωτής, chasing his beloved, but also a stock-image of the sophist, the man-hunter, in search of new pupils from whom to extort massive fees.99

A well-known example we find in Plato’s Sophist where the Eleatic Stranger and Theaetetus attempt to “hunt down”, i.e. to define, the elusive nature of the sophist (222d-223a). One of the candidate definitions is the sophist as a man-hunter: within the class of “the hunt on private persons”, there is the subdivision called ἐρωτικὴ τέχνη, the afore-mentioned branch of hunting-by-gift-giving (δωροφορικόν). The sophist, on the other hand, is characterized as the class of “hunt on private persons” that involves pay (μισθός) in cash (νόμισμα)—the branch of hunt labeled μισθαρνητικόν, “involving pay”.100

97 For the sophistic appropriation of rhetorical ἐπίδειξις as their trademark see Pl. Euthyd. 274a10-b1; cf. Pl. Hipp.Mj. 282c6-d5.
98 E.g. Mem. I.i.4, I.ii.2, I.ii.60-1, I.vi.5, II.iv.1, II.v.1, II.vi.1, III.i.1, III.i.1, III.viii.1, III.x.1, IV.1.1, IV.iv.1, IV.vii.1. In Mem. I.ii.1, after the first two chapters that constitute a more explicit defense of Socrates, Xenophon opens the rest of his Memorabilia with a clear mission statement: Ως δὲ δὴ καὶ ὁφελεῖν ἐδόκει μοι τοὺς συνόντας τὰ μὲν ἔργῳ δεικνύων ἑαυτὸν οἷος ἦν, τὰ δὲ καὶ διαλεγόμενοι, τούτων δὴ γράψω ὡς ὧν καὶ διαμνημονεύσω. (transl. T&W). See also: DORION (2006), NEHAMAS (1998), 110-111.
99 DELATTE (1933), 160-1. In Pl. Symp. 203D ἔρως is imagined as a hunter (θηρευτής) and philosopher. For the notoriously exorbitant high fees charged by sophists see BLANK (1985).
100 Note that on closer look, the δωροφορικόν man-hunt is in terms of exchange patterns not isomorphous to its μισθαρνητικόν counterpart: within the ἐρωτικὴ τέχνη, it is the hunter, the
What is most striking is the classification of erotics and sophistry as both types of man-hunting, demarcated from one another by the same ideological dividing line that distinguishes the world of χάρις and seduction from the world of commerce and coercion—two worlds both dictating their own distinct ethics of reciprocity.

The same dividing line recurs in the closing chapter of Xenophon’s *Cynegeticus* where the sophist is depicted as hunting rich young men and coercing them to pay high fees:

(11) *Xen., Cynegeticus* 13.8-9

οἱ σοφισταὶ δ’ ἐπὶ τῷ ἐξαπατᾶν λέγουσι καὶ γράφουσιν ἐπὶ τῷ ἐαυτῶν κέρδει, καὶ οὐδένα οὐδέν ὠφελοῦσιν. οὐδὲ γὰρ σοφὸς αὐτῶν ἐγένετο οὐδὲ ἐστίν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἄρκει ἐκάστῳ σοφιστήν κληθῆναι, ὅ ἐστιν ὄνειδος παρὰ γε εὐ φρονοῦσι. τὰ μὲν οὖν τῶν σοφιστῶν παραγγέλματα παραγγέλλεται, τὰ δὲ τῶν φιλοσόφων ἐνθυμήματα μὴ ἀτιμάζειν· οἱ μὲν γὰρ σοφισταὶ πλουσίους καὶ νέους θηρῶνται, οἱ δὲ φιλόσοφοι πάσι κοινοὶ καὶ φίλοι· τύχας δὲ ἀνδρῶν οὔτε τιμῶσι οὔτε ἀτιμάζουσι.

Here a similar demarcation line can be discerned, distinguishing the commercial sphere where the sophists operate, hunters of rich and young men, prone to deceive (ἐξαπατᾶν) and motivated by self-interest (ἐπὶ τῷ ἐαυτῶν κέρδει), from the sphere of φιλία, where the philosophers are active, who are available for everyone and who operate on the basis of long-term personal ties. As we have seen in Socrates’ debate with Antiphon the sophist, the ἐράστης, who hunts with gifts; the sophists hunt young men for the sake of μισθός.

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101 “The Sophists speak and write to deceive people for their own profit and do nothing useful for anyone; for none of them ever was or is wise, but it is enough for each of them to be called a Sophist, which is a term of abuse among well-thinking persons. Accordingly I advise my readers to be on their guard against the precepts of the Sophists, but not to scorn the arguments of the philosophers; for the Sophists hunt rich young men, while the philosophers are available and amiable to everyone; they neither value nor despise men’s fortunes.” (PHILLIPS & WILLCOCK).

102 This opposition seems to suggest a potential contradiction in the metaphor of “friend-hunting”, as becomes evident a couple of paragraphs further on (Xen. *Cyn.* 13.12), where there is a clear distinction between those citizens who hunt for wild animals, and hence contribute to the common good, and those who hunt for friends, which (it is implied) is anti-social in its very nature for it aims to harm the other (ἐπ’ ἀνδρὸς βλάβη) and is motivated by self-interest (φιλοκερδείᾳ). It seems to be suggested that the proper object of hunting are enemies (πολέμω,
opposition between sophist and philosopher is organized along the same lines as the opposition between the zero-sum world of commerce and the world of χάρις—the same ideological opposition that holds between the occupation of the prostitute and the art of the courtesan.

When we compare the Antiphon-debate with the Theodote-episode, Socrates appears to have identity-problems very similar to Theodote’s: to demarcate his activities from seemingly isomorphous sophistic education. The discursive strategy Socrates chooses resembles the courtesan’s: to appropriate the vocabulary of long-term relationships and claim that his activities are embedded in a different type of relationship than the practice of his near-siblings, in a way that does not contradict the subject matter. For, as Socrates elsewhere suggests, there is a tension between being a teacher in virtue and charging fees, very similar to the conceptual contradiction between being seductive and accepting pay.

But there are differences. Theodote is a friend-hunter who, at the beginning of the dialogue, turns out to extract benefit herself from ἐπίδειξις rather than benefiting her friends. Socrates is invited to become her co-hunter (συνθηρατής) of friends—a metaphorical match-maker or procurer, as he elsewhere boasts to be. In Xenophon’s Symposium for instance, he acts as a match-maker for Hermogenes and Callias, and his success in flattering Callias is applauded by Hermogenes:

ἐχθροῖς), by definition not friends. A man-hunter cannot be a friend, for his interests inherently conflict with those of his prey. This, of course, is consistent with the line of argument we have encountered before in which Socrates had to make an effort to adjust the hunting-metaphor, originating from the more violent and invasive sphere of erôs, to the benign sphere of philia which by its very nature, consisting in long-term relationships based on mutual consent, is incompatible with violence (βία) and deceit (ἀπάτη). In both dialogues, with Critoboulus and Theodote, the hunting methods deemed suitable for friend-hunt are far removed from conventional prototypical hunting techniques—to the point where we may even feel that Socrates retches the metaphor too much.

