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The Theory of Plato's Eikōs Logos or Eikōs Muthos

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Abstract

Plato divides the sensible world into two parts: pistis (view) and eikasia (conjecture), and because of this he proposes two kinds of picture or image: that of Forms and that of bodies in water and in mirrors. His *Timaeus* deciphers how the Form indwells within the soul and how individual things partake of the Form with the aid of his doctrine of eikōs logos or eikōs muthos. This article adopts two procedures to clarify the true concept of "eikōs muthos" or "eikōs logos." The first is to analyze the controversies, from the Roman philosopher Cicero to contemporary scholars, and the second is to clarify the meaning of the adjective "eikōs" (εἰκώς) so as to investigate his core explanation of the relationship between similarity and paradigm. Then the concept of the Greek noun "eikōn" (εἰκών) is further examined to reveal the relationship between copies and paradigm. Following this, it is hoped that the separation of the technē of likeness from that of appearance will be clearly shown.

Keywords: appearance, copy, eikōs muthos, likeness, paradigm.

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I. Introduction

Eikōs logos or eikōs muthos is the pivotal argument in Plato by which his essential philosophical conviction that individual things are the copies of Forms can be understood. He clearly demonstrates that eikōs logos or eikōs muthos is crucial to the understanding of his doctrine of the creation of the cosmos, the nature of the human being and of the soul in his *Timaeus* 27a and *Phaedrus* 246a separately. To put it another way, the doctrine of eikōs logos or eikōs muthos is his exegesis of the concept of participation; that is, how Forms inhabit the living thing (τὸ ζῷον) or how the individual thing possesses Forms - and this is to directly counter the Sophists, who insist that the body or matter and substance (σῶμα καὶ οὐσία) are identical.[1] Therefore, the development of the doctrine of eikōs logos or eikōs muthos, which expounds the image of Forms, is founded upon the dialectical unfolding of Forms.

In addition, his doctrine of eikōs logos or of eikōs muthos paves the way for his unwritten doctrine.[2] In the *Timaeus*, Timaues says that it is a hard job to discover the creator, and even after we do, it is impossible for us to tell of him to other people. So we have to be content to offer a likely muthos and not to investigate beyond it.[3]

1 Plato, *Sophist*, 246bff, quoted in Plato, *Theaetetus*, *Sophist*, edited by G. P. Goold, translated by Harold North Fowler. (Massachusetts, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, the Loeb Classical Library, First Printed 1921). The great majority of references to Platonic sources are drawn from editions prepared by G. P. Goold (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, the Loeb Classical Library, reprinted 1996 and 1999) and where the footnote shows no publication details this is the source. Otherwise the author has used editions prepared by Cooper (Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 1997) and translations by Schleiermacher (Darmstadt: WIssenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1990) and where this is the case full details appear in the relevant footnote. Occasionally she has disagreed with the available translations and in such instances she has opted to use her own in preference. Details of these are given in full in 'Works Cited' at the end of this paper.

Because of differing academic fields, some styles of citation are not limited to Chicago Style.

2 Aristotle says that Plato has unwritten teachings in his *Timaeus*. Aristotle, *Physics*, IV, II, 209b 15. Edited by G. P. Goold, translated by P. H. Wicksteed and F. M. Cornford (England; London: Harvard University Press, First Printed 1929).

3 Plato, *Timaeus*, 28c-29d, quoted in Plato, *Timaeus, Critias, Cleitophon, Menexenus, Epistles*, edited by G. P. Goold, translated by R. G. Bury.

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II. The controversial translation of eikōs logos and eikōs muthos

> For the cosmos has received the living things both mortal and immortal and been thereby fulfilled; it being itself a visible living thing embracing the visible creatures, a perceptible god made in the image of the intelligible, most great and good and beautiful and perfect in its generation - even this one heaven sole of its kind.[4]

The phrase "eikōs muthos" or "eikōs logos" is used by Plato to describe how the sensible world takes part in Forms. Thus the sensible world, such as time, is the manifestation of god, and the cosmos is the picture or image (εἰκών) of him. So what is the meaning of Plato's "image"? And what kind of role does it play in Platonic philosophical structure? This is what this paper essays to discover, since the concept deeply influences late philosophical developments, such as phenomenology.

The connotations of the Greek feminine noun "eikōn" (εἰκών) are quite extensive, but are tightly related to the term "picture." Its meanings include "likeness," "image," "personal description," "representation," "resemblance," "comparison," and "image in a mirror" or "an image in the mind." For example in the *Timaeus* 92c Plato portrays "eikōn" as "a perceptible god made in the image of the thought/reason" (εἰκὼν τοῦ νοητοῦ θεὸς αἰσθητός).

Another term which corresponds to "eikōn" is "eoikos" (ἐοικός, appearing), but the philosophical meaning is completely opposite to "eikōn" in Platonic thought. The former denotes the true thing (τὸ ἀληθινόν), while the latter refers to the not-true thing (τὸ μὴ ἀληθινόν).[5] In brief, in the sensible world there are two branches, the truth and the not-truth. One is phenomenon, the other is appearance. And the opposite concept of "eikōs" is not of "anagkaion" (necessary), but of "eoikos." This paper will expose these two different concepts accordingly.

From the point of view of Platonic Line, the term "eikōn" belongs to the lowest range of the sensible world, eikasia (εἰκασία), which means comparison, conjecture, shadow and copy. Thus, it is simply an image or reflection of the real thing which is perceived by our sense perception. In the *Timaeus* 30a-b it refers to the visible

4 Plato, *Timaeus*, 92c.

5 Plato, *Sophist*, 240b-c.

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universe that enfolds the image of the intelligible world of Forms, and time is the image of eternity.[6]

When Plato describes Forms, time and space in the *Timaeus*, it is as though he is in a dream state. His mind is inspired by god, enabling him to create his cosmology.[7] Subsequently, according to Burnyeat, Plato, as if in a dream, and as the exegete of cosmology, explains or narrates an unobserved signification of mental image or picture, which is derived from the divine.[8] Undoubtedly, the existence of eikōn has to be dependent on something, otherwise it cannot exist. That is, its principle is the image itself and its existence has to rely on truly existing things.[9]

In the *Timaeus* 29b-c there are three concepts to be analysed, "eikōn," "eikōs" and "paradeigma" (παράδειγμα).[10] Of these, the term "eikōs" is especially

6 F. E. Peters, *Greek Philosophical Terms: A Historical Lexicon* (New York; London: New York University Press; University of London Press Limited, 1967), 51.

7 Plato, *Timaeus*, 71e-72a.

8 M. F. Burnyeat, "Eikōs Muthos" in *Plato's Myths* ed. by Catalin Partenie (UK; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 173.

9 Plato, *Timaeus*, 52a-c, quoted in *Plato: Completed Works*, edited by John M. Cooper, translated by Donald J. Zeyl. (Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 1997)

10 ....τούτων δὲ ὑπαρχόντων αὖ πᾶσα ἀνάγκη τόνδε τὸν κόσμον εἰκόνα τινὸς εἶναι, Μέγιστον δὴ παντὸς ἄρξασθαι κατὰ φύσιν ἀρχήν.᾽Ωδε οὖν περί τε εἰκόνος καὶ περὶ τοῦ παραδείγματος αὐτῆς διοριστέον, ὡς ἄρα τοὺς λόγους, ὥνπέρ εἰσιν ἐξηγηταί, τούτων αὐτῶν καὶ συγγενεῖς ὄντας· τοῦ μὲν οὖν μονίμου καὶ βεβαίου καὶ μετὰ τοῦ καταφανοῦς μονίμους καὶ ἀμεταπτώτους – καθ᾽ ὅσον οἷόν τε καὶ ἀνελέγκτοις προσήκει λόγοις εἶναι καὶ ἀνικήτοις, τούτου δεῖ μηδὲν ἐλλείπειν – τοὺς δὲ τοῦ πρὸς μὲν ἐκεῖνο ἀπεικασθέντος, ὄντος δὲ εἰκόνος εἰκότας ἀνὰ λόγον τε ἐκείνων ὄντας·

