A Chasm underneath the Smoothed Consensus:
A Note on Plato’s Idiosyncratic Use of ἀληθῆ λέγεις

Akitsugu Taki

Some linguistic incongruities in ordinary language, even though harsh for an inquisitive audience, do not stop the flow of conversation. The participants seem to cooperate tactfully to keep to the subject-matter and to fi ll the gap instantly. For example, responding, “I agree” when asked a Yes-No question will not always invite a rebuke. So why should responding ἀληθῆ λέγεις (meaning “You say true things” or “You say truly”)*1?

For most readers of Plato’s dialogues, the reply form ἀληθῆ λέγεις and the like*2, at the first reading and even later, sounds like an established form

* I thank Harold Tarrant, Holger Thesleff, Michael C. Stokes, and Peter J. Rhodes for comments and criticisms on earlier versions of this work and anonymous reader(s) of the Bulletin for enlightening criticisms on its penult.

Reference to classical authors and works is made according to the abbreviations listed in Liddell & Scott and Jones, A Greek-English Lexicon, 9th ed. with rev. suppl., Oxford, 1996. Reference to Plato’s works is made according to Stephanus’ page and section and, for convenience’ sake, to Burnet’s line (J. Burnet, Platonis Opera, 5 tom., Oxford, 1900–1907).

*1 An alternative question is sometimes taken by the respondent as a simple question, or a statement, of the second alternative: Cra. 387b11–c5; Tht. 152b5–8; Plt. 281c7–d4.

*2 The evaluative ἀληθῆ, ὀρθῶς, sometimes δίκαια, καλῶς and εὖ, and their superlatives governed either by the infinitive λέγειν under the modals κινδυνεύεις, φαίνη and δοκεῖ or, elliptically or not, by any form of λέγεις in the second person; and the reply ἀληθὲς τούτο λέγεις.
in reply not only to a statement but even to a Yes-No question. The conversation certainly does not stumble over it. Certainly, on the whole, this reply type, since it literally expresses the speaker’s intended speech and the truth value of the proposition embodied, is used throughout the classical age as reply in the affirmative to a statement. However, as reply to a Yes-No question it is not established, even among or after Socratics. Therefore, despite the first impression the Platonic idiosyncrasy is worth putting under scrutiny.

In practice, by various forms of λέγειν in the second person singular such as εἴπες, εἴπας, ἐλεγες, ἐλεξας, εἴρηκας and in the perfect passive form λέλεκται, one can reply to any type of utterance, declarative, interrogative or imperative, and also, by adding various evaluative words in the form of adverbs or neuter plural or singular accusative adjectives, one can evaluate any aspect of the utterance, even its implication and presupposition, intended or unintended.

---


*4 H 357, Σ 285; A. Supp. 246, 342; S. Aj. 94, OT 280, 322, 404–405; E. Cyc. 196, 569, Alc. 1104, Med. 354, 1128, Heracl. 333, 464, 726, 797, Hipp. 278, Andr. 909, Hec. 382, 670, 1007, Supp. 296, 332, El. 640, HF 606, Ion 648, 1022, IT 340, 597, 740, 766, 909, 1293, 1325, Hel. 125, 141, 772, 808, 1064, Ba. 823, 953, IA 504, 829, 975, 1024, 1347; Hdt. 5.50; Ar. Eq. 1364; reply to a rhetorical or biased question: ρ 381; E. Hel. 158; Ar. Nub. 1289.

*5 S. Ant. 771; E. El. 275, IT 1021, Hel. 1043, Or. 386, IA 1132; cf. A. Eum. 719.

*6 Hdt. 1.8; 9.111; E. Or. 638; Ar. Eq. 492; reply to a hortative: Pax 1051.

*7 E.g. τό πάν ἀτίμως ἐλέξας A. Ch. 434; ός εὖ κάζιως λέγεις σέθειν E. Hec. 990.