See Chapter Four.

E.g. I.i.5-7.

Xen. Mem. III.xi.15: καὶ ἡ Θεοδότη, Τί οὖν οὐ σύ μοι, ἐφη, ὦ Σώκρατες, ἐγένετο συνθηρατής τῶν φίλων; Theodote said, “Why don’t you help me in my hunt for friends, Socrates?”

Xen. Symp. III.x, IV.56-64.
Here, quite exceptionally, the verb χαρίζεσθαι is used with reference not to the erômenos, but to the third party, the match-maker Socrates, who not only gratifies the erastes’ desire for the boy as well as the boy’s desire for compliments, but also attains a didactic goal (παιδεύεις).

Contrary to Theodote, Socrates does live up to the vocabulary of φιλία and χάρις, as his philosophical education does not take the shape of sophistic ἐπίδειξις, the ostentatious demonstration of rhetorical skill that makes one wonder who is doing a favor to whom. He is not the hunter profiting from his prey, but the co-hunter who may be capable of helping the hunter Theodote realize her true goals.

4. Desire management

4.1. Beneath the veil of words

As Theodote is eager to know how to apply the hunting metaphor to the case of φίλοι, Socrates suggests that she needs a human hound who will track down men of wealth and good taste for her and drive them into her nets (τὰ σὰ δίκτυα), i.e. the close-enfolding nets of her body (εὖ περι πλεκόμενον, τὸ σῶμα) and her soul inside:

107 “I swear, Socrates,’” said Hermogenes, ‘the thing I admire most in you—and there are many others—is that, at the same time as paying Callias a compliment, you instruct him in how he ought to behave.’”
111 Mem. III.xi.9.
The ψυχή actively supports and facilitates Theodote’s hunt.113 The passage effectively demonstrates a transition, not only from the physical to the spiritual, but from short-term attraction instigated by physical beauty to long-term commitment grounded in behavior: if Theodote really aspires to capture friends, she not only needs to be selective, but she has to be told by her soul how to really gratify (χαρίζεσθαι)—i.e. what real χάρις is. As χάρις and φιλία are reciprocal endeavors, here we see it is Theodote who is told to look (ἐμβλέπουσα, presumably “looking in the face”, “with eye-contact”) while gratifying a friend—another indication that the roles are being reversed.114 Moreover, real χάρις entails the display of a range of emotions and dispositions: to be cheerful (εὐφραίνοις) when talking, to be well-pleased (ἀσμένως) when welcoming a respectful lover, to look after an ill friend thoughtfully

112 “‘One, certainly,’ said Socrates, ‘which is very close-enfolding: your body. And in it is your mind, which teaches you how to look charming and talk gaily, and tells you that you must give a warm welcome to an attentive lover, but bolt the door against a selfish one; that, if a lover falls ill, you must look after him devotedly; that, if he has a stroke of luck, you must share his pleasure enthusiastically; and that, if he cares for you deeply, you must be gratifying to him wholeheartedly. As for loving, I am sure that you know how to love not only passively, but with real affection; and you convince your lovers that you are fond of them, I know, not by words but by deeds.’” (transl. adapt.)

113 Hence, this passage should not be interpreted in terms of a Socratic “sublimation” of ἔρως (that we may expect in Plato’s Socratic work): rather, the soul is complementing and supporting the work done by the body. An indication for the “complement” interpretation (as opposed to sublimation) is that in I.ii.52 Socrates (reportedly) says that friends who are only εὔνους are useless (οὐδὲν ὄφελος) unless they are capable of helping (ῴξελειν δυνήσονταί).

114 Already noted by GOLDHILL (1998), 118. A socially correct object of the gaze is not supposed to return the look, but to modestly casts his or her eyes down (which reinforces his/her status as object). Cf. GILHULY (2009), 1-5ff. on the symposiasts gazing at Autolycus in Xen. Symp. I.viii-x.
(φροντιστικῶς), to empathize with him when he is lucky (συνησθῆναι)—in other words: when the friend cares for her deeply (τῷ σφόδρα σού φροντίζοντι) she ought to be devoted to him with her entire soul (ὅλῃ τῇ ψυχῇ κεχαρίσθαι).\(^\text{115}\)

Here we see Socrates draw a systematic distinction between real φιλία and real χάρις on the one hand and its counterfeit, the isomorphic practice of the prostitute who only uses the vocabulary of reciprocity: a hetaera may look like a friend, but underneath the superficial (lexical) resemblances of the true φίλος there is a range of internalized dispositions, emotions and virtues.

This dialectics of inside and outside may explain the pun on the close-folding (περιπλεκόμενον) hunting-net that is Theodote’s body: of course, the weaving metaphor fits nicely in the imagery of both the spider’s web and the hunting-nets employed in hare-hunting. Moreover, the image initiates a transition from the outside (Theodote’s body) to the inside (her soul):\(^\text{116}\) a real friend not only gratifies her/his friend with the body, but with a whole repertory of internalized dispositions, emotions and virtues—factors that may not always be visible, because the body is “veiling” them well (τὸ σῶμα εὖ περιπλεκόμενον), but that in the end make all the difference between a counterfeit friend and a real one. Here, we see a very literal case of the demarcation strategy that we have encountered in Part One, to internalize the criteria that distinguish φιλία-exchanges from isomorphic exchanges: on the level of the body, prostitute/hetaera and the real friend may seem to gratify the friend; but real gratification in real friendship requires a different attitude of the soul.

The metaphor also applies at a verbal level to Theodote’s euphemistic veil of words.\(^\text{117}\) A parallel can be found in Against Timarchus, where Aeschines claims that Timarchus’ promiscuous erotic track record not only reveals that he has

\[\text{115} \quad \text{The perfect aspect (κεχαρίσθαι) seems to characterize a disposition rather than single (euphemized) acts.}\]

\[\text{116} \quad \text{DAVIDSON (1997), 130 suggests that the image of Theodote’s body as a “net”, or a “veil”, hints at the innermost part of the female body, i.e. the vagina. In this context, I find it somewhat far-fetched, as there is a clear opposition between body and soul made here.}\]

\[\text{117} \quad \text{GOLDHILL (1998), 118. Cf. Eur. Phoen. 494-6: περιπλοκὰς λόγων. In Antiphanes fr. 75.1 K-A the expression περιπλοκάς λέγεις is opposed to σαφῶς; in Straton fr. 35 K-A περιπλοκάς λέγεις is opposed to speaking ἀπλῶς and σαφέστερον.}\]
been living ἡταιρηκώς, as somebody’s boy-lover, but also as a prostitute (πεπορνευμένος). As Aeschines consistently makes a show of his hesitation to discuss coarse subject matter such as prostitution, he makes an ostentatious fuss about having to utter the very word “prostitution”:

\[(14) \text{Aesch. I.52}\]