(Das aber zugrunde gelegt, ist es ferner durchaus notwendig, daß diese Welt von etwas ein Abbild sei. Das Wichtigste aber ist, bei allem von einem naturgemäßen Anfang auszugehen. In Hinsicht auf das Abbild nun und auf sein Vorbild muß man folgende Unterscheidung treffen: daß die Reden, da sie eben dem, was sie erläutern, auch verwandt sind, daß die, die sich also mit dem Beharrlichen, Dauerhaften, auf dem Wege der Vernunft Erkennbaren befassen, beharrlich und unveränderlich sind – soweit es möglich ist und es Reden zukommt, unwiderlegbar und unbesiegbar zu sein, so darf man daran nichts vermissen lassen –, daß aber die Reden, die sich mit dem befassen, was nach jenem nachgebildet und ein Abbild ist, nur wahrscheinlich und jenem entsprechend sind.) Platon, *Timaios*, in the *Platon Werke in acht Bänden Griechisch und Deutsch*, Band 7, bearbeitet von Klaus Widdra, Übersetzung von Hiernoymus Mükker und Friedrich Schleiermacher (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1990). Cf. Francis Macdonald Cornford, *Plato's Cosmology*, the *Timaeus* of Plato translated with a running commentary by Francis

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important, as there has been scholastic controversy over its translations. This paper will focus on discussing these three concepts appropriately.

Schleiermacher translates the term "eikōn" into "Abbild" (copy) and the participle term "eikōs" into "wahrscheinlich" (likely, probable),[11] and the term "paradeigma" into "Vorbild" (example, paradigm). His translation does not completely agree with Cornford's, who translates the term 'eikōn' into 'likeness' and the participle term "eikōs" into "likely."[12]

Böhme maintains that Cornford's translations are more correct than Schleiermacher's, since it seems that there is no etymological relationship between "Abbild" and "wahrscheinlich" unless we make some explanation of its content, otherwise it is challenging us to imagine how a statement about an image should be probable.[13] The reason for this may be in the limitations of the usage of German, so in this case English is more suitable to translate these terms correctly. Furthermore, Gernot Böhme points out that "likely" as eikōs can be suitably called probable and reasonable.[14] He assumes that Cornford's translation not only highlights the analogy of the original and the picture (die Analogie von Original und Bild), but that it emphasizes the distinction between the strict statement and the likely statement as well, so Cornford describes correctly and vividly the etymological relationship between eikōn and eikōs logos.[15]

Cicero, who is the first philosopher to translate Plato's *Timaeus*, paraphrases "eikōs muthos" as "probabilia" (Wahrscheinliches).[16] The Latin adjective term

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Macdonald Cornford (UK: Routledge und Kegan Paul Ltd, 1937). Translations used in this paper emanate from a variety of sources with some modifications applied by the author.

11 Gernot Böhme, *Idee und Kosmos: Platos Zeitlehre-Eine Einführung in seine theoretische Philosophie* (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann GmhH, 1996), 29.

12 Francis Macdonald Cornford, *Plato's Cosmology* (UK: Routledge und Kegan Paul Ltd, 1937), 23. Cf. Gernot Böhme, *Idee und Kosmos*, 29.

13 Böhme, *Idee und Kosmos*, 29.

14 Ibid.

15 Ibid.

16 "..., si probabilia dicentur: aequum est enim meminisse et me, qui disseram, hominem esse et vos, qui iudicetis, ut, si probabilia dicentur, ne quid ultra requiratis." (*Timaeus* 29c-d) Marcus Tullius Cicero, *Timaeus über das Weltall*, Herausgegeben und übersetzt von Karl und Gertrud Bayer, Lateinisch- Deutsch (Düsseldorf: Artemis & Winkler Verlag, 2006), 14. Cf. M. F. Burnyeat, "Eikōs Muthos" in *Plato's Myths* ed. Catalin Partenie (UK; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 168. Cicero does not translate the entire dialogue of *Timaeus*, only going as far as 47b. According to Luc Brisson, the expression "eikōs muthos" occurs three times (29d2, 59c6 and 68d2) and "eikōs logos" seven times

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"probabilis" expresses "that may rightly be assumed or believed" or "likely" or "probable" or "credible" in English. And he interprets the phrase "eikōs logos" as "causa,"[17] which can be defined as the "grounds or cause of something", and which connotes that eikōs logos is a speech to unfold the first cause of creation. That means that the cosmos has its grounds, i.e. it has a foundation.

Hence from Cicero's point of view, it follows that in Plato's *Timaeus* it can rightly be assumed that there is a god, who creates the cosmos, and who is the grounds or cause or principle of all living things; which is a "credible" account or a "likely" truth. In other words, since no one can truly know the truth itself or god himself, we only can assume that he himself, who is the beginning of all creation, exists. And that assumption is a likely truth, not equivalent to the truth itself.

In addition, the relationship between paradigm/model and copy is a causal relationship. God, the Demiurge, is the cause of all living things, which are the copies of Forms. He is the principle of motion, since when he creates the soul, he puts nous into it and it into the body, and according to the doctrine of eikōs logos, the cosmos necessarily comes into existence because of the providence of god.[18]

Eikōs muthos is Plato's illustration of how the individual thing possesses Forms, or how Forms reside in the sensible world. We, being in the sensible world, can likely know the truth and Forms. The cosmos is the creation of god, i.e. the cosmos is god's copy, so our description of and epistēmē of him are only likely and hypothetical, not certain, absolute and definite. Because our reason is not able to apprehend the truth itself and Forms themselves, we can simply offer a likely statement about the creation of god through logical inference from our observation of the sensible world. For example, geometrical figures (as with biology and mathematics), whose essence cannot unquestionably be understood, but whose images, which are abstract, can probably be grasped; ergo the depiction of them is also a likely one. Reason explicates its understanding of the images of the cosmos and of human nature with the aid of logos. So the relationship between eikōs muthos

(30b7, 48d2, 53d5-6, 55d5, 56a1, 57d6 and 90e8) in the *Timaeus*. "Why Is the *Timaeus* Called an Eikōs Muthos and an Eikōs Logos?" in *Plato and Myth: Studies on the Use and Status of Platonic Myths*, ed. Caherine Collobert, Pierre Destree and Francisco J. Gonzalez (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2012), footnote 13, 371. Unlike Burnyeat, who interprets Cicero's "probabilis" as simply "likely" and "probable," (Burnyeat 2009, 169) here I further expound it as "assumed" or "believed." In Latin, the adjective "probabilis" denotes "that may be approved" as well.

17 Marcus Tullius Cicero, *Timaeus über das Weltall*, 18. Cicero paraphrases "κατὰ λόγον τὸν εἰκότα" (Plato, *Timaeus*, 30b) as "quam ob causam," 18.

18 Plato, *Timaeus*, 30b.

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and eikōs logos signifies a hypothetical logical inference, which is like the truth and similar to the model or the original. Plato says:

> ... we were saying that this probability of yours was accepted by the people because of its likeness to truth; and we just stated that he who knows the truth is always best able to discover likeness.[19]

To sum up, Cicero's translation provides us with two hints: the cosmos has a cause or foundation and the concept of eikōs muthos is Plato's analysis of the cosmos and of the soul that is formulated like the truth. That is, eikōs muthos and eikōs logos could be used interchangeably. In terms of the world of becoming Plato does not strictly distinguish the one from the other.

Burnyeat is not satisfied with Cicero's translation, although he does not set out to discover the reasons for his transliteration. This is because he disagrees with Cicero neglecting the term "muthos" in his translation and only translates the adjective "eikōs" into "probabilis."[20] Another reason is that he suggests that it is better to translate the adjective "eikōs" into "reasonable" or "rational," not "likely" or "probable" in the Prelude for the first reading, so the phrase "eikōs muthos" is strikingly interpreted as "reasonable/rational myth" so as to conquer the traditional opposition between muthos and logos.[21] But in the following paragraphs for his second reading he says that it is appropriate to translate eikōs muthos as a "probable myth" or "probable account."[22] Furthermore, and in asserting a similar opinion to David Sedley,[23] he holds that if eikōs muthos is rendered as "eikōs myth," then it is related to a theogony.[24]

Burnyeat's reasons do not completely add up, for he discounts the function of Plato's "muthologein" (μυθολογεῖν),[25] his role as a "muthologos" (μυθολόγος)

19 Plato, *Phaedrus*, 273d, quoted in Plato, *Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Phaedo, Phaedrus*, edited by Goold, translated by Harold North Fowler.