*8 E.g. μέγα γ 227, π 243; βαρέα A. Supp. 342; αἰνικτὰ κάσαφη S. OT 439; ἀσῆμα E. Alc. 522, ἀμήχανα Heracl. 464, δίκαιον IT 740, Ἰλίου τ’ οὐκ ἄξια Hel. 808, ἀδύνατον Hel. 1043; ὁμιον Ar. Lys. 594; θαυμαστὰ X. Mem. 2.3.9; ἄτοπα Mem. 2.3.15; ἀπίστα Hier. 1.9; cf. Hdt. 2.119 εἴπας τὴν ἄλθειν τῶν πραγμάτων.

*9 S. Aj. 1127, Ant. 282, 316; E. Hel. 1043, 1219, Or. 386; Ar. Nub. 204; cf. S. Ant.
In theory, therefore, one can reply to a Yes-No question by \( \lambda \varepsilon \gamma \varepsilon \iota \varsigma \) and evaluate the truth value of the embodied proposition by \( \dot{\alpha} \lambda \eta \theta \eta \)\(^{10}\).

Also, with the verbs for asking a question various aspects of the utterance are evaluated (\( \dot{\omicron} \rho \theta \omega \varsigma \mu \; \dot{\epsilon} \rho \omega \tau \tilde{\alpha} \varsigma \dot{E}. \text{Ph}. \; 930; \; \dot{\omicron} \rho \theta \omega \varsigma \; \ldots \; \eta \rho \omega \tau \iota \kappa \epsilon \; \dot{P}l. \text{Phlb}.18a3; \dot{\alpha} \tau \pi \omicron \nu \; \dot{\eta} \rho \omicron \nu \; \text{Lg.} \; 658c4\(^{11}\)) but the truth value of the embodied proposition is not. Hence, among the verbs for saying, if not by \( \dot{\lambda} \varepsilon \gamma \varepsilon \iota \varsigma \), how else could one have evaluated it (cf. \( \kappa \alpha \iota \; \mu \alpha \lambda \alpha \; \dot{\alpha} \lambda \eta \theta \eta \dot{\varepsilon} \varsigma \; \tau \circ \; \nu \varnothing \; \lambda \varepsilon \gamma \omicron \mu \epsilon \nu \circ \nu \; \text{Phlb.} \; 46d3\)?

However, using the reply type \( \dot{\alpha} \lambda \eta \theta \eta \dot{\varepsilon} \gamma \varepsilon \iota \varsigma \) in reply to a Yes-No question is, according to the extant literature, not practised before\(^{12}\), and almost never after Plato\(^ {13}\). Only in his dialogues does there seem to be such.

---

\(^{10}\) At \( \text{E. Ion} \; 943 \) in response to a Yes-No question with simple \( \dot{\alpha} \rho \dot{\alpha} \dot{\alpha} \; \dot{\alpha} \lambda \eta \theta \eta \dot{\varepsilon} \gamma \varepsilon \iota \varsigma \) occurs but in an additional remark, not as direct reply. It means the questioner’s commitment to the embodied proposition but comes from the questioner’s suggestion that from the respondent’s previous description he has just recognized he already noticed the referent in question.

\(^{11}\) \( \text{E. HF} \; 1137 \; \dot{\epsilon} \rho \omega \tilde{\alpha} \varsigma \; \delta \; \dot{\alpha} \theta \lambda \iota \; \dot{\epsilon} \rho \mu \iota \nu \epsilon \iota \mu \iota \mu \alpha \tau \varsigma \alpha \; \dot{P}l. \; \text{Cra.} \; 406b8 \; \mu \epsilon \gamma \alpha \lambda \alpha \; \ldots \; \dot{\epsilon} \rho \omega \tilde{\alpha} \varsigma \; \text{R} \; \text{p}. \; 456d11 \; \gamma \epsilon \lambda \iota \circ \iota \circ \iota \varsigma \; \dot{\epsilon} \rho \omega \tilde{\alpha} \varsigma \; \text{Lg} \; 685a5 \; \circ \; \pi \alpha \nu \; \rho \alpha \dot{\delta} \iota \iota \nu \; \dot{\epsilon} \rho \omega \tilde{\alpha} \varsigma \).