(…) οὐκέτι δήπου φαίνεται μόνον ἡταιρηκώς, ἀλλὰ καὶ —μὰ τὸν Διόνυσον οὐκ οἶδ’ ὅπως δυνήσομαι περιπλέκειν ὅλην τὴν ἡμέραν— καὶ πεπορνευμένος:

Aeschines exclaims that he cannot keep being euphemistic: he “knows not how he can keep on veiling (περιπλέκειν) all day long”. As a prosecutor, he is impelled to be explicit about subject matter that civilized people prefer to talk about in less vulgar expressions—e.g. Misgolas’ testimony that is delicate (οὐκ ἄπαθεν) and hence omits the act that dare not speak its name, the thing itself (αὐτὸ μὲν γὰρ τούτον τοῦ ἔργου).

Aeschines reduces the difference between prostitution and Timarchus’ allegedly more honorable encounters with Misgolas to a merely lexical distinction (a difference in names), which in turn is motivated solely by matters of politeness, cultivation, and style (not truth), and can be undone and re-vealed for what it is. In other contexts too, the image of “veiling” and weaving webs of words stand in opposition to speaking plainly and straight-forwardly. Hence, Socrates’ use seems to hint at a reality underneath the verbal veil of χάρις- and φιλία-terminology (the transaction that is really going on; what a hetaera really is).

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118 The verb ἑταιρεῖν (and the deverbative noun ἑταίρης) are not used of a hetaera but predominantly of a boy “who played a homosexual role analogous to that of a hetaira.” DOVER (1978), 21. Cf. Aesch. I.51ff.

119 E.g. in I.38 he excuses himself for being this explicit (σαφῶς εἴποιμι) because the subject matter (Timarchus’ behavior) necessitates him to do so.

120 “(…) he will seem to you no longer to have been an escort; no—and by Dionysos I do not know how I can keep wrapping it up all day long—to have prostituted himself.” (transl. FISHER)

121 I.45.

122 Cf. Eur. Phoen. 494-6: περιπλοκὰς λόγων. In Antiphanes fr. 75.1 K-A the expression περιπλοκὰς λίαν ἐρωτᾶις is opposed to σαφῶς; in Straton fr. 35 K-A περιπλοκὰς λέγεις is opposed to speaking ἁπλῶς and σαφεστερον.
As for caring (φιλεῖν), Socrates continues, a real friend knows how to do so not only "gently" (μαλακῶς, perhaps "passively"), but also with display of good intent, εὐνοϊκῶς, (like one ought to do with parents and neighbors, see Section One). Moreover, she needs to convince (ἀναπείθεις) her friends that they satisfy her (ἀφεστοὶ σοι εἰσίν), in word and deed: she needs to πείθειν her friends as much as they do her, and not so much in word but in deed (οὐ λόγῳ ἀλλ’ ἔφγαγω), i.e. not lexically by using the vocabulary of φιλία and χάρις, but actively and actually.

Theodote is (ostensibly) shocked by Socrates' demasqué and swears that she does not contrive (μηχανῶμαι) any of these things:

(15) Xen. Mem. III.xi.11

Μὰ τὸν Δί’, ἔφη ἡ Θεοδότη, ἐγὼ τούτων οὐδὲν μηχανῶμαι. — Καὶ μήν, ἔφη, πολὺ διαφέρει τὸ κατὰ φύσιν τε καὶ ὀρθῶς αὐθεντέως προσφέρεσθαι. καὶ γὰρ δὴ βία μὲν οὐτ’ ἀν ἔλοις οὔτε κατάσχοις φίλον, εὐεργεσία δὲ καὶ ἡδονή τὸ θηρίον τούτο ἁλώσι μόν τε καὶ παραμόνιμον ἐστιν.

Theodote pretends to be appalled because Socrates speaks way too explicitly and systematically about what it takes to be a good friend. She seems to resent the idea that friendship can be described this methodically (e.g. μηχανῶμαι). Socrates adds that it makes all the difference when it is done naturally (perhaps "casually") and correctly (κατὰ φύσιν τε καὶ ὀρθῶς), as violence may suffice for one-off catches; but to catch and hold on to an animal (τὸ θηρίον) requires unorthodox hunting techniques, i.e. longer term investments in relationships by means of benefits (εὐεργεσία) and pleasure (ἡδονή).

123 In homo-erotic contexts, μαλακός refers to effeminate boys or effeminate behavior, associated with submission to penetration. In general μαλακία is associated with femininity (Hdt. 7.153.4, Ar. EN 1150b15), as the opposite of masculine behavior (e.g. Eur. Suppl. 882-5). Aristotle defines μαλακία, juxtaposed with ἀκολασία and τρυφῆ, as “a failure to resist or be strong in the face of things that most men are able to resist” (EN 1150b1-2), and as opposed to καρτέρια (NE 1116a14, 1150a31-b19). To Xenophon, μαλακία is close to ἱβροτής (Symp. 8.8). Cf. Kürke (1997). Cf. Huart (1968) 373-6 and Hunt (2010), 122ff. on μαλακία in the context of politics and battle.

124 “Honestly,’ said Theodote, ‘I don’t use any of these methods.’ ‘Then again,’ said Socrates, ‘it’s much better to keep one’s human relationships natural and right. You can’t capture or keep a friend by force; but by showing the creature kindness and giving it pleasure, you can both catch it and keep it by you.’”

125 Note that Socrates does not make a categorical distinction between catching an animal (τὸ
4.2. Playing hard to get: χάρις deflated

Next, Socrates shows Theodote the knack of controlling other people’s desires (III.xi.12-14), in a way that still remains “natural and correct”:

(16) Xen. Mem. III.xi.12-13

Δεῖ τοίνυν, ἔφη, πρῶτον μὲν τοὺς φροντίζοντάς σου τοιαύτα ἀξιοῦν, οία ποιοῦσιν αὐτοῖς μικρότατα μελήσει, ἐπεῖτα δὲ αὐτὴν ἀμείβεσθαι χαριζομένην τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον· οὕτω γὰρ ἂν μάλιστα φίλοι γίγνοιτο καὶ πλείστων χρόνον φιλοίεν καὶ μέγιστα εὐεργετοίεν. χαρίζεσθαι δὲ ἂν μάλιστα, εἰ δεομένοις δωροῖο τὰ παρὰ σεαυτῆς· ὁρατός γὰρ ὅτι καὶ τῶν βρωμάτων τὰ ἥδιστα, ἐὰν μὲν τις προσφέρῃ πρὶν ἐπιθυμεῖν, ήπιός φαίνεται, κεκορεσμένος δὲ καὶ βδελυγμίαν παρέχει, ἐὰν δὲ τις προσφέρῃ λιμόν ἐμποιήσας, κἂν φαυλότερα ἄρ, πάνυ ἠδέα φαίνεται.