20 M. F. Burnyeat, "Eikōs Muthos" in *Plato's Myths*, 168-9.

21 Ibid., 179. Cf. Luc Brisson, "Why Is the *Timaeus* Called an Eikōs Muthos and an Eikōs Logos?" 369.

22 "Eikōs Muthos," 179.

23 David Sedley, "Hesiod's *Theogony* and Plato's *Timaeus*" in *Plato and Hesiod*, ed. G. R. Boys-Stones and J. H. Haubold (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 246-58.

24 Burnyeat, "Eikōs Muthos", 168-9, 175. On page 169 Burnyeat says that "…. Timaeus's cosmology will be a theogony too." Further, on page 180, he says that "the reasoning, like any craftsman's reasoning, will be practical reasoning rather than theoretical."

25 Plato, *Timaeus*, 22b.

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and the dialectical development of muthos. He, like Luc Brisson,[26] holds that "muthos" is translated as "myth" and interprets Plato's *Timaeus* as a theogony.

The terms "muthos" and "logos", in the Platonic philosophical framework, are utilized ambiguously so that sometimes logos is regarded as muthos and muthos as logos.[27] Therefore, it is very difficult for us to find the correct vocabulary to translate them. The reasons for this can be found in their multiple significances and their wide purview. For example, in the *Theaetetus* 164d Socrates refers to both Protagoras' Man-Measure doctrine "ὁ μῦθος Πρωταγόρειος" and Theaetetus' doctrine of perception as knowledge as muthos. And in the *Sophist* 242d Plato, as the Stranger, interprets the doctrine of Xenophanes and of Empedocles and his disciples as a muthos.

It is misleading if Plato's "muthos" is interpreted as "story" or "tale;" his *Timaeus* is classified with Hesiod's *Theogony* in the Platonic philosophical framework. It may also be mis-judged by Luc Brisson who reads myth purely as dealing with the lowest part of the human soul, along with spirit (thumos) and desire (epithumia), such as pleasure and pain, fear and temerity;[28] since Plato's muthos (which entails his teleological arguments; so it is inappropriate to regard Plato's muthos as simply stories and tales) has abstruse and abstract construction in its philosophical development - especially when the theses are involved in metaphysics, epistemology and ethics. For example, the muthos of the *Phaedo* 60b-c, in which is portrayed the relationship between pain and pleasure, possesses the dialectical implication of profound binary opposition.

Christoph Horn, in providing us with a hint about the teleological concept of Plato's muthos, thinks that the muthos of Platonic Eros in the *Symposium* is essentially to develop his concept of immortality by means of begetting, additionally, his metaphysical concept of ascent to beauty, including his theory of Form, can be advanced.[29] That is, his theory of love is his mental "theory of picture or image"

26 Luc Brisson, "Why Is the *Timaeus* Called an Eikōs Muthos and an Eikōs Logos?" 374. He agrees with Burnyeat that "muthos" must be translated into English as "myth," but disagrees with him in respect of Plato's *Timaeus* as Hesiod's *Theogony*.

27 Walter Mesch, "Die Bildlichkeit der platonischen Kosmologie. Zum Verhältnis von Logos und Mythos im *Timaios*" in *Plato als Mythologe: Neue Interpretationen zu den Mythen in Platons Dialogen*, Hrsg. Markus Janka und Christian Schäfer (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2002), 198.

28 Brisson, "Why Is the *Timaeus* Called an Eikōs Muthos and Eikōs Logos?" 375.

29 Christoph Horn, "Enthält das *Symposion* Platons Theorie der Liebe?" in the *Platon: Symposion*, Band 39, Herausgegeben von Christoph Horn, Sonderdruck aus Klassiker Auslegen Herausgegeben von Otfried Höffe (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2011), 5.

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(Theoriebildung),[30] of which the metaphysical connotation is depicted through Diotima's muthos. The meaning of "Bildung," of which the root is "Bild" (meaning image),[31] and which has also been developed to the spiritual formative meaning of "the imitation of Christ" by the Christian Neo-Platonist Meister Eckhart (1260 -1328),[32] not only plays an important role in Platonic theology, but is also an essential concept of Imago Dei in Judao-Christian tradition.[33]

David Sedley holds that Platonic muthos entails metaphysical and moral telos and gives us an example of the concept of Platonic "homoiōsis theōi," which in some senses can be "described as the telos of the best life."[34] Whereas, Kathryn Morgan's point, that in Plato's late dialogues the importance of teleological myth weakens and the importance of myth as a metaphor for philosophical theory and argument strengthens because of his particular emphasis on collection and division,[35] is moot, since muthos is Plato's metaphor, through which his teleological thoughts are manifested, and by which his teleological methodology is established. For example, in the *Timaeus* 33b Plato determines that the cosmos is made spherical by the Demiurge, and in 44d that a man's head, which is a mini-cosmos, is shaped spherical by the Demiurge's sons. Furthermore, in the *Timaeus* 73c-d he says that the brain, a cosmos-within-a-cosmos, is formed in a sphere by the Demiurge's sons, and the divine seed dwells there. It seems that there is a hierarchical relationship between these three spheres. Overtly it is Plato's teleological methodology for the purpose of using the divine seed, which dwells in our brain, to know God by means of his creation of the cosmos and time, through which the eternal (to aidion) can be unmasked, by which man in the pursuit of truth can be explained, and upon which science can be founded, since the cosmos and time is God's manifestation. The tasks of philosophers and scientists are to unveil the epistēmē of god by means of prospecting the mystery of the cosmos and of exploring the invisible soul through the physical visible world.

30 Ibid.

31 Pauli Siljander & Ari Sutinen, "Introduction," in *Theories of Bildung and Growth: Connections and Controversies Between Continental Educational Thinking and American Pragmatism*, ed. Pauli Siljander, Ari Kivalä, and Ari Sutinen (Netherlands: Sense Publishers, 2012), 3.

32 Eetu Pikkarainen, "Signs of Reality – The Idea of General Bildung by J. A. Comenius," 20-21.

33 Pauli Siljander and Ari Sutinen, "Introduction," 3.

34 David Sedley, "The Ideal of Godlikeness," in *Plato 2: Ethics, Politics, Religion, and the Soul*, ed. Gail Fine (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 320-1.

35 Kathryn A. Morgan, *Myth and Philosophy from the Presocratics to Plato* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 245-6.

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Another example of teleological methodology in Plato's late dialogues is his *Phaedrus*' Palinode (palinōdia), which refers to another ode to Eros (243b). After Diotima's muthos in the *Symposium*, Plato writes another ode to Eros. In this muthos Plato compares the soul to a pair of winged horses, one being noble, the other the complete opposite.[36] The main purpose of this metaphorical muthos is to beget the divine philosophy (ἡ θεία φιλοσοφία)[37] and to be in a state of eudaimon on the dialectical upward path to beauty thanks to being captured by the divines. So Plato's teleological muthos is the recollection of beauty, of goodness and of truth. And his mythic teleological thoughts consistently infiltrate his early, through middle, to his late dialogues, though the arguments in the latter are more mature and complete.

One of the examples that Kathryn Morgan employs to support her point of view is Theodoros' comparison of Socrates to Skiron and Antaios in the *Theaetetus* 169a-b.[38] However, in this comparison Plato's goal is not only to insinuate that the technē of Socrates' midwifery or elenchus is different from that of the Sophist's eristic, but also to make the point that Socrates was sentenced to death by false accusations. In Greek mythology Skiron and Antaios were killed by Theseus and Heracles respectively. When Socrates says that he has met many a Heracles and many a Theseus, who have used powerful words and eristic arguments to sharply refute his dialectic arguments, he has never given in to their attacks, for his midwifery is to help his students search for and discover the truth, so as to give birth to their true reproductions.[39] In the face of truth, he fears nothing, but shows his aretē. Hence, in this ironic metaphor, which shows how different is the philosopher from the Sophist, there is no hint to prove that Plato decreases the significance of teleological myth to pave the way for his philosophical theory and argument in his late dialogues.