\(^{12}\) The reply form \( \dot{\alpha} \lambda \eta \theta \eta \dot{\varepsilon} \gamma \varepsilon \iota \varsigma \) as question: \( \text{S. Ant.} \; 758, \; \text{OT} \; 350; \; \text{E. Cyc.} \; 241, \; \text{Fr.} \; 885.1; \; \text{Ar. Ach.} \; 557, \; \text{Eq.} \; 89, \; \text{Nub.} \; 841, \; \text{Vesp.} \; 1223, \; 1412, \; \text{Av.} \; 1048, \; 1606, \; \text{Lys.} \; 433, \; \text{Ran.} \; 840, \; \text{Plut.} \; 123, \; 429: \) the reply form \( \dot{\alpha} \lambda \eta \theta \eta \dot{\varepsilon} \gamma \varepsilon \iota \varsigma \) as question: \( \text{Ar. Plut.} \; 394; \) the reply type \( \dot{\alpha} \lambda \eta \theta \eta \dot{\varepsilon} \gamma \varepsilon \iota \varsigma \) in reply to non-interrogative force: \( \text{S. El.} \; 1040, \; \text{Ant.} \; 403, \; \text{Ph.} \; 341; \; \text{E. Ion} \; 745, \; \text{Or.} \; 100, \; 110; \) \( \text{Ar. Ran.} \; 672; \) the reply type \( \dot{\alpha} \lambda \eta \theta \eta \dot{\varepsilon} \gamma \varepsilon \iota \varsigma \) repeating the main clause finite verb \( \dot{\lambda} \gamma \omega \) in question: \( \text{S. OT} \; 1141; \) \( \dot{\omicron} \rho \theta \dot{\alpha} \varsigma \; \dot{\lambda} \gamma \varepsilon \iota \varsigma \) is uttered in reply to a non-biased Yes-No question at \( \text{Ar. Nub.} \; 679 \) but the verb refers not to the embodied proposition but to the way of speaking grammatically.