The scenario depicted here seems to be a very minimal construction of χάρις: gratification, χαρίζεσθαι, is reduced to requital (ἀμείβεσθαι); it entail first asking something from friends and then making similar immediate returns (ἀμείβεσθαι χαριζομένην τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον); only giving when asked to (δεομένοις δωροῖο τὰ παρὰ σεαυτῆς)—with the explanation that this way they become most friendly (μάλιστα φίλοι γίγνοιτο) and keep on being friends as long as possible (πλείστων χρόνον φιλοίεν) and become the greatest well-doers (μέγιστα εὐεργετοίεν). This mode of thinking sounds uncannily like a hetaera’s course in Customers’ Relations—not like the art of friendship at all.

126 “So in the first place, said Socrates, ‘when people care for you, you should make only such demands of them as they can satisfy with a minimum of trouble. Then, you should repay their favours in kind. In this way they are likely to become most attached to you, to go on loving you for the longest time, and to be most generous to you. And you are likely to give them most pleasure if you bestow what you have to give only when they ask for it. You can see that even the most delightful dishes seem disagreeable if they are served before the appetite is ready, and if one is satiated, they actually cause disgust; but even inferior food seems quite attractive if it is served after hunger has been aroused.’”

127 Goldhill (1998), 119: “Charis is now to be constructed on an equal (minimal) and reciprocal basis. (...) The economics of gratification appear here to aim at a stable state, where need and satisfaction coincide.”
Moreover, Socrates, comparing friendship to hunger and favors to food, advises Theodote to keep her prospective friends hungry by postponing gratification:

(17) *Xen. Mem. III.xi.12-14*

Πῶς οὖν ἄν, ἔφη, ἐγὼ λιμὸν ἐμποιεῖν τῶν παρ᾽ ἐμοὶ δυναίμην; — Εἰ νὴ Δι’, ἔφη, πρῶτον μὲν τοῖς κεκορεσμένοις μήτε προσφέροις μήτε ὑπομιμνήσκοις, ἐῶς ἂν τῆς πλησμονῆς παυσάμενοι πάλιν δέωνται, ἐπειτα τοὺς δεομένους ὑπομιμνήσκοις ὡς κοσμιωτάτῃ τε ὁμιλίᾳ καὶ τῷ φαίνεσθαι βουλομένῃ χαρίζεσθαι καὶ διαφεύγουσα, ἐῶς ἂν ὡς μάλιστα δεηθώσι· τηνυκαύτα γὰρ πολὺ διαφέρει τὰ αὐτὰ δῶρα ἢ πρὶν ἐπιθυμῆσαι διδόναι.

Socrates explicitly incites Theodote to manipulate other people’s desires and, by implication, exploit their lack of self-control: to wait until they feel the want (ἕως δέωνται), and when they become aware of the want (τοὺς δεομένους) and to behave as a model of propriety (ὡς κοσμιωτάτη) and to make a show of reluctance to yield (διαφεύγουσα), until their need is as great as can be (ἐи ὡς ἂν ὡς μάλιστα δεηθώσι), because then the same gifts (τὰ αὐτὰ δῶρα) mean much more than when they are offered before they are desired (πρὶν ἐπιθυμῆσαι).

Here, Socrates’ talk about gratification and gifts has dropped to a level of euphemism: the explicit ὁμιλίᾳ and ἐπιθυμῆσαι, the vocabulary of hunt/seduction (διαφεύγουσα), the talk about “giving the things of yourself” (δωροῖο τὰ παρὰ σεαυτῆς) make plain that Socrates’ use of the terminology of χάρις, gift-giving and φίλοι are a case of *double entendre*, with unambiguously erotic referents, innuendos: as in the Anaxilas fragment (T 8), “wanting” or “needing” (δέομαι) unambiguously refers to sexual needs. The use of χάρις-vocabulary has shrunk to sheer politeness and an ironic show of cultivation. Similarly, the rules of χαρίζεσθαι propagated here coincide with the rules of the market: it is all about satisfactions of needs and wants (cf. the vocabulary of

128 “‘Very well,’ said she, ‘how am I to arouse hunger for what I have to give?’ ‘Why, surely,’ said Socrates, ‘if, when your admirers are satiated, you neither offer nor hint at your favours, until the satisfaction has passed and they feel the want again; and next, when they most feel want, if you drop hints by a combination of the most modest behavior and obviously wanting to gratify them, and by obviously holding back until their need is as great as possible—for the same favours are much better then than before the desire for them is aroused.”

129 The combination with ὡς κοσμιωτάτη effectively de-euphemizes ὁμιλίᾳ.
δέομαι), how to satisfy customers in the short run, while making sure they will be needy again in the long run; how to reciprocate in the same coin; how to cash in on frequent customers. Is this a cynical strategy?

At this point, we should keep the analogy between Socrates and Theodote in mind: they both seduce. Theodote’s ἐπίδειξις arouses desire by her carefully dosing exposure, showing only “as much of herself as decency allows”; she refrains from the extreme exposure characteristic of the brothel prostitute. In the same way, Socrates has not shot his bolt like a sophist does in his ostentatious display of rhetorical skills, his ἐπίδειξις; rather, he teases his prospective pupils by gradual exposition, by hinting at the knowledge and wisdom he possesses and shares with his companions, and by carefully holding back information at the moment Theodote’s curiosity is aroused.

Socrates’ exposition of the method of friend-hunting is self-reflexive. Theodote is told to be selective in the friends she welcomes: she should give a warm welcome to the eager suitor (τὸν ἐπιμελόμενον), but shut the door on a spoiled brat. In the same way, Socrates is said to select his friends on basis of their receptivity: the prospective pupil is not only recognized by his quickness to learn and his ability to remember what he has learned, but also by his desire (ἐπιθυμεῖν) to acquire wisdom.