In fact, the serious theory of mental pictorial meanings of Plato's muthos are difficult to grasp through superficial understanding, since we must attain divine wisdom, which man can only achieve when inspired by god, in order to fully appreciate his insights.[40]

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36 Plato, *Phaedrus*, 246a ff.

37 Plato, *Phaedrus*, 239b.

38 Kathryn A. Morgan, *Myth and Philosophy from the Presocratics to Plato*, 246. I am especially grateful to Prof. Christoph Horn for giving me some ideas concerning why the cosmos is spherical.

39 Plato, *Theaetetus*, 167e-169d.

40 Christoph Horn describes a man like Socrates as a "philosopher of daimon-like characteristics" (daimoisch charakterisierte Philosoph). "Enthält das *Symposion* Platons Theorie der Liebe?" 7.

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Luc Brisson asserts that Plato's *Timaeus*, which describes the birth of a god (as does Hesiod's *Theogony*), does it in a religious context, for it begins with a prayer requesting the help of the gods and goddesses.[41] He ignores that the process of the invention of muthos is undertaken in a state of "ecstasy", [42] that is, muthos must be completed in insularity. The reason for this is that it is a monologue. Plato calls this the divine passion (theīon pathos) or the divine love.[43] So Plato as a poet, and as if in dream state,[44] creates his muthos because of being inspired by the divine.

Both the *Timaeu*s, in which Plato gives a speech on his cosmology, and the *Phaedrus*, wherein he depicts the muthos of love and of the soul, pray to gods and/or goddesses for the purpose of being possessed by god or the presence of god.[45] This is the style of muthos; and only an inspired man is capable of giving a speech of muthologein. Thus the greatest work of muthos, just as the greatest piece of music, is the greatest divine inspiration or the greatest divine madness,[46] for it is god's gift.[47] The whole process of producing muthos is one of muthologein thanks to "the presence of the divine,"[48] Plato sees this phenomenon as being seized by god.[49] So there are two kinds of creation: the divine and the human (to men theōn kai to d' anthropinon).[50]

In addition, some scholars, perhaps spellbound by the concepts of rationalism, hold that logos and muthos are opposite to each other. In fact, the relationship between muthos and logos in Platonic philosophical structure is not like the difference between rationalism and irrationalism. Muthos begins with the observable phenomena, which are closer to us,[51] and gives them a likely explanation through logos. That is, logos expatiates the picture of our mind by means of thought.

41 Brisson, "Why Is the *Timaeus* Called an Eikōs Muthos and an Eikōs Logos?" 376. Cf. Plato, *Timaeus*, 27c-d.

42 Plato, *Phaedrus*, 234d.

43 Plato, *Phaedrus*, 238c, 241c, 266a.

44 Plato, *Timaeus*, 71e-72b.

45 Plato, *Timaeus*, 27c-d, Plato, *Phaedrus*, 237a, 238d, 242b-d, 252e-253a, 257b, 263d.

46 Plato, *Phaedrus*, 256b, quoted in *Plato: Completed Works*, edited by John M. Cooper, translated by Alexander Nehamas and Paul Woodruff. (Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 1997).

47 Plato, *Phaedrus*, 244a, c. Ibid.

48 Plato, *Phaedrus*, 238d.

49 Plato, *Phaedrus*, 249e, 263d, 263a.

50 Plato, *Sophist*, 265a-b, Plato, *Phaedrus*, 245c.

51 Arbogast Schnitt, "Mythos und Vernunft bei Platon" in *Plato als Mythologe* (Germany; Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2002), 309.

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The second reason is that when muthos narrates historical facts it does not act as an unconfirmed muthos but as an authenticated fact of report.[52] Therefore, muthos as logos always appears as a "support of its validity" (eine Affirmierung ihrer Geltung),[53] that is, it is marked as a "true account already known" (wahr erkannten Logoi).[54] Hence muthos as historical fact is related to empirical thought, which is not only narrative, but also recollection or memory. For example, in the *Timaeus* 26c-e Timaeus says to Socrates:

> And the city with its citizens which you described to us yesterday, as it were in a muthos, we now copy it into a fact.[55]

Another example is Kritias' narrative about the natural disasters in Egypt, such as fire and flood - these historical truths are reported by means of the style of muthos, in the *Timaeus* 21e-22e. So the task of Kritias is muthologein, or we could say that recollection is a state of muthologein.

Burnyeat holds that some translators disagree with rendering "muthos" as "myth", because they maintain that eikōs muthos is a logos as well as myth, and he deems Plato's *Timaeus* as a theogony,[56] of which disapproval will be discussed later.

As distinct from Burnyeat, Luc Brisson tries to demonstrate that eikōs can qualify as muthos and logos,[57] with which this paper agrees, but a different point of view is shown in the third reason.

And this third reason is that their relationship is a dialectical *Aufheben*. Muthos begins with the sensible phenomena, from which Plato infers that the cosmos is created by the invisible eternal, which we cannot see through our physical eyes, but which can be logically inferred through reason (nous). Only nous, which is put into our soul by god himself, possesses the divine capability and is immutable.[58] Thanks to this, man should be as much as possible like god himself.[59] That means that man should return to the rational soul-part, to its own original nature, which god

52 Walter Mesch, "Die Bildlichkeit der platonischen Kosmologie. Zum Verhältnis von Logos und Mythos im *Timaios*," footnote 4, 198.

53 Ibid.

54 Ibid.

55 Plato, *Timaeus*, 26c.

56 Burnyeat, "Eikōs Muthos," 169.

57 Brisson, "Why Is the *Timaeus* Called an Eikōs Muthos and an Eikōs Logos? " 370.

58 Plato, *Timaeus*, 30b.

59 Plato, *Timaeus*, 29e.

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put into our soul.[60]

The cosmos manifests the picture or image of the eternal; and the mental image is our thought, which is "a silent inner conversation of the soul with itself,"[61] and which from the soul in vocal utterance through the mouth is logos.[62] This is the dialectical path from muthos to logos. Hence Plato's *Timaeus* is a mental pictorial speech. So "the best muthos is a dialectical logos and the best logos is a rational muthos."[63]

To put it another way, eikōs muthos assumes hypothesis, for example, the hypothesis of god, the Demiurge, or Forms or nous, according to the observation of the cosmos and of human nature; and eikōs logos gives us a causal explanation of hypothesis according to the logical inference, which is rational, and which is similar to truth. So some scholars, for example Walter Mesch, understand the term "eikōs" as "verisimilis."[64] Because it is hypothesis, not certainty, the explanation is purely likely and similar, not true and certain. Timaeus says:

> Now our view declares the cosmos to be essentially one, in accordance with the probable account (eikōs logos); but another man,[65] considering other facts, will hold a different opinion. Him, however, we must let pass. But as for the kinds which have now been generated by our argument, let us assign them severally to fire and earth and water and air. To earth let us give the cubic form; for of the four kinds earth is the most immobile and the most plastic body and of necessity the body which has the most stable bases must be pre-eminently of this character. Now of the triangles we originally assumed (hypotethentōn), the basis formed by equal sides is of its nature more stable than that formed by unequal sides; and of the plane surfaces which are compounded of these several triangles, the equilateral quadrangle, both in its parts and as a whole, has a more stable base than the equilateral triangle. Therefore, we are preserving the probable account (eikōs logos) when we assign this figure to earth, and of the remaining figures the least mobile to water, and the most mobile to fire, and the

60 Sedley, "The Ideal of Godlikeness," 320.

61 Plato, *Sophist*, 263e.

62 Plato, *Sophist*, 263e.

63 Schnitt,"Mythos und Vernunft bei Platon," 309.

64 Mesch, "Die Bildlichkeit der platonischen Kosmologie," 202.

65 "Another man," in this case, refers to the Sophist, Protagoras.