\(^{13}\) In a question-and-answer session at \( \text{Mem.} \; 4.2 \), Xenophon uses this reply form just once at 4.2.32, when Euthydemos replies to Socrates’ magisterial exposition he previously requests. The reply type elsewhere (\( \text{Mem.} \; 2.8.3, \; 3.3.1, \; 3.3.2, \; 3.3.8, \; 3.5.4, \; 3.6.7, \; 3.6.9, \; 3.10.2, \; 3.10.5, \; 3.11.12, \; 4.5.9; \; \text{Anab.} \; 5.8.10; \; \text{Cyr.} \; 8.3.44\)) is not
Even in Plato’s dialogues, however, the reply type ἀληθῆ λέγεις is clearly not interchangeably used with normal reply forms such as νοι in question-used in reply to a Yes-No question, except to a rhetorical question at Mem. 3.3.4 (καλῶς λέγεις) and to a question with ἐντεθύμησαι at Mem. 3.3.13. In the spurious dialogues in the Platonic corpus, the reply type ἀληθῆ λέγεις is uttered in reply to a statement or, if the preceding utterance has no absolute mark for statement, is mostly reducible to the interlocutor’s affirmative or exegetical stance (reference backward (or forward) to direct or indirect evidence, mainly main clause finite verbs implying, connectives referred back to, or interrogatives leading to, the discussion leader’s affirmation or exegesis, see n. 17), 112a10, 112c7 (112c2, c1, a10), 120c3 (120a1), 120d8 (120d4), 126b7 (126b3), 128e9 (128e3), 129b4 (129b2), 130b13 (130b11), 131b3 (131a9–10), 131c4 (130c8–d1), 131c8 (131c5), 131e5 (131e1–2), 132e4 (132e2), 133a4 (132e7), 133b1 (132e7), 134c8 (134c4), 135b6 (135a6), Alc. 1 112c7 (112a10), 112c7 (112c2, c1, a10), 120c3 (120a1), 120d8 (120d4), 126b7 (126b3), 128e9 (128e3), 129b4 (129b2), 130b13 (130b11), 131b3 (131a9–10), 131c4 (130c8–d1), 131c8 (131c5), 131e5 (131e1–2), 132e4 (132e2), 133a4 (132e7), 133b1 (132e7), 134c8 (134c4), 135b6 (135a6), Alc. 1 112c7 (112a10), 112c7 (112c2, c1, a10), 120c3 (120a1), 120d8 (120d4), 126b7 (126b3), 128e9 (128e3), 129b4 (129b2), 130b13 (130b11), 131b3 (131a9–10), 131c4 (130c8–d1), 131c8 (131c5), 131e5 (131e1–2), 132e4 (132e2), 133a4 (132e7), 133b1 (132e7), 134c8 (134c4), 135b6 (135a6), Alc. 2 145a3 (144d4), 146d6 (146b1, 5), Amat. 138b9 (138b11; 137b6–7), Thg. 122c5 (122b7), 124e1 (124d10 rhetorical question; 123b3–8), Hipparch. 230c7 (144d4), 317b1 and peri dikaiou 375c1. In a dialogue by Alexander Aphrodisiensis six of 19 replies are the reply λέγεις ὀρθῶς, formally once to a rhetorical question, but, in intention, always to statement (Alexandri scripta praet er commentaria minora reliqua, ed. by Ivo Bruns (Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca, suppl. II-2) Berlin, 1892: 8–13). In Porphyry’s dialogue, the questioner confirms the expositor’s answer by ἀληθῆς τοῦτο three times (63) (Porphyrii in Aristotelis Categorias exposition per interrogationem et responisionem, ed. by A. Busse (Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca IV-1) Berlin, 1887: 53–182). The type ἀληθῆ λέγεις rarely appears in reply to a Yes-No question but only to a biased one: a question of an implication by modus tollens (Lucianus, Solec. 1.6); a rhetorical question by ἀν’ οὖν ὁ (Eusebius, Praep. Evang. 12.52.13); a question with ὄνομα (Galenus, De Placitis Hippocratis et Platonis 9.3.17).
and-answer sessions of each dialogue, which stylometric statistics have also indicated\(^*\)\(^14\). Meletus in the *Apology*, examined at Socrates’ trial, does not use it to Socrates’ questions. The slave boy in the *Meno*, when Socrates questions him with a series of biased interrogative sentences, in a way which is clear to his audience Meno, yet claims not to be teaching him (cf. *Euthphr.* 6d2, 9a1, 11e3, 12e1), uses it only once when his previous idea turns out to be wrong.

Among the descriptions, in indirect discourse, of the reply type ἄληθη λέγεις there is no case where the preceding utterance is described as a question (*Chrm.* 161b6–7; *Hp. Ma.* 300a3–4; *Rp.* 331e1–2, 4, 341e7–8, 392b8–9; *Lg.* 857e2, 901a6).

The reply ἄληθη λέγεις or ὁρθῶς λέγεις often has its meaning spelled out in a ὅτι clause (*Rp.* 338b4–6, 395a7; *Phlb.* 52b4; cf. *Cra.* 434c1).

However, once in reply to the explicit performative utterance [ἐρωτῶ] εἶ ... at *Rp.* 353c6–7, ἄληθές ... τοῦτό γε λέγεις is uttered. Yet in contrast with a similar previous exchange at 349b10–c3 one could not deny that in the context here from 350d6 the respondent takes care to find what proposition the questioner is potentially committed to, and perhaps, pretends to assent to it.

Τοῦτ’ ἄληθέστερον εἶρηκας is uttered, definitely when asked in an alternative interrogative sentence (πότερον ... ἦ ...) in the *Gorgias* (493d4). The “questioner”, nevertheless, doubts the first alternative in saying πειθῶ τι.

