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### **Quasi-Individual Natures in the Republic or the 'Logic of Dogs'**

For Socrates of the *Republic*, true philosophers are those whose souls are philosophical by nature. This is also the case of each profession. As he claims, the principle of Division of Labor is established as a strict observance of nature. Every one is born (370a, 374b) for an occupation and this is for Plato's Socrates identical to possessing a specific nature (370b). Thus, he merely turns a rule of beauty (370c3–5) into a law (456b–c).

Natures, as defining human occupations and individual lives—as well as the fact of being born with a given capacity—are subject to analyses mainly in the earlier books of the *Republic*. In those analyses, they seem to be discussed as cases of generic rules, or even as instantiated Forms. Socrates recommends that possessing a nature with a specific bent be considered in line with its εἶδος (454a–b). He even refers to this method by the verb "διαλέγεσθαι" and the name "διάλεκτος" (454a).

In earlier books of the *Republic*, the word "εἶδος" is rarely used in its strict philosophical meaning. Still, it relates always to objects of a generic constitution: modes of speech, qualitative elements in the souls, characteristics of good and bad cities, and to prudence, courage, liberality discussed as such (402b–d). Thus, a paradox emerges. A philosophical, warrior or cobbler-like nature is something one obtains with and thanks to one's birth. Can we identify it with the nature of Book 10, which is the primordial moment of the Forms (597b–d)? Yet without answering this question, we may call this paradoxical concept of φύσις "a quasi-individual nature."

The paradox may be easily overlooked (Cross & Woosley, 1966; White, 1979). The easiest and most tempting commentary one may propose for the passages in which in-born natures are discussed is to present them as typical instances of Plato's dialectics (Bernadete, 1989; Rosen, 2005). Actually, since Adam's commentary (1900), some scholars rather turn their attention to comical elements in the animal analogies accompanying those discussions (Rosen, 2005). Some other scholars focus on the empirical content of those analogies (Schofield, 2006).

In my paper, I will attempt elucidating and solving this riddle. I believe that one may (1) draw at least some partial conclusions from the passages where the concept of quasi-individual nature is used by Plato as a premise of arguments. The prominent ones will be his elaboration of Principle of Division of Nature and the proof of the equality of men and women. (2) It will also be worth examining the pictures that accompany those arguments, which are almost all drawn from the life of dogs. One may even say that it is in these illustrations that the relationship between individual, its nature and Form becomes cognizable and clear. In the animal world, nature results from and expresses both the individual and the Form. Ontology seems to become embodied and graspable in a "Logic of Dogs."