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> intermediate figure the air; and, further, when we assign the smallest body to fire, and the greatest to water, and the intermediate to air; and again, the first point of sharpness to fire, the second to air and the third to water.[66]

It is clear that Plato tries to articulate the nature of the cosmos by dint of geometrical science. He, as a scientist, who knows the truth, is best able to give a likely speech of the essence of the cosmology, since he, also being a poet and philosopher, is capable of beholding the truth behind the sensible world, so that the speech in the *Timaeus*, is spoken like the truth, and is his insight deriving from god. In short, Plato is one who is possessed (ἐνθουσιάζων)[67] by god.

Therefore, Luc Brisson's point that the speech of the *Timaeus* cannot be classified as "science" is debatable.[68] Indeed, the *Timaeus* is the best cosmology, in which Plato posits that the cosmos is created by an eternal god, a changeless one (to hen), which is the foundation of all things, at that time. Today physicists and astronomers, with all the help of high-tech hardware, still debate its essence and are not able to provide us with definitive answers, only hypothetical ones. It is also the best anthropology, whereby Plato assumes that the immortality of the human soul is nous, or reason. That is, the human is a rational living thing, his soul is immortal, and discussion of moral reward and punishment is possible. It is also the Greeks' first theology, not a theogony as Burnyeat claims. Luc Brisson is correct in saying that "the *Timaeus* dissociates itself from Hesiod's *Theogony*, which accounts for the appearance of the gods by using as images exclusively those paternal relations that imply sexual relations and conflictual relationships between father and son."[69] Furthermore, Plato's *Timaeus* posits that there is an invisible eternal (to aidion), who is the foundation or grounds of all things, and who is the good and the beauty.[70] Every creation stems from him. However, it is unseemly to hold that the *Timaeus* is a constituent of a tale,[71] since it is a treatise on cosmology in the pattern of eikōs muthos and eikōs logos, which, as previously discussed, interpret how nous is the

66 Plato, *Timaeus*, 55d-56a.

67 Plato, *Phaedrus*, 249d-e.

68 Brisson, "Why Is the *Timaeus* Called an Eikōs Muthos and an Eikōs Logos?" 375.

69 Ibid., 374-5.

70 Plato, *Timaeus*, 29a, 68e.

71 Brisson, "Why Is the *Timaeus* Called an Eikōs Muthos and an Eikōs Logos?" 374. Luc Brisson says that "In fact, this tale in which the *Timeaus* consists is situated in lineage of Hesiod's *Theogony*, for it deals with the generation of the gods, with the world itself being a god."

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first cause of motions and resides in the soul; and the cosmos is the picture of god. To sum up, the term "muthos" cannot purely be seen as "tale" or "story."

Plato's *Timaeus* is a subject of theological science, which hypothesizes that there is a beginner (one who causes beginnings), who is the father of creation, the first cause of causes, and who is good, beauty and truth. The human imitates his beauty and goodness and pursues a virtuous course like him. God is our model, he wants us to emulate his beauty and goodness. The reason for this is that god himself is aretē itself; and we are created according to him, so we must necessarily be good and beautiful because we are his image.[72] Only a virtuous man is a true politician, who copies god's techne to manage his state and to take care of his citizens' well-being. And only a state, which is ruled by a virtuous man, produces healthy and good laws to administer its citizens. God is our model (paradeigma).[73] He is the final judgement of reward and of punishment. He is the eternal; and time, which is generated with the cosmos together, is his image or manifestation.

III. The adjective term "eikōs" (εἰκώς)

Above, we discussed the controversial concept of the adjective "eikōs" starting from Cicero to contemporary scholars. The intention in this section is to portray the relationship between eikōn and paradigm by means of exposition of the adjective eikōs.

In the literal sense the terms "eikōn" and "eikōs" appear to have similar meanings. Thus, when one tries to distinguish "eikōn" from "eikōs", it is a challenge to simply analyse the term "eikōs" without involving the term "eikōn".

The term "eikōs" is derived from the verb "eoika" (to be like, to seem likely),[74] which is in the perfect tense with the meaning of the present tense, and which underlines the similar thing, "das Ähnlichkeit-Sein (the likeness-being)."[75] The reason for this is that a statement, which *is like*[76] the truth, can be called a "likely"

72 Plato, *Timaeus*, 28a-29c.

73 Plato, *Politikos*, 271dff. Platon Werke, Band 6, bearbeitet von Peter Staudacher, übersetzet von Friedrich Schleiermacher (Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1990).

74 Cf. M. F. Burnyeat, "Eikōs Muthos," 170.

75 Gernot Böhme, *Idee und Kosmos*, 29.

76 According to R. E. Allen, "in English, we say that *a* is like *b*. The Greek says that *a* is like to (dative) or toward (πρὸς) *b*; that *b* is therefore like *a* and represents a separate inference. So relations are grammatically exhibited as relative predicates, distinguished from other predicates by the fact that they are *to* or *toward* or *of* or *than* or *from*

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statement. A picture can be said to be "a likeness" because of the similarity (Ähnlichkeit), which it has with the original.[77] Correspondingly, the meaning of eikōs logos is to "be like true speech" or to "be similar to true speech", for a human being as a living thing is composed of the body and the soul, and because of the restriction of his body he can only come near to having an understanding (τὸ εἰδέναι) concerning the truth.[78] Therefore, Plato says that his statement about the cosmos, the soul, space and time is eikōs muthos and eikōs logos, because in his mind he has observed the truth and constituted a likely picture, which is similar to the real things, based upon his experiences, and he finally depicts them with the aid of logos (speech), which is "a path to epistēmē" (der Weg zur Erkenntnis).[79]

Böhme maintains, in short, that eikōs logos should be interpreted as the discourse of images/pictures (εἰκόνες).[80] The reason for this being that eikōs logos is involved in a relationship with the concept of image/picture (die Beziehung zum Begriff des Bildes), not with that of expression.[81] Accordingly, Plato's theory of the sensible world in the mode of eikōs muthos or eikōs logos is not an "exact science" [82] and "exact truth"[83] as pure mathematics, which start from the intelligible. So eikōs muthos as a discourse of image, which is simply a better or worse copy of the eternal being, is to find out what is the model (was ist das Urbild) or what is the first cause of causes, according to which the Demiurge, the world builder (Weltbaumeister), is established.[84] This means, the cosmos does not exist in its own right, but depends on its creator, God, for its existence in Platonic cosmology.[85]

Furthermore, Böhme states that eikōs logos is not merely involved with sense-perception, such as the observation of the sensible world, it is more concerned with hypothesis of the thesis and speculative development through rational thinking

something." R. E. Allen, *Plato's Parmenides: Translation and Analysis* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Publisher, 1983), 75.

77 Gernot Böhme, *Idee und Kosmos*, 29.

78 Plato, *Phaedo*, 66e-67a.

79 Gernot Böhme, *Platons theoretische Philosophie*, 100.

80 Gernot Böhme, *Idee und Kosmos*, 29. "τὸ εἰκός" means "a likelihood" or "probability". Here it translates as "picture" or "image", for a picture is painted like the original copy.

81 Gernot Böhme and Hartmut Böhme, *Feuer, Wasser, Erde, Luft: Eine Kulturgeschichte der Elemente* (München: Verlag C.H.Beck oHG, 1996), 100, n. 48.

82 A. E. Taylor, *A Commentary on Plato's Timaeus* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1928), 59.

83 Ibid.

84 Böhme, G. & H. *Feuer, Wasser, Erde, Luft*, 100-1.

85 A. E. Taylor, *A Commentary on Plato's Timaeus*, 71.

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of games.[86] In brief, Plato's doctrine of eikōs logos is a logical hypothetical inference starting from sense-perception to speculative reason. It is his path from muthos to logos, i.e. from the observation of the sensible world to the disclosure of rational dialectics.