Certainly the Platonic idiosyncratic use gets a clean bill of health from the utterance ναὶ, ὦτως ἔχει ὦς σὺ λέγεις unbrokenly issued in reply to a Yes-No question at *Hp. Mi.* 367a5 but only if limited to this single exchange\(^*\)\(^15\). The whole context of the dialogue along with Plato’s parallels points the other way. Hippias here, proud of winning any question-and-answer match, claims to answer any question. Therefore, he must be doing something

---


\(^*\)\(^15\) The reply at *Euthphr.* 8e2–3, except its opaque demonstrative, also supports the propositional use of λέγεις.
tactically best. By the reply type οὐτός ἐξει ὡς σὺ λέγεις a respondent, even though the questioner is intending to examine the respondent’s belief, may affirm what he regards as the ‘questioner’s’ disguised statement as in Hp. Ma. 281a1–282a4, Chr. 161a8–10 and Men. 78e6–79a2, 96c1–2, and even when asked an alternative question as in Cra. 387b11–c5.

Yet, the impersonal meaning of the reply type ἀληθῆ λέγεις might be a stipulation for the interlocutors in Plato’s dialogues (Chr. 161c5–8; Prot. 331c4–d1; Grg. 479e8; Rp. 349a9–b1), but where and until when is it operative and cui bono?

With all the dubious indirect evidence, the reply type ἀληθῆ λέγεις is, certainly, sometimes used in reply to grammatically genuine Yes-No interrogative sentences beginning with the particle ἀρα. However, there is no case of a simple ἀρα question without any bias. With closer observation of the context antecedent to the reply type ἀληθῆ λέγεις there are almost always, for the respondent, one or two, embedded, close, or remote, unmistakable markers for what his interlocutor is prepared to affirm. The antecedent conversation can be reduced mainly to two simplified types: Type A: “ P, I think / do you understand / do you agree”,

*16 The reply type ἀληθῆ λέγεις in reply to a formally genuine Yes-No question with: main clause finite verb of opinion in the second person singular: Phdr. 263d1, Lg. 769c9 (cf. La. 199e2; Rp. 335b1; Phlb. 31d1; m.c.f. verb in the second person singular: Ly. 214b6; m.c.f. verb in the first person plural: Lg. 788d9, cf. Rp. 349d2, 5); τι δὲ; + non-biased question followed by further explanation οἰον τοιὸνδε λέγω: Grg. 464a6–7; simple ἀρα: Plt. 296d5 (biased question in sense) (cf. Euthphr. 12d4); πότερα ... ἢ ...: Rp. 331d1; πότερον οὖν: Plt. 281d4; ἀρ ὁν+ alternative conjunction ἢ: Rp. 601c14; ἀρ οὖν οὗ: Phlb. 53b3, Lg. 647b2, 657d7, 840b2, 896b9, 901e8, (cf. Lg. 666a1); ἀρ οὗ: Phd. 66a9–10; Plt. 296c3, 300a8; Phlb. 36c2 (cf. Phlb. 26a5); ἀρ οὗ: Hp. Ma. 281d8; Lg. 661e5 (cf. μὸν: Lg. 895a3); μὸν οὗ: 672a4; negative question introduced by τι δὲ or τι οὖν: Hp. Ma. 284d5–6; Rp. 440c6, 519c7 (cf. Phlb. 23a9); οὐκ οὗ: Ly. 220b5; Phlb. 59a10; οὗ ἀρα: Men. 78e8–b1; οὗ: Ion 531d3; Chr. 160a3, Hp. Ma. 284d5–6.

*17 The parenthetical use of οἴμαι is not entirely a marker for an affirmative or
“Yes”, “Then, Q₁ (?)”, “Yes”, “Then, Q₂ (?)” …*₁⁸, e.g. Euthd. 307b2; Hp. Ma. 297c3; Ion 535a8*₁⁹; Type B: “P, I think”, “How?” “Q”, e.g. Euthd.

exegetical stance (See A. Taki, “A Thorn in the Flesh of Doctrinal Readers of Plato: a note on an οἴμαι sentence at Rp. 335d”, 『フィロロギカ——古典文献学のために』古典文献学研究会, 3 (2008), 79–87.).

