

‘The Origin of Interrogation Marks in the Medieval Manuscripts of Plato’s *Republic* and Its Significance in the Tradition of Plato’s Dialogues’

(an abstract for the 20-minute presentation)

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In the text of the *Laws* in the ninth century manuscript cod. Vaticanus graecus 1 (Codex O), comprising part of Tetralogy IX and oldest among Plato’s extant medieval manuscripts, comma-shaped marks can be observed placed under a single-dot colon or under, or left below, the two-dot colon, the mark already observable in ancient papyri for the change of speakers. Those marks are probably copied from the original, because the position of the speaker-changing marks is not constant, often moving for the comma-shaped mark from the usual sentence-end to the middle of the inter-sentential space. Therefore, the practice of putting those marks is dated earlier. If the patriarch mentioned in the scholia as authority of corrections is Photius, those marks may already have been in some manuscript housed in his library.

Almost all of the marks concerned in Codex O can be observed in the same place of cod. Parisinus graecus 1807 (Codex A), comprising Tetralogies VIII-IX and later than Codex O. Also, marks similar in style and position are put in the text of the *Republic* probably by the same hand. Boter and Cobet ascribe all the marks to a hand later than the copyist of the text, but the ending stroke of the last letter of the last word in a sentence is sometimes traceable to the beginning of the comma-shaped mark. If it is not a later chemical effect, some of the marks concerned are as old as the text. And if the original of Codex O has Tetralogy VIII, the marks come from its family. Therefore, the marks concerned in the *Republic* are coeval with the original of Codex O.

Cod. Vindobonensis 54, suppl. phil. gr. 7 (Codex W) could form a tradition of the practice with Codex A if their originals composed Plato’s lost two-volume works. As to the *Republic*, the oldest part of cod. Venetus append. class. IV cod. 1 (Codex T) in only half of the marks concerned, whereas cod. Marcianus graecus 185 (Codex D) or cod. Vindobonensis suppl. gr. 39 (Codex F) in very few, agrees with Codex A. However, Codex W in those marks in Tetralogies I-VII subsumes Codex T and graphically gives the same positioning as Codices A and O.

The semantic characteristics of the sentences with the mark concerned show that among all the medieval manuscripts mentioned above and cod. Bodleianus MS E.D. Clarke 39 (Codex B) the mark tends to appear not with grammatically explicit interrogative features such as interrogative pronouns but rather with features for the speaker's indirect expression of question such as parenthetical *oimai*, inferential *ara*, or the mentioning of the second person. Therefore, there may be an interpretative tradition behind its origin.

There is no direct contemporary evidence in the scholars in Constantinople, the reproduction in semi-uncial or Arabic translations of Aristotle and Plato. However, the practice of finding the speaker's indirect question may be traced to Proclus' respondent-centered reading practice (esp. *In Alc.*; *In Parm.*) and perhaps to Plato's original device in the age of no punctuation. (500 words)