Eikōs logos, which translates as "likely speech/account," is probable or plausible speech of the essence of individual things. It may be because those who give likely speech are mythologoi and possess the "prophetic gift."[87] In the *Phaedo* Plato says:

> I don't altogether admit that one who investigates things/beings in thought is observing pictures more than one who studies things in tasks.
>
> Οὐ γὰρ πάνυ συγχωρῶ τὸν ἐν τοῖς λόγοις σκοπούμενον τὰ ὄντα ἐν εἰκόσι μᾶλλον σκοπεῖν ἢ τὸν ἐν τοῖς ἔργοις.[88]

Here, Plato does not deny that the philosopher very often investigates beings by means of pictures. Moreover, as a poet he gives speeches by means of the techne of mythologia to enlighten his fellow citizens. Furthermore, politicians have to possess the techne of mythologia, because it belongs to the science of persuasion and speech.[89]

Hans Willms (as interpreted by Böhme) proposes that eikōn and paradeigma are complementary concepts; so that when the discourse belongs to eikōn, something as its paradeigma is to be copied by another thing; these concepts principally belonging to the sphere of imitation (der Bereich der Mimesis), the representative/descriptive techne (die darstellende Kunst).[90] In the *Timaeus* Plato uses the language of this sphere to describe the shape of the cosmos (die Gestalt des Kosmos). When he says that the cosmos is an eikōn, he means that the eikōn duplicates the paradeigma.[91] In brief, the former explains the latter, or, the latter is the cause of the former; that is, the paradeigma is the object which is interpreted by

86 Böhme, G. & H. *Feuer, Wasser, Erde, Luft*, 101.

87 Plato, *Theaetetus*, 142c.

88 Plato, *Phaedo*, 100a.

89 Plato, *Politikos*, 304d-e. Platon Werke, Band 6, bearbeitet von Peter Staudacher, übersetzet von Friedrich Schleiermacher (Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1990).

90 Gernot Böhme, *Idee und Kosmos*, 29-30.

91 Ibid.

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eikōn.[92] In other words, it is the relationship between a subject and a picture (Vorwurf und Bild), because there is also an artist (Künstler), who mediates in the relationship between the subject and the picture.[93] Johansen, saying that X is a likeness of Y in respect of Z, might misconceive Plato's doctrine of likeness. His example is that the Mona Lisa is like its mysterious model in respect of her smile or the pallor of her skin.[94] However, Plato's doctrine of likeness underlines that the cosmos, which is shaped according to the eternal by the Demiurge (who is the cause of the cosmos), is the image of the eternal. It is made like and is like, the eternal. Thanks to its participating in the changeless Form, it is the exhibition of the eternal. So his concept of likeness highlights that a copy manifests or mirrors its model.

In the *Timaeus* Plato expresses clearly several times that as human beings we cannot discuss the cosmos, except by means of eikōs logos or eikōs muthos and muthos;[95] that is, "Plato repeatedly calls the eikōs logos of the *Timaeus* a muthos."[96] In this manner, owing to the concepts of eikōn and paradeigma the description of the relationship between the cosmos and the sphere of the unchanging being (der Bereich des immer Seienden) belongs to eikōs logos: it is a pictorial, metaphorical description[97] with speculative rational inference.

Briefly, Plato's *Timaeus* emphasises that the cosmos is a paradigm-copy-relationship (das Urbild-Abbild-Verhältnis), through which the doctrine of the changeless Form is grasped.[98] His purpose is to utilise the eikōs logos as a means to understand the Form so as to comprehend the essence of the cosmos in the world of sense perception.

As it is, however, our ability to see the periods of day-and-night, of months and of years, of equinoxes and solstices, has led to the invention of number, has given us the Form of time and opened the path to inquiry into the nature of the cosmos.[99]

In other words, "the eikōs logos is a road to understanding each Form, through which the essence of the cosmos (das Wesen des Kosmos) is comprehended."[100] From this point of view, the eikōs logos does not explain the epistēmē of the

92 Plato, *Timaeus*, 29b.

93 Gernot Böhme, *Idee und Kosmos*, 30.

94 Thomas Kjeller Johansen, *Plato's Natural Philosophy: A Study of the Timaeus-Critias* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 48-68, 53.

95 Plato, *Timaeus*, 29d, 48d, 55d, 56a, 59c, 68d, 69b.

96 Gernot Böhme, *Idee und Kosmos*, 30

97 Ibid., 31.

98 Ibid., 45.

99 Plato, *Timaeus*, 47a-b.

100 Gernot Böhme, *Idee und Kosmos*, 56.

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structure of the cosmos, but interprets an observation of the cosmos, which latter mirrors its original, and whose essence can be grasped by means of the description of the original.[101] Hence Platonic philosophy is a doctrine of Form, and its epistēmē is the knowledge of the Form. However, this doctrine of the knowledge of the Form is understood by dint of examples, pictures, metaphors and muthoi, which are what is needed for us to walk along the path of Plato's epistēmē.[102]

So it can be seen that, from the point of epistēmē, the meaning of eikōs logos is not an akribēs logos (exact account, or strict science). In the Platonic Allegory of the Line there are two divided worlds: the world of reason and the world of sense perception. In the world of knowledge, Form and the objects of mathematics belong to strict science. The difference between these two is that the former goes with the sphere of epistēmē, and the latter is affiliated to the range of mathēma. In the sensible world the real existing things and their images, the shadows in the water, the pictures in the mirror and artistic representation do not belong to strict science, they are only ἡ δόξα and τὸ δοξαστόν.[103] In this case, the former is associated with the sphere of pistis (πίστις, view), which is known by observation; and the latter is included in the sphere of eikasia (conjecture), which we know by means of conjecture. Hence in the sensible world there are two kinds of picture: one is eikōn, which denotes the true picture, and which is called phenomenon, of which our opinions are consisted. The other is eoikos, which refers to the not-true picture, and which is called appearance, of which our prejudices and ignorance are made up.

So it is evident that eikōs logos is different from akribēs logos, which is concerned with the discourse of Forms themselves and things in themselves, whilst the objects of eikōs logos, being aisthēta, belong to the mutable world, which is comprehended by pistis along with sensation, so its discourses are the manifestation of the paradeigma, not the paradeigma itself, which is apprehended by thought along with reason.[104] In other words, eikōs logos is a speech or explanation of phenomenal pictures in the becoming world. Therefore, the objects of the eikōs logos are the sensible.

The term eikōs logos cannot be strictly expressed, but it can be included in strict discourses. The reason for this is that the cosmos is a perceptible living thing or "bodily likeness of the Forms,"[105] whose knowledge we can understand through

101 Ibid.

102 Ibid.

103 Ibid., 57-58. Cf. A. E. Taylor, *A Commentary on Plato's Timaeus*, 73.

104 A. E. Taylor, *A Commentary on Plato's Timaeus*, 62. Cf. Gernot Böhme, *Idee und Kosmos*, 66.

105 Thomas Kjeller Johansen, *Plato's Natural Philosophy*, 57.

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speculative observation by means of rational explanation and we can possess the true opinions (δόξαι) and views (πίστεις) of the becoming things through sensation.[106] Timaeus (i.e. Plato) says:

> Whenever the account concerns anything that is perceptible, the circle of the Different goes straight and proclaims it throughout its whole soul. This is how firm and true opinions (δόξαι) and views (πίστεις) come about. Whenever, on the other hand, the account concerns any object of reasoning (τὸ λογιστικόν), and the circle of the Same runs well and reveals it, the necessary result is nous and science.[107]

To be concise, the *Timaeus* is Plato's insight into the account of the cosmos, which he explains by means of mythologia and rational speech, and which is similar to the truth. So he often emphasizes that his astronomical work is founded upon "the doctrine of likeness" (τὸ τῶν εἰκότων δόγμα)[108] for the purpose of discussing the role of the eternal (τὸ ἀίδιος) in the cosmos, or of the first cause of causes in the sensible world. How does Plato obtain these insights, which are in thought? That is, how can the doctrine of likeness starting from sensation include the account of strictness? This concerns his theory of anamnesis and of elenchus. It is clear that in the *Theaetetus* the path, on which Theaetetus gives birth to his opinions out of his soul with Socrates' help, is all toil and travail. So, the process of anamnesis, or put another way, the process of pursuing epistēmē and truth, is laborious and painful.