*₁⁸ ‘P’ and ‘Q’ are variables for propositions. The part “Yes”-“Then, Q(?)” is sometimes dispensed with and sometimes repeated. Whether the intention of Q is question or not cannot simply be determined except where explicit performative verbs, interrogative particles, or question-introducing sentences are used without any structure of rhetorical question.

*₁⁹ Ion 535a8 (Q (= in reply formally to an interrogative sentence)) (533c9–d1); Chrm. 160a3 (Q) (160a1), 160d4 (160a8), 161b3–4 (161a10), 164a1 (163e9–10), 168b1 (168a10–11), 168c8 (168c2), 171a2 (170e5); Crī. 48b2 (48a5–6, 47c8); La. 185a8 (184d8), 190b2 (189e7–8), 191c6 (191b8), 192b4 (192a10), 193e5 (193e3); Euthphr. 13d3 (13c11–12); Ly. 216e5 (216d3), 220b5 (Q) (219d5), 221c5 (221a5–6); Prt. 340c1 (Q) (340b2), 352d4 (352d1), 354e2 (354e1), 359e7 (359e5), 360b2 (360a8); Men. 84b2 (84a3), 85c3 (85c2), 98b6 (98b5, 1); Hp. Ma. 285e9 (285e8), 288c4 (288c2), 297c3 (297b9); Euthd. 307b2 (Q) (307a8); Cra. 386d7 (d3 parenthetical οἴμαι, 386c6), 404e3 (404e2), 414b5 (414a8), 414e1 (414c4, e2), 418a4 (418a2–3), 435e5 (435e3), 438e10 (438e8, 6); Phdr. 63b1 (63a5), 70b5 (70b1), 74c10 (73c4), 102a2 (102a1), 102c5 (Q) (102b8), 103e1 (103c10), 104c10 (104b6), 107b10 (107b7); Smp. 194c8 (194c7), 200b8 (200a8–b2), 202a10 (202a5–6), 206a13 (206a6, a1); Phdr. 238d4 (238c9), 260a8 (260a7), 268e6 (268d6 (d6, d3 parenth. οἴμαι)), 272b7 (b5–6, 271c9), 275d3 (275b5–c1, 274c5); Prm. 135c4 (135c2–3), 149a4 (149a4); replies to the question about the validity of the inference (137c2ff.): 137d1, 137d6, 138a1, 138e4, 139c5, 139d1, 139d5, 140b1, 140d2, 141e7, 148d7, 149e2, 152c6, 153e5, 155d8, 156a1, 157c1, 158a3, 159b1, 159d7, 160a3, 160d6, 160e7, 162b3, 162d8, 163e2, 164c6, 164d4, 165e1, 166b7; Rp. 329e6 (329e1), 330c9 (330b8), 336a8 (336a5), 370d4 (370d3), 374a7 (374a4), 375c5 (375a12), 377a11 (377a9), 387e2 (387d5), 388e1 (388a5), 389c7 (389b9), 391c7 (390d2), 395a7 (395a7, 5), 395a9 (395a8), 395b7 (395b3), 396a7 (396a2 parenth. οἴμαι), 395d1, 398d7 (398c1), 402b4 (402b2), 408c5 (408c1–3, a1), 410b9 (409e3), 413d6 (413d4, 2), 425a7 (424e5), 428a7 (428a3–4, 427e6), 430c1 (430b6), 431b8 (431b4–5), 431c8
A Chasm underneath the Smoothed Consensus

279c7\(^{20}\). Which means that almost all the antecedent contexts can be referred to an exegetical, not non-committal, stance, even when a battery of