Theodote shows herself an eager suitor, for she indicates that she desires Socrates’ company, although it has not yet occurred to her that the tables are turned, as she suggests that Socrates may become her co-hunter and invites him to her place. Socrates immediately replies, with a leçon par l’exemple: posing as a

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130 E.g. the Euthydemus-episode in Mem. IV.ii, where the desire to learn is not yet evident in the pupil. Socrates manages to seduce Euthydemus, who initially stands aloof watching from the outside how Socrates converses with his companions, into a conversation (as he also did with Theodote). This initial seduction works as a first selection procedure that selects those people who are susceptible enough to subject them to testing, ἐλέγχειν, a Socratic procedure in which the claims to wisdom are refuted and, if the victim is susceptible to what Socrates has to offer, arouses the desire to know. So too did Euthydemus who, enthusiastic in his pursuit of knowledge and wisdom, is extremely eager to spend as much time with Socrates as possible, “never leaving” Socrates again. See Tarrant (2002) for the contention that Socratic ἐλέγχος is primarily applied to persons rather than propositions. For the distinction between different types of Socratic elenches, see: Johnson (2005). Cf. Dorian (2000); Slings (1999); Morrison (1994). Fürst (1996), 69-77 on Plato’s conception of φιλία as the ideal setting for ἔλεγχος (mostly in the Gorgias).
busy hetaera, he plays hard to get and manages to make her eager to come to him, giving clues as to how she is supposed to seduce him, i.e. by means of love magic.

5. **The Secrets of Love Magic**

5.1. **Socrates the co-hunter**

Socrates’ self-representation as an ἐρώμενος or an object of desire is of course a well-known theme in Socratic literature, where often the objective of role reversals is to make the younger companion take an active role in the quest for virtue and wisdom. In Xenophon’s Socratic works too, we see the elevating effects of beauty on those who pursue her. Critoboulus, in his speech in the *Symposium*, makes the rather bold claim that his beauty will benefit (ὡφελήσει) people (IV.17), for it is the beautiful beloved that “inspires” virtues into his lover, making him more generous, strenuous, heroic, modest and self-restrained (IV.15). Again we see the mechanisms of χάρις at work: in the world of seduction, where coercion is out of the question, playing hard to get makes a pursuer outdo himself in terms of generosity and self-restraint—just like the quarry that gives the huntsman a good run enhances the physical shape of the hunter.

In a dialogue aiming to alter misconceptions of reciprocity there is an obvious objective in Socrates’ posing as an object of desire: to invite and provoke Theodote to break out of her one-sided conception of φιλία, in which there is a clear distinction between an active partner who initiates contact and a passive reactive partner, and to live up to her vocabulary of reciprocity by taking initiatives and making investments herself.

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131 See n.4. above. Cf. **Edmonds** (2000), 271; **Halperin** (1990b); **Reece** (1988), 69-70. Plato’s paradoxical identification of Socrates as a desirable ἐρώμενος serves to transform prevailing conceptions of beauty into another notion of beauty, a beauty that is philosophically functional and that coincides with the good, serving as a midwife to the thoughts of the young men in Socrates’ company, that directs the gaze of the lover to its real object, the beauty of the Forms. **Edmonds** (2000), **Halperin** (1990b), **Reece** (1988), **Thomsen** (2002), **Narcy** (2004).
But there is more to it than sheer role reversal as things get increasingly unsettling towards the end of the dialogue where the hunting image becomes even more complicated. For after Socrates’ elaborate exposition of the art of desire management (xi.12-14), Theodote invites Socrates to become her co-hunter (συνθηρατής) of friends—presumably harking back to Socrates’ interpretation of the hunting metaphor (xi.9): the methods of the hare-hunt are applicable to friend-hunting when for the hounds we substitute “someone who will track and find men of wealth and good taste and drive them into Theodote’s nets”. In other words, Socrates is offered a career-change to become a professional pimp—a proposition that is less of an anomaly than may appear at first sight for it is in line with Socrates’ recurrent assimilation with women of the working class, such as midwife, matchmaker and procuress. This is a productive class of metaphors expressive of the educational processes of protreptics, counseling and coaching an apprentice philosopher as each of these professions is given a metaphorical twist by Socrates: a midwife that assists young minds in giving birth to wisdom, a go-between that matches a student with the right teacher, a pimp that makes people mutually useful to one another.

But here, Socrates outflirts Theodote:

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133 As this episode is the only one in Xenophon’s *Memorabilia* picturing Socrates in conversation with a woman, a woman moreover implicated in what we might label “commercial sex”, it is tempting to regard Theodote as a counterpart of Aspasia or Diotima—those articulate female personalities in the other Socratic authors who were notorious for their erotic expertise. E.g. Tilg (2004), 205: “Theodote repräsentiert die gefährliche Seite Aspasias. Sokrates bewahrt ihr gegenüber jedoch überlegen seine Selbstbeherrschung und macht es damit besser als Perikles. Das Motiv Perikles-Aspasia wird als negativer Vergleichspunkt für eine apologetische Demonstration angeschlagen, aus der Sokrates als moralisch-politisches Vorbild für das öffentliche Leben hervorgeht.” Cf. Halperin (1990b), Ehlers (1966).

134 E.g. Pl. *Theaet. 149ff.*


136 E.g. Xen. *Symp. III.10, IV.56-64.*

137 Cf. Thomsen (2002).

138 Thomsen (2002).
As we have seen, “wanting” or “needing” (déomai) can refer to sexual needs and sexual requests: here it is Theodote who desires (déη) and who is to seduce (πείθειν) Socrates, and it is Socrates who is to gratify (χαρίζεσθαι) Theodote. Moreover, in assuring Theodote that she’ll “sure think of some device (μηχανήσει)”, referring back to the discussion of the “skill” (μηχανή) required to catch friends (III.xi.5), (a skill that Theodote denies to be using (xi.11)), Socrates implicitly invites her to bring the preceding exposition on methods of friend-hunting into practice—on him. In other words: he is willing to help Theodote provided that she make him her friend. But how?

As Theodote begs Socrates to come (εἴσιθι) and see her often, Socrates alludes to his ἀπραγμοσύνη:

(18) Xen. Mem. III.xi.15

Ἐάν γε νὴ Δί', ἔφη, πείθης με σύ. — Πώς οὖν ἄν, ἐφη, πείσωμι σε; — Ζητήσεις, ἐφη, τούτο αὐτή καὶ μηχανήσει, ἐάν τί μου δέη.

As Theodote begs Socrates to come (εἴσιθι) and see her often, Socrates alludes to his ἀπραγμοσύνη:

(19) Xen. Mem. III.xi.16-18

Ἀλλ', ὦ Θεοδότη, ἐφη, οὐ πάνυ μοι ῥᾴδιόν ἐστι σχολᾶσαι· καὶ γὰρ ἰδία πράγματα πολλὰ καὶ δημόσια παρέχει μοι ἀσχολίαν· εἰσὶ δὲ καὶ φίλαι μοι, αἱ οὕτω ἰμέρας οὕτε νυκτὸς ἀφ' αὐτῶν ἐάσωσι με ἀπιέναι, φίλτρα τε μανθάνουσαι παρ' ἐμοῦ καὶ ἐπῳδάς. — Ἐπίστασαι γάρ, ἔφη, καὶ ταύτα, ὦ Σώκρατε; — Ἀλλὰ διὰ τί οἴει, ἔφη, Ἀπολλόδωρόν τε καὶ Ἀντισθένη οὐδέποτέ μοι ἀπολείπεσθαι; διὰ τί δὲ καὶ Κέβητα καὶ Σιμίαν Θήβηθ εν παραγίγνεσθαι; εὖ ἴσθι ὅτι ταῦτα οὐκ ἄνευ πολλῶν φίλτρων τε καὶ ἐπῳδῶν καὶ ἰύγγων ἐστί. —Χρῆσον τοίνυν μοι, ἔφη, τὴν ἴυγγα, ἵνα

139 "I will, believe me,’ said Socrates, ‘if you persuade me.’ — ‘How can I persuade you?’ — ‘You’ll look to that yourself,’ he said, ‘and you’ll find a way, if you need any help from me.’"