IV. The Greek noun "eikōn" (εἰκών, picture/image)

Throughout his entire corpus Plato prefers to speak in allegory or parable to disclose his hidden philosophical concepts, which he employs in order to furnish his dialogues with a playful style, and present them with a lively and vivid look, to account indirectly for his philosophical core notion. This is the mode of philosophical thought that he uses to attract the reader's interest. However, this style, while allowing his thought to be profound and abstract, often generates a lot of controversy among scholars. This kind of allegory, which includes playful and theoretic techniques, is named "the

106 Plato, *Timaeus*, 28a.
107 Plato, *Timaeus*, 37b-c.
108 Plato, *Timaeus*, 48d.

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intercourse of allegory." (Gleichinsrede)[109] In other words, the intercourse of allegory is the indirect statement. Among the more well-known of these allegories is his parable of the cave, which Plato uses to criticize obliquely the Athenians' ignorance. Blindly, they obey earthly values and vanity, making them like parrots, because the eyes of their souls are blind.

The so-called eikōn for Plato means it is not the "true being, but simply is a copy or image of the paradigm (das Abbild eines Urbildes)."[110] So it is clear that the bond between paradigm and reproduction is a tight one. From the view of epistemology the intercourse of parable belongs with the lower rank; however, from the aspect of linguistics, Plato describes the linguistic statement as copy. We must therefore ask that what kind of speech does Plato name "eikōn"? First, we must investigate the term. It is related to the verb "ἐικάζειν", which means "to portray", "to compare", and "to make like to."[111] Hence, the meaning of ἐικάζειν is "object A is comparable with object B", or more precisely, A is made like B. And, from another point of view, the verb ἐικάζειν means "to copy" (abbilden).[112] The meaning of copy does not only purely mean (as in mathematics) to reproduce each other in the structure of range, but more closely pertains to picture.[113] Within this meaning eikōn is also allegory/parable. In the analogous sense the meaning of eikōn is visualization (Veranschaulichung) or allegory (Allegorie).[114] Briefly, a picture is a certain thing, which is made like another thing through mental vision, and which has been visualised.

Plato defines the concept "eikōn" as:

> …for an image, since not even the very principle on which it has come into being belongs to the image itself, but it is the ever moving semblance of something else, it is proper that it should come to be in something else, clinging in some sort to existence on pain of being nothing at all.[115]

So it is apparent that the so-called eikōn means "someone copies a true picture." It means that he creates a thing, which is made similar to the real picture. This is the

109 Böhme, *Platons theoretische Philosophie*, 22.
110 Ibid.
111 Ibid., 184.
112 Ibid., 22.
113 Ibid.
114 Ibid., 185.
115 Plato, *Timaeus*, 52c.

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interconnection between eikōn and ἐικάζειν; namely, the relationship between pictures of Forms and reproductions.

From an epistemological view, something which is copied is far away from the true being or Form, its existential rank of ontology is lower, because it is nearer to our sensible world and is deeper estranged from the rational world. Thus, its certainty is less reliable and is weaker. For example, a carpenter makes a bed according to the Form of the bed. The bed that he makes is the picture of the bed, the image of the Form of the bed.[116] The carpenter creates the bed according to the Form of the bed, which he sees with his soul's eye, and which also resides in the bed at the same time as it is made, since it participates in the Form of the bed. Therefore the individuals share in the Forms.

The kinship between the Forms and the individuals is the connection of the paradigms and the copies. Böhme is of the view that the interconnection between the picture and the paradigm is not a reciprocal relationship; it does not have reciprocal similarity. He gives us an example in that we say that the daughter is like her mother, though logically and genetically, we do not say that the mother is like her daughter. It is similar to the relationship between things and Forms.[117] His example is inappropriate, because mother and daughter, though they are hierarchically not a reciprocal relationship, genetically they are a reciprocal relationship. Böhme confuses the genetics with Plato's doctrine of likeness, because Plato's concept of participation means that the individuals partake in Forms, i.e. Forms reside in the sensible things. For example, a flower is beautiful, because it shares in the Form of the beautiful. In brief, the Form of the beautiful is in the presence of the flower, so it is beautiful. Socrates says,

> …nothing else makes it beautiful other than the presence of, or the sharing in, or however you may describe its relationship to that Beautiful we mentioned, for I will not insist on the precise nature of the relationship, but that all beautiful things are beautiful by the Beautiful.[118]

So it is clear that the relationship between the Form of the beautiful and the beautiful flower is not a reciprocal relationship, because the beautiful flower, which belongs

116 Böhme, *Platons theoretische Philosophie*, 181.

117 Ibid., 187.

118 Plato, *Phaedo*, 100d. Edited by John M. Cooper, translated by G. M. A. Grube. (Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 1997).

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to the sphere of becoming, does not equate with the Beautiful Itself, which is in the world of unchanging Forms. They are two different concepts in Platonic philosophical structure. Plato's concept of participation cannot be analogous to the genetics of mother and daughter. Böhme misinterprets Plato's theory of likeness with an inadequate example. So here, with regard to the expression of the existence of the original and the picture, there are two concepts that need to be clarified, ὃ ἔστιν and τοιοῦτον. The former means the thing itself, the latter refers to something like that or of that kind (etwas derartiges), which means to *be like* the real being, but not the true being itself.[119] In other words, when the carpenter constructs the bed, he makes it like (εἰκάζειν) the picture of the bed, the bed itself, which he sees with the aid of the eyes of his soul. So the bed is not the bed itself, being (ὄν), but only the picture, something like that, phainomenon (φαινόμενον).[120] Briefly, a picture is a thing of that kind (ein Derartiges), just like another thing, or, a picture is something in such a way (ein Etwas derart).[121] This something of that kind is called the production of mimicry, which possesses the same name as the true thing.

> Thing [author], which bears the same name and is like Form, is perceived by the senses, and it has been begotten….It is apprehended by opinion with sense perception (δόξῃ μετ᾽ αἰσθήσεως).[122]

So the bed made by the carpenter has the same name as the mental picture of the bed, and it is called a bed.[123] Plato calls this kind of imitative techne likeness-making (εἰκαστική).[124]

The carpenter's piece, which is made like his mental picture of the Form, is a copy, namely, his work is similar to his mental picture itself. His copy is further away from the rational world and nearer to the sensible one. Ontologically, the painter or artist has a lower rank than that of the carpenter, because he draws the picture of the phenomenon (Bilder von Phänomenen).[125] Plato calls his techne the

119 Böhme, *Platons theoretische Philosophie*, 181.

120 Ibid. The verb "φαίνω" means "to bring to light," "to make to appear," "to disclose" or "to explain".

121 Ibid., 185.

122 Plato, *Timaeus*, 52a.

123 Plato, *Sophist*, 234b.

124 Plato, *Sophist*, 236b.

125 Böhme, *Platons theoretische Philosophie* , 182.

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techne of appearance (φανταστικὴν),[126] because he produces appearances (φάντασματα), not likenesses (εἰκόνα).[127] In the *Parmenides* Plato stresses that the Form is a paradigm, which exists in nature, and all other things *are like* the Forms and are the likenesses (ὁμοιώματα) of the Forms, and they are made (εἰκασθαῆναι) like the Forms.[128] According to Plato's division (διαίρεσις), the likeness-making (εἰδωλοποιία) can be divided into two classes (δύο εἴδη), the techne of likeness and the techne of appearance.[129]

So it can be seen that there are two distinctive pictures, and it is necessary to quote a paragraph of the *Sophist* to accentuate them:

> Visitor: So if we say he has some expertise in appearance-making (φανταστικὴν τέχνην), it will be easy for him to grab hold of our use of words in return and twist our words in the contrary direction. Whenever we call him a copy-maker (εἰδωλοποιόν) he'll ask us what in the world we mean by a 'copy' (εἴδωλον).[130] We need to think, Theaetetus, about how to answer the young man's question.
>
> Theaetetus: Obviously we'll say we mean copies in water and mirrors, and also copies that are drawn and stamped and everything else like that.
>
> Visitor: Evidently, Theaetetus, you haven't seen a Sophist.
>
> Theaetetus: Why do you say that?
>
> Visitor: He'll seem to you to have his eyes shut, or else not to have any eyes at all.
>
> Theaetetus: How?