\(^{20}\)Chrm. 161c7 (161c3–4); La. 185d4 (Q) (185b6–7), 186a2 (185e7); Euthd. 279c8 (279c5–6); Cra. 393e9 (393d5), 398a7 (398a3), 407a5 (406d9), 417d7 (417d4), 423c7 (423c3); Phdr. 83e4 (83d3); Smp. 205c3 (205b7, 204d1–2), 205c10 (205c4, b7), 205d9 (205b7); Phdr. 266b2 (265d8); Prm. 148c7 (148c4), 157c4 (157c2), 165b4 (165a7); Rp. 379a5 (378e4–6), 379c8 (379b11, a5–6), 381c3 (381b10), 392c5 (392a12), 408e6 (408e2 parenth. οἵματι, 408d9), 409d5 (409a1, 408d9, 7, 4–5), 422c10 (422b2, a8–b1), 459c7 (459c1), 459d3 (459c7), 459e4 (459d6), 460a7 (459d6), 460b6 (459d6), 461b3 & b8 (460e3, 1–2), 461e4 (461d1), 467e8 (467e1), 485c9 (485c2), 486a7 (486a3), 490c7 (490c4), 498c5–6 (498b2), 503c8 (503c1), 507e5 (507e3), 535b10 (535b4), 535d7 (535c9), 536e5 (536d9), 554c10 (554c6), 562b8 (562b2), 571d5 (571c2), 578c4 (578b12), 581a2 (580d9), 584b9 (584b4), 597c10 (597c6), 602d5 (602c6), 606c1 (606a2); Tht. 164b3 (164a4), 164b6 (164a4), 189c5 (189b11), 206a9 (206a4); Sph. 219b7 (219b3), 224a8 (223e3), 225c5 (225b4), 229c7 (229c4), 238c7 (238b9), 241e6 (241d2), 246e1 (246d3), 249d5 (249a5), 250a7 (250a3), 251b4 (251a7), 252b7 (251d4), 252d1 (252c1); Plt. 260d10 (260d3), 261d2 (261e6), 263a2 (262c8–9), 263c8 (263c2), 264c7 (264e5), 275a7 (274e9), 275b7 (274e9), 275c2 (275d7), 276b6 (276a8), 276c2 (276a8), 276d7 (276d4), 276e5 (276d10), 280a6 (279c4), 281c6 (281a7, 2), 281d4 (Q) (281c7), 282e10, 283a2 & 283a9 (282e3), 286d3 & 287b9 (286c4), 292a4 (291d11), 292c4 (292b5), 294c5 (294a9), 295a8 (295a4 parenth. οἵματι, 294d9), 307b4 (307a6), 309a7 (308b11), 309d9 (309e4); Phlb. 34a6 (33e9), 34c3 (34b5), 39d6 (39c9), 42b1 (42a6), 42d8 (42c8), 43c12 (43c10), 44d6 (44c3–4), 47a2 (46c5), 52e5 (52d9), 53b3 (53a1), 55c10 (55a13), 56a8 (55d12), 64e4 (64d8), 65e8 (65e1), 67a4 (66d6); Lg. 640d3 (639e4), 647a7 (646e6, 4–5), 656a6 (655d4), 657d7 (Q) (657d1, 656d3–4), 669a7 (668e6), 672a4 (Q) & 671e4 (671a4, 670c7, c5–6), 673a2, 673a6 & 673a1 (672e4), 679e5 (678e8), 684e6 (684d3), 692c8 (691d7), 701b3 (700a5), 702a1 (701d6), 709c10 (709b6), 714c10 (714c5), 715e2 (715a7), 719b8 (719a6, a4–5), 719e6 (719b10), 723d5 & 724b5 (722c5), 754a3 (753a5–6), 778a6 (777b1–3), 781e4 (780d2–3), 788c5 (783d7), 790c4 (790a4), 791c3 (790e7), 792a7 (791e1–3), 798e8 (Q) (797a6), 799b9 (799a3), 799d9 (799c3), 806d3 (806c8–9), 812c8 & 813a4 (812b8), 831e3 (831c3), 833c3 (832b9, 7–8), 837b1 (837a5), 838b6 (838a8), 838c8 & 839d6
questions go on as in Type A. Accordingly, our reply type is almost always used in response to what the respondent regards as an explicitly or implicitly intended statement.