140 GOLDHILL (1998), 120.

141 "Well, Theodote, (...) it’s not very easy for me to find the time for it. I have a great deal of private and public business that keeps me occupied; and I have some girlfriends too, who will never let me leave them by day or night, because they are learning from me about love potions and incantations. ‘Do you really know about them too, Socrates?’ she asked. ‘Why do you suppose that Apollodorus here and Antisthenes never leave me? And that Cebes and Simmias come to visit me from Thebes? You may be sure that these things don’t happen without a lot of love potions, incantations and incantation spells.’ ‘Lend me your magic wheel, then, so that I may spin it first for you.’ ‘Certainly not,’ he said, ‘I don’t want to be drawn to you; I want you to come to me.’ ‘Very well, I will,’ she declared, ‘Only mind you let me in.’ ‘Yes, I’ll let you in,’ said Socrates, ‘unless I have someone with me that I like better.’” (transl. TREDENNICK & WATERFIELD (1990), adaptations are mine)
The role reversal appears to be complete: Theodote will come to Socrates (πορεύσομαι) and practically begs him to receive her (ὑποδέχου), and Socrates manages to outbid Theodote by claiming the positions of the object of seduction—but only by representing himself as some sort of old maiden surrounded by girls who crave for his presence, for he teaches them the tricks and dodges of love-magic and he may or may not have time to receive Theodote as he may be occupied (“have someone ἔνδον”). Socrates appears to have turned into an overage courtesan with a full-time job entertaining girlfriends or in instructing and passing on experience to younger colleagues.

This passage has raised some discomfort in many a commentator and hence provoked ironical, satirical and allegorical readings of this passage. Some contend that the girl-friends mentioned by Socrates “ironically” refer to the companions named, present at the conversation. Others presume that the “dearer girl inside” represents Socrates’ soul that proves to be capable of self-restraint. There is, however, a middle course between assuming a deeper-level allegorical reading on the one hand and dismissing these paragraphs as a touch of Socratic irony or satire on the other, as there is a way to make sense of the motive of love magic without playing it down as an element of local color belonging to the world of courtesans that was not Socrates’ patch to begin

142 TREDENNICK & WATERFIELD (1990), 170 n.2; GOLDHILL (1998), 123: “Socrates’ triumph over the hetaera is won at the cost of the bizarre representation of him with his girlfriends.” Cf. NARCY (2004), 217 (ἐφώμενοι are reduced to passive females, cf. Symp. VIII); 216 for the complication that on this reading Socrates’ companions are both students and victims of the art of love magic. When read metaphorically these objections are cancelled. Moreover, the “girlfriend” need to be interpreted against the backdrop of φιλία (as opposed to ἔρως), which is inherently bilateral: friends become wiser in the process of friendship and wise men become friends in the process of grower wiser. cf. Chapter Four Section 1 on Xen. Mem. I.vi.

143 According to NARCY (2004), 217, the final line cannot be taken literally (it is hardly conceivable that Socrates’ companions visit Socrates at home, for he spends his time in public space) and hence must refer to Socrates’ ψυχή, the “dearer friend inside”, who is κυρία over the body, along the same lines as Alcibiades’ comparison of Socrates with beautiful figurines inside a Pan-figurine (ἔνδοθεν δὲ ἀνοιχθείς) that refer to Socrates’ σωφροσύνη in Pl. Symp. 216d6-7.
with—especially when we realize that the love magic-metaphor recurs in a couple of episodes elsewhere in the Memorabilia.

5.2. Mem. II.iii and II.vi: Love Magic

Love magic does indeed belong to the world of the courtesan who has obvious interests in attracting new wealthy visitors. ἴγξ-spells, most commonly used by courtesans, for instance, incite uncontrollable lust in the victim. But Socrates, significantly, does not only mention erotic spells, but also φίλτρα that are not typically spells inducing desire and attracting people, but are regarded as more beneficial charms that, as the terminology suggests, induce φιλία. They bind people. As such, φίλτρα are generally used by individuals who wish to repair or heal marriages or other pre-existing relationships.

There are two other episodes in which Socrates mentions φίλτρα in the Memorabilia. Both revolve around φιλία: in the Chaerecrates-episode (II.iii), the case under scrutiny is a disturbed φιλία-relationship between two brothers that needs to be healed; in the Critoboulus-episode (II.vi), the question at stake is very similar to the one in the Theodote-episode, i.e. how to hunt friends and initiate friendships. In both cases, the φίλτρον-terminology is clearly brought in as a metaphor, and in both cases, Socrates evokes and activates the etymological relation between φίλτρα and φιλία, presupposing that φίλτρα are means to initiate and sustain φιλία.

Given the traditional application of φίλτρα within a pre-existing relationship, let us first take a look at Socrates’ use of the metaphor in the Chaerecrates-episode which is more in line with the prototypical use of the terminology. In this conversation with Chaerecrates, Socrates is mediating in a

145 For the instrumental character of the suffix –τρον see FRIESE, s.v. φίλος.
146 A prototypical (but unfortunate) example is Deianira who mistakenly kills Heracles in the belief that she is saving her marriage with a φίλτρον. Soph. Trach. 577; cf. ARMONI (2001), 33 ff. FARAOONE (1999), 7; FARAOONE (1994).
147 For an analysis of the friend-hunt and the love magic-metaphor in II.vi see NEITZEL (1981). ἐπῳδαί also have a prominent role in Plato’s Phaedo (77e-78a) and Charmides in the context of seduction and σωφροσύνη (e.g. 176b). See MCPHERAN (2004), DELATTE (1933), 153.
148 On the Chaerecrates-episode, see also Section 1; Cf. Chapter Four Section 3.2.
quarrel between the young man and his older brother Chaerephon, urging the younger brother to restore their φιλία-relationship and turn his brother into an asset instead of a liability (a ζημία). Chaerecrates, in his desperation, asks Socrates for a φίλτρον to make his brother well-disposed towards him. In a school-book example of Socratic midwifery, Socrates makes Chaerecrates aware of his latent knowledge of φίλτρα:

(20)  *Xen. Mem. II.iii.11-14*\(^{149}\)