126 Plato, *Sophist*, 236c, 239c.

127 Plato, *Sophist*, 236c.

128 Plato, *Parmenides*, 132d.

129 Plato, *Sophist*, 236c, 260d, 264c.

130 Gernot Böhme says that in principle there are three terms in Greek to express the notions of picture: εἰκών, εἴδωλον and πίναξ. Εἰκών in our sections of text is the supporting expression. It is relevant to the verb εἰκάζειν, and means that a thing is made similar to another thing. And the term εἴδωλον is often used as an alternative to εἰκών and in the *Sophist* 230d4 the beginning of asking the question of the definition of picture is also implied in this expression. But εἴδωλον is derived from the verb εἴδω (see). So εἴδωλον is simply the thing that is seen (Das Gesehene), or the picture (das Bildchen). Πίναξ means original board (ursprünglich Brett), which is pictured, and which is similar to the French term tableau. Gernot Böhme, *Platons theoretische Philosophie*, 188.

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Visitor: He'll laugh at what you say when you answer him that way, with talk about things in mirrors or sculptures, and when you speak to him as if he could see. He'll pretend he doesn't know about mirrors or water or even sight, and he'll put his question to you only in terms of words.

Theaetetus: What sort of question?

Visotor: He'll ask what runs through all those things which you call many, but which you thought you should call by the one name, copy, to cover them all, as if they were all one thing. Say something, then, and defend yourself, and don't give any ground to him.

Theaetetus: What in the world would we say a copy is, sir, except something that's made similar to a true thing and is another thing that's like (τοιοῦτον) it?

Visitor: You're saying it's another true thing like that (τοιοῦτον)? Or what do you mean by like it (τὸ τοιοῦτον)?

Theaetetus: It never is a true being, but a seeming thing. (οὐδαμῶς ἀληθινόν γε, ἀλλ᾽ ἐοικὸς μέν.)

Visitor: Meaning by true, really being?

Theaetetus: Yes.[131]

Thus it is clear that the copy-maker is different from the Sophist, who is just like the painter, and who copies the picture from a mirror or from water. It follows that there are two classes of pictures, one is the picture of Forms, which *is like* the true being; and the other one is the picture of appearance, which *looks like* the true being. So the verb "ἐοικα" has two distinctive concepts, one is that it *is similar to* the true being and its adjective "εἰκώς" (ähnlich sein) means "is similar to," which is τὸ τοιοῦτον. The other one is that it *seems like* an apparent being and is τὸ ἐοικός. So man should differentiate between the two concepts τοιοῦτον and ἐοικός. It follows that the sentence "οὐδαμῶς ἀληθινόν γε, ἀλλ᾽ ἐοικὸς μέν" can give rise to two interpretations according to Plato's theory of picture. One is that the picture *is like* the original, the other one is that the picture is not like the original, but *looks like* the appearance thereof. Hence copy-making possesses two classes: likeness-making and appearance-making.

Likeness-making means that the carpenter makes the bed with the help of the

131 Plato, *Sophist*, 239c-240b.

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eye of his soul enabling him to see the Form of the bed, which inhabits the bed once the carpenter has made it. In other words, the bed in our sensible world is made like to the Form of the bed, so the techne of the carpenter possesses the techne of likeness and his work is ἀληθινόν. The picture likens to the original and the picture of the bed that was made is of that kind (τοιοῦτον), so it can be valued as the original.[132] Its expression is that "the picture is just like (τοιοῦτον) the original (Das Bild ist eben so wie (τοιοῦτον) das Original)."[133]

In the *Timaeus* Plato describes the relationship between the original/the truth and the copy/the pistis as:

> …while an account of what is made in the image of that other, but is only a likeness, will itself be but likely, standing to accounts of the former kind in a proportion: as reality is to becoming, so is truth to view (ὅτιπερ πρὸς γένεσιν οὐσία, τοῦτο πρὸς πίστιν ἀλήθεια).[134]

However, the painter draws the picture of the bed according to what he sees in the empirical world with his physical eyes, so once his picture of the bed is drawn, the Form of the bed does not reside in his work. Plato calls his work ἐοικός and his techne is the techne of appearance. That is, his work, which he pictures, is done by his corporeal eyes according to the picture in the empirical world. His picture is "without foundation in thing" (ohne fundamentum in re);[135] it is "only-so-look-like (Nur-so-Aussehen-wie)."[136] Thus, this only-so-look-like picture cannot be regarded as the original. It is only the seeming and apparent thing, not the real and true thing. In the *Sophist* the visitor/stranger tells Theaetetus:

> This appearing, and this seeming but not being, and this saying thing but not true things---all these issues are full of confusion, just as they have always been both in the past and now.

132 Böhme, *Platons theoretische Philosophie*, 185.

133 Ibid., 189.

134 Plato, *Timaeus*, 29c.

135 Jörg Hardy, *Platons Theorie des Wissens im Thaeitet* (Göttingen: Vandenboeck und Ruprecht, 2001), 63.

136 Gernot Böhme, *Platons theoretische Philosophie*, 188.

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> Τὸ γὰρ φαίνεσθαι τοῦτο καὶ τὸ δοκεῖν, εἶναι δὲ μή, καὶ τὸ λέγειν μὲν ἄττα, ἀληθῆ δὲ μή, πάντα ταῦτά ἐστι μεστὰ ἀπορίας ἀεὶ ἐν τῷ πρόσθεν χρόνῳ καὶ νῦν.[137]

And Plato's definition of appearance is: if a thing *appears* the way the thing does, but in fact it isn't like it, it is called appearance.[138]

Consequently there are two classes of imitation, the imitation of likeness and the imitation of appearance. The feature of the imitation of likeness is:

> One type of imitation I see is the techne of likeness-making. That's the one we have whenever someone produces an imitation by keeping to the proportions of length, breadth, and depth of his model (κατὰ τὰς τοῦ παραδείγματος συμμετρίας),...[139]

The things, which are made like the paradigm, are copied by the techne of likeness according to the paradigm of number, so its copy is necessary to match the proportions of number. However, the painter draws the picture - but not according to the paradigm of number. He purely copies the appearance of the thing, not the thing itself. So after he draws the picture, there is no being (to on) or Form residing in it.

V. Conclusion

The main purpose of Plato's doctrine of eikōs logos or eikōs muthos, which can be described as the doctrine of likeness of the paradigm, is to separate his theory from that of the Sophists, in particular, Protagoras.

In the sensible world there are two kinds of theories, and one is the theory of likeness or phenomenon. Man produces his work according to the picture of the paradigm, which he sees with his spiritual eye. Plato claims that there is a god, a being, who is the first cause of causes, and that the Form or being dwells in individual things, i.e. individual things participate in the Forms, they are the pictures of the Forms. The other is the theory of appearance, which claims that the Form or Being does not exist. The Sophist is like the painter who produces his work according to the picture of bodies reflected in water and in mirrors. So there are also

137 Plato, *Sophist*, 236d-e.
138 Plato, *Sophist*, 236b.
139 Plato, *Sophist*, 235d.

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two kinds of picture: that of Forms in the soul and that of the reflections in water or in mirrors; there are two kinds of opinion: that of pistis and that of eikasia; and there are two kinds of creation: the divine and the human, that is, likeness making and appearance making.

To sum up, Plato's theory of eikōs muthos is of mental picture, which is brought from the soul through logos that *is like* or *is similar to* the truth.

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柏拉圖的「形似的演說」或者「形似的神話」之理論

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摘 要

柏拉圖把可感的世界切割為：「意見」（pistis）與「猜測 」（eikasia）。鑑於此，他提出圖像的兩個種類：眾相（Forms）的圖像與在水裡以及在鏡子裡的眾物體之圖像。他在《蒂邁歐》以「形似的演說」或者「形似的神話」之學說描寫相如何居住在靈魂之內以及個別事物如何分有相。此篇論文採取兩個步驟去澄清「形似的演說」之真正的概念。第一、從羅馬的哲學家西賽羅（Cicero）開始到現代的學者去分析各種的爭論。第二、澄清形容詞「形似的」（eikōs）的意義以便研究在相似性與典範之間的關係之核心的解釋。接著進一步檢驗希臘名詞 「圖像」（eikōn）的概念以揭露在複本與典範之間的關係。在這些的概念被探究之後，可預期的，「相似的技藝」不同於「表象的技藝」將清晰地被展示出來。

關鍵詞：表象　複本　形似的神話　相似性　典範

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