

**COLLEEN O'BRIEN**  
**Plato's Metaphors**

When he spoke  
about Lachesis, Clotho, Atropos

when he spoke of them as women

at a loom—not three points defining  
an infinite plane, slicing any thing

man, monument, mountain, the sun—

not wall, nor floor, nor constellation,

when he,  
before solid geometry,

before space-time, believed in *is*

and still incarnated in air the women  
turning whorls studded with planets, was he

condescending  
even to his spiritual sons—or had he come in fact

to ecstasy, to a region

where reason's heat  
passes blue and

shatters into gods?