Erotic Feminism: Struggle, Resistance and Becoming Otherwise in Plato and the Platonic Tradition

Workshop Discussion with the Department of Philosophy Visiting Speaker:

DR. DANIELLE A. LAYNE

Dr. Danielle A. Layne is Associate Professor of Philosophy at Gonzaga University, Spokane WA. She is the author of numerous articles on Plato and Neoplatonism and was the co-editor of The Brill Companion to the Reception of Plato in Antiquity (Brill), Proclus and his Legacy (De Gruyter) and The Neoplatonic Socrates (Penn Press).

Description

The classical reception of Platonism is infamously problematic in its depiction of women and the feminine. Many feminist critics have noted that Plato not only disparages women but also explicitly associates the feminine with, at best, the passive or, at worst, the irrational, therein solidifying as natural a gendered and exclusionary matrix that is sustained throughout the Western philosophical tradition. In contrast to this, I argue that Plato is one of the rare thinkers of antiquity to offer not merely a political feminism but also an ontological feminism that intends to combat the typically dualistic (and therein marginalizing) discourses of his contemporaries. By reimagining the value of the feminine and of the slave/Other relationship, I argue that, throughout Plato’s corpus, he “queers” hierarchal and exclusionary matrixes, i.e. various patriarchal, imperial and colonial logics of the West. In this way, Plato has already provided us with a clue for how to dismantle problematic philosophical and political systems in the contemporary world.

Moderator and Respondent: Elizabeth Hill (Department of Philosophy)

Monday, September 30th, 5-6:45pm

SN 4087 (the Sally Davis seminar room)

All are welcome!

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