Λέγε δή μοι, ἐφη, εἰ τινὰ τῶν γνωρίμων βούλοιο κατεργάσασθαι, ὅποτε θύου, καλεῖν σε ἐπὶ δεῖπνον, τί ἂν ποιοίης; — Δήλον ὦτι κατάρχομι ἀν τοῦ αὐτῶς, ὅτε θύομι, καλεῖν ἐκείνον. —Εἰ δὲ βούλοιο τῶν φίλων τινὰ προστρέφασθαι, ὅποτε ἀποδημοίης, ἐπιμελεῖσθαι τῶν σῶν, τί ἂν ποιοίης; — Δήλον ὦτι πρότερος ἂν ἐγχειροῖν ἐπιμελεῖσθαι τῶν ἐκείνου, ὅποτε ἀποδημοίη. —Εἰ δὲ βούλοιο ἐξένον ποιήσαι ἐπιμελεῖσθαι σεαυτόν, ὅποτε ἔλθοις εἰς τὴν ἐκείνου, τί ἂν ποιοίης; — Δήλον ὦτι καὶ τοῦτον προτρέποι ὑποδεχοῖσθαι πρὸς τὸν ἀνθρώπον, ὅποτε ἐλθοίς ἂν ἐκείνου, ὅτι αὐτὸν ἐπιτιθέμενον πάλαι ἀπεκρύπτειν. — Πάντες δὲ σύνε τὰ ἐν ἀνθρώπων φίλτρα ἐπιστάμενος πάλαι ἀπεκρύπτειν.

The love-charm turns out to be a simple but universal principle:\(^{150}\) make the first move. Taking initiatives is an imperative in all kinds of reciprocal relationships that involve long-term interests as investment in a relationship is what binds the partner. Hence, there is little more to these φίλτρα than making the first move in doing good to the other.

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\(^{149}\) "Tell me, then," said Socrates, ‘if you wanted to prevail upon one your acquaintances to invite you to dinner whenever he was holding a celebration, what would you do?’ ‘Obviously I should begin by inviting him when I was celebrating.’ ‘And if you wanted to induce one of your friends to take care of your property when you were away from home, what would you do?’ ‘Obviously I should first try to take care of his when he was away.’ ‘And if you wanted to make a foreigner give you hospitality when you visited your country, what would you do?’ ‘Obviously I should first give him hospitality when he came to Athens. And if I wanted him to be eager to achieve the object of my visit for me, obviously I should have first to do the same for him.’ ‘So you know all the magic spells that influence human conduct, and have kept your knowledge dark all this time!’"

\(^{150}\) Cf. GIGON (1956), 134: “Das scheinbar so geheimnisvoll abgelegene Zaubermittel ist in Wirklichkeit eine völlig durchsichtige, ja banale ethisch-gesellschaftliche Regel.”
A similar use of the φίλτρον-metaphor is to be found in the Critoboulus-episode (Mem. II.vi), a dialogue that, like the Theodote-episode, elaborately deals with the process of selecting and acquiring φίλοι in the context of a hunting metaphor (II.vi.9-11): hunting friends requires techniques different from hunting wild animals, for pursuit (κατὰ πόδας), deceit (ἀπάτη) and force (βία) only breed enmity, not friendship:

(21)  Xen. Mem. II.vi.10-11

Φίλοι δὲ πώς; ἐφη. – Εἶναι μὲν τινὰς φασιν ἐπῳδάς, ἃς οἱ ἐπιστάμενοι ἐπᾴδοντες οἷς ἂν βούλονται φίλους αὐτοὺς ποιοῦνταί εἶναι δὲ καὶ φίλτρα, οἷς οἱ ἐπιστάμενοι πρὸς οὓς ὀψίς ἂν βούλονται χρώμενοι φιλοῦνται ὑπ’ αὐτῶν.

Friends are caught with incantations (ἐπῳδαί) and love charms (φίλτρα): with incantations one makes them one’s friends (φίλους αὐτοὺς ποιοῦνταί), with charms one secures that the friendship is reciprocal (φιλοῦνται ὑπ’ αὐτῶν).

Socrates’ example of incantations, ἐπῳδαί, is the song of the Sirens who know the art of tempting by praising (II.vi.11). ἐπῳδαί, incantations, also have a binding force, as the Sirens κατεῖχον their victims. The Sirens find their real-life Athenian counterpart in Pericles who knew how to make the citizens φιλεῖν him by putting them under his verbal spells (II.vi.12). The other half of the pair, the φίλτρα, are represented by Themistocles who made the polis φιλεῖν him by attaching something good to the polis (περιάψας τι ἀγαθόό)—presumably the fortifications and ships deployed to protect the city of Athens. The section on love magic is wrapped up by Critoboulus:

(22)  Xen. Mem. II.vi.14

Δοκεῖς μοι λέγειν, ὦ Σώκρατες, ὡς, εἰ μέλλοιμεν ἀγαθόν τινα κτήσασθαι φίλον, αὐτοὺς ἡμᾶς ἀγαθοὺς δὲ γενέσθαι λέγειν τε καὶ πράττειν.

151 “‘But how are friends made?’ asked Critobulus. ‘They say that there are incantations which those who know them can use to win the friendship of anyone that they like; and drugs too, which can be used by those who understand them to make them loved by anyone that they like.’”

152 “‘I suppose you mean, Socrates, that if it were our intention to secure a good friend, we ought to make ourselves good both in word and deed.’”
In order to make a good man one’s friend, one must become (γενέσθαι) a good friend oneself, i.e. good in speaking and acting (λέγειν τε καὶ πράττειν): incantations (ἐπῳδαί) are a metaphor for initiating φιλία by *saying* things, charms (φίλτρα) for securing reciprocal φιλία by *doing* things.\(^{153}\)

Hence, the image that emerges from other uses in the *Memorabilia*, is that the φίλτρον-metaphor expresses the social maxim that, unlike short-term interpersonal encounters, long-term relationships require investments and a willingness to make the first move. A φίλτρον, a means to initiate and sustain φιλία, turns out to be some kind of a model-gift, a blow-up representation of what gifts do: they bind people by creating and strengthening ties of goodwill and gratitude.

### 5.3. Playing hard to get vs. Love Magic

The word/deed-pair, evoked by the images of the ἐπῳδαί and the φίλτρα remind us of Socrates’ guidelines to Theodote that insist that she needs to convince (ἀναπείθεις) her friends not so much in word but in deed (οὐ λόγῳ ἀλλ’ ἔργῳ) (T 13). This reminds us of the fact that Socrates and Theodote are still merely *talking* about φιλία. It is the power of Socrates’ λόγος that, for now, seems to be stronger than Theodote’s beauty as he seems to have incited the urge in Theodote to come and seduce him. His incantations, ἐπῳδαί, seem to have worked. But how about the φίλτρα?