It will be risky, though, to try to reduce every case to a simple exegetical context. In some cases, however remotely referred back to an exegetical stance, the interim context still proceeds with some non-biased questions embedding clear marks for examining the respondent’s belief such as alternative interrogatives. In those cases, one intends to ask a question whereas the other intends to reply to a statement; whereas the former implies

(838b9), 860a3 (859d2), 861a3 (860d4), 895b8 (894e3), 897c10 & 897d2 (897c3), 898b4 (898a7), 901e8 (Q) & 901e11 (901d5, b7), 962c3 (962b3), 963e9 (963d11), 965b11 (964d8–9, d3–7).

Reference in the round bracket here mainly concerns marks of diagnosing the respondent’s belief. Ion 531d3 (531c1–2, a1–2), 533b1 (533a1); Hp. Mi. 375a1 (375c3–5, d6–7, d2–5, 374b7); Cri. 49c9 (49c4); La. 192d9 & 193b4 (193a8, 192d10, c7, c3–6); Euthphr. 7e5 (7e2, c12–d1), 8d3 & d7 (8d1 & c10 parenth. οἶμα, c6, b10), 8e2–3 (8d9–10), 12d4 (Q) (12d3), 14e5 (14d6–7); Ly. 210a5 (210a4 parenth. οἶμα, 209e6–210a1, 209d1), 214b6 (Q) (214b2–4, b1); Grg. 450c3 (450e1–2), 454a5 (454a3, 453d7–10), 454d8 (454d6, d1–3), 459a6 (Q) (459a1–3), 464a6–7 (Q) (464a3–4, a2); Men. 74e10 (74e8, 4, 2), 78a8–b1 (77e5–7), 83c2 (82e14–83a4); Hp. Ma. 281d8 (281c3–8), 284d5–6 (Q) (284d3–5, d1–2), 299e6 (299e2, d9); Euthd. 280d7 (280d5, d3, c6, b4–6); Phd. 65a8 (64d11), 65c1 (65b1–2, a9–b1), 66a9–10 (65d4–5), 106a7 (105e8); Smp. 205a4 (205a1, 204d5–6, 3, 1–2); Prm. 132a5 (130e4–5), 133a4 (132c10); Rp. 331d1 (331c1–2), 332a6 (331e7–8), 332e8 (332c7–8), 334d4 (334c1, d5), 335d13 (335d3 parenth. οἶματ, 335a6), 341d4 (341d1 parenth. οἶματ, 341c4), 353a6 (353a4 parenth. οἶματ, 352d8), 353c8 (353b2, a12, a9), 397e9 (397d10), 404e6 (404d11 parenth. οἶματ, 404d5, d1–3), 429a3 (429d11–428e1), 435b8 (435a5–7), 463e6 (463c9), 475b10 (475b4), 478c5 (478b12–c1, a11–12), 479d2 (479c6–7, b9–10), 524c2 & c9 (524b10–c1, 523e7, e3), 590d7 (590c8, 588b6–8), 598d6 (598c6 parenth. οἶματ, b1, a5), 601c14 (Q) (601c10–13, b9–c1), 604b2 (604b6 parenth. οἶματ, 604a1); Tht. 144c7 (Q) (144e2–3), 198d9 (198d2, 197b6, b3), 208b7 (208a2); Phlb. 49d10 & 50a10 (49c6–7); Lg. 646e1 (646c3–8), 668b3 (667e10, c9, a6).
intending not to commit himself to the proposition embodied in the question, the other implies intending to commit the former to the proposition and to agree with him (cf. Ion 539d4–5; Alc. 1 112e1–113b7). Accordingly, if the former does not rebuke the latter’s misunderstanding on the spot, then the latter’s intention is fulfilled while the former’s botched. Therefore, if the former in asking a question is prepared to accept this failure, he is not asking for the asking’s sake (cf. Rp. 392b8–9, 422c10)*22. And yet the agreement is still under, and perhaps merely on, the latter’s belief. This conclusion leaves open the possibility that a systematic difference in belief is running deep between the interlocutors.

Closed readers of Plato might have smoothed away this idiosyncrasy but there is opened a chasm underneath.

*22 For the questioner’s ex post facto remark of prejudgements, Euthphr. 12c10, 13c12–d2; Hp. Mi. 369e2 ff.