As we have seen, the φίλτρον-metaphor evokes a key-principle of Socrates’ philosophy of friendship in the *Memorabilia*: Active, or pro-active, Partnership: taking the leap of faith by “paying it forward”, by taking initiatives in benefiting the other. As such, it propagates a radically different notion of χαρίζεσθαι and gift-giving than the rules of Playing Hard to Get: Active Partnership is about giving first, *not* asking first; it is about defeating the other in well-doing, *not* gaining as much as possible from a well-doer. Hence, Socrates’ propagation of Playing Hard to Get turns out to be a *reductio ad absurdum* of Theodote’s parlance—enough as a teaser to make the other active, but not the very substance of friendship that consists in being active oneself.

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\(^{153}\) NEITZEL (1981).
By playing along the language game so essential to her self-definition, Socrates guides Theodote to the somewhat unsettling understanding that she may not be able to imbue words like χάρις and φιλία with real meaning, that she may not yet be the friend she would like to believe she is. In her trade, the language of χάρις, the ideologically crucial but thin dividing line between seduction and self-commodification, dissolves into a euphemistic cover-up for commercial intercourse, in which she is passively waiting for her “friends” to come along, in which χαρίζεσθαι is reduced to delivery-on-pay and χάρις is narrowed down to transactions on a *quid pro quo*-basis. Despite her use of the language of long-term reciprocity, her φιλία remains a unilateral matter, with an active party that initiates contact and a passive party that responds: she makes a living out of friends who do her good, but her way of reciprocating is mere “requital”, revealing a *quid pro quo*-attitude, a travesty of the principle of χάρις. If she would genuinely be interested in long-term relationships instead of one-off catches, she would do all those things that real φίλοι do: to visit a sick friend, to congratulate a lucky friend, to dedicate herself with heart and soul to an eager suitor. Just like the other professional craftsmen whom Socrates confronts with their lack of a genuine understanding of the essence of their τέχνη, Theodote comes to realize she still has a lot to learn—from the old and experienced courtesan Socrates.

Socrates has a better understanding of the Art of Friendship, Theodote’s τέχνη, as he has proved himself a better friend. His friendships, with Cebes, Simmias, Antisthenes and Apollodorus, have been shown to be lasting, living up to the ethics of reciprocity implied by the terminology of χάρις and φιλία. To Socrates’ companions, already engaged in bonds of φιλία with Socrates, this is a clear clue, for they know from previous encounters what φίλτρα represent: he expects his prospective friends to be actively engaged in their joint enterprise, their quest for wisdom, and demands active participation and initiatives. To Theodote, Socrates’ mentioning of love magic is a Siren’s song, a teaser, hinting at wisdom and knowledge of the Socratic Art of Friendship beyond the rules of Playing Hard to Get and protreptic towards philosophy,
Socrates’ true preoccupation, “the other love”, the dearer friend perhaps (τις φιλωτέρα). Theodote is willing to visit him but still expects some guarantee that he will be there for her. Socrates’ jesting answer is also revealing of the nature of χάρις: when it comes to seduction and friendship, there is no such guarantee. One has to be prepared to make a shot in the dark.

6. CONCLUDING REMARKS

“Of all human relationships, prostitution is perhaps the most striking instance of mutual degradation to a mere means, and this may be the strongest and most fundamental factor that places prostitution in such a close historical relationship to the money economy, the economy of means in the strictest sense.”

This statement by Georg Simmel is one that Socrates might agree with. To Socrates, the sophist, the businessman and the hetaera suffer from the same flaw, as they, having a false conception of the good, can only interact with fellow-humans on the degrading basis of mutual passivity. As the genuine good can only be acquired by an active shaping of the self, and virtue is to be attained in interaction with the world, virtue comes down to the capacity to relate properly to the world around us: to the gods, the community and to other individuals. The proper way to “deal with” other individuals requires Active Partnership: actively investing in a reciprocal relationship. Active Partnership is what demarcates long-term exchanges from seemingly isomorphous short-term transactions. Active Partnership requires internalized dispositions, attitudes and emotions—goodwill, trust, generosity, empathy in good and bad times, the willingness to take initiative—or, in Socrates’ terms a ψυχή that actively supports what the body is overtly doing. In Xenophon’s oeuvre, the sophist, the businessman and the hetaera are represented as passive. They do not actively

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155 Simmel (1978), 379. Simmel elaborates on what he sees as a fundamental analogy between the use of money and prostitution: “The indifference as to its use, the lack of attachment to any individual because it is unrelated to any of them, the objectivity inherent in money as a mere means which excludes any emotional relationship—all this produces an ominous analogy between money and prostitution.”
select their exchange partners, their “gratifying” is reduced to mere requittal and they are not δωροφορικόν but μισθαρνητικόν: they do not give gifts, but they receive payment.

This suggests an interesting difference between Plato and Xenophon with respect to Socrates’ erotic doctrine. In Plato’s dialogues it is ἔρως that is made philosophically productive, as it represents a principle of motion. When sublimated from the physical realm, ἔρως is the driving force of philosophy, facilitating protreptics and the ascending movement of the soul towards the beauty of the forms. In Xenophon’s Memorabilia the operative term is φιλία: Socrates appropriates the terminology of the long-term order, as the very contents of his philosophical conversations are all about the question how an individual can become virtuous by learning to relate to the long-term order, his family, friends, the polis and the gods. At the same time, φιλία is also the very medium of Socratic education as his philosophical enterprise of developing virtue takes place within the context of reciprocal friendships in which both partners are actively engaged—a bilateral relationship that benefits both partners. The sophist is merely a pale imitation of a teacher, operating with the wrong notion of reciprocity and hence revealing his defective ἐγκράτεια, because mastery of one’s appetites and impulses is not only the prerequisite of commitment in a long-term relationship but also the very precondition for the development of virtue. In contrast, Socrates’ understanding of the reciprocal obligations and expectations that go with true φιλία qualifies him not only as a better friend than Theodote, but also as a better teacher than the sophist.

Let me conclude on a slightly more uncanny note. Socratic morality is ultimately ethical egoism: it directs an individual towards the development of his own virtue. This means that Socrates’ education is intended to help the conversation partner develop his self-restraint by envisioning the long-term good and by stimulating him to be an Active Partner towards others—active, that is, not necessarily an equal one. As he tells Chaerecrates: equality between partners may happen when the other too is eager to win the battle of generosity. But equality is not the moral goal of φιλία. The goal is to win. As long as you adhere to the principle of Active Partnership, you will be the moral winner to which the other, when not equal, is irredeemably indebted. To Xenophon’s
Socrates, as to Aristotle, moral superiority is eventually based on asymmetry. In effect, the principle of Active Partnership can be used to underwrite and legitimate asymmetrical power relations—in the household, in religion and in empire.\textsuperscript{156}

\textsuperscript{156} See also Chapter Two Section 6.