THE ROLE OF LITERARY FORM IN PLATO'S DIALOGUES

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ABSTRACT

This work on the role of literary form in Plato's dialogues is in response to the problem set by different approaches to an understanding of Platonic thought. The traditional approach to the study of Plato attempts to separate literary form, considered an irrelevant element, from philosophic content. A second kind of approach views each dialogue as a dramatic whole. Here, philosophic content is one component of the whole and literary form is considered to be of primary importance. A third approach attempts to give equal consideration to literary form and philosophic content.

In this thesis, I examine the role of literary form in the Phaedrus in Chapter Two and in the Republic in Chapter Three. In Chapter Four, general patterns of form recognizable in the Euthyphro and the Philebus are assessed. My claim is that full access to an understanding of Plato is achieved only when both aspects, form and content, are recognized as integral aspects of the whole. I argue that literary form is an integral element in the totality of Plato's thought.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

A written work presents its reader with a task: that of understanding the author's meaning. Since each reader approaches a text with his own presuppositions, traditions, beliefs, knowledge, and capacity to understand, each reading is an interpretation of the author's intended meaning. Some interpreters of Plato's writings believe that literary form is an embellishment of the philosophic content, which is the 'real meaning' of his works. This kind of interpretation, in its attempt to get at the core of meaning, sets aside literary elements. If we ask why Plato expresses his philosophy in a literary manner, rather than as a treatise, the usual response is that literary aspects are designed merely to enchant, or engage the reader.

The belief that literary form is incidental to philosophic content leaves many questions unanswered. Why does Plato choose the entrance to the law courts as the setting for the Euthyphro? Why does Philebus sleep through a dialogue that bears his name? If the Phaedrus is a well-written discourse, then why does it seem to fall into unconnected halves? The fact that Plato chose certain settings, characters and contexts is irrelevant, or unimportant, according to this interpretation.

Since the above approach to an understanding of Plato's meaning makes certain things unintelligible, it is tempting to approach the dialogues as dramatic works. This second type of interpretation views Plato as a poet interested in aesthetic effects and engaging the reader. With stress placed on the reader's experience, the author's meaning becomes problematic since an individual's experience on the occasion of reading a text may be termed 'subjective'. Further, if the meaning of a dialogue is to be achieved through dramatic impact, then what Plato is saying may be neglected.

It is the task of this thesis to reveal the inadequacies of both of these modes of interpretation through an investigation of the role of literary form in Plato's writings. I shall argue that literary form is constitutive of a full understanding of the meaning intended by Plato. I suggest that full access to an understanding of Plato's thought is attained when both aspects, philosophical content and literary form, are recognized as integral aspects of the whole.

The distinction between form and content is commonly made in an evaluation of a literary work. Literary form may again be distinguished from literary style, which is the manner in which an author's work is recognizable. Plato's literary style, for example, includes his prolific use of

metaphor, his predilection for puns and his use of irony; his literary form is the structure of the composition and the manner in which the content is presented. What may be included in the concept of form are: introductory passages, patterns of speech, pauses, emphases, repetitions, historical contexts and references, literary themes, structure and order of arguments, and analogical language. In general, literary form is how something is said, the ergon element, whereas the content is what is said, the logos element.

All fashioned in dialogue form, Plato's writings are the legacy not only of a brilliant thinker, but also of a skillful literary craftsman. That Plato was a philosopher and a poet lends credence to the view that there are two distinct aspects to his writings: the philosophic content and the literary form.

The usual approach to the study of Plato is an analysis of the philosophic content. The 'philosophic' reader of Plato distinguishes the philosophic content from the literary form and sees the latter to be of minimal importance. On the grounds that the literary elements are embellishments, advocates of this approach focus on Plato's arguments, dismissing literary aspects to varying degrees. When taken to its extreme, this viewpoint considers literary form to be an impediment to a clear understanding of the content and strips away a myriad of minutiae deemed

philosophically irrelevant. From the Greek word hyle, meaning matter, or the material out of which a thing is constructed, the term 'hyletic' will be used to refer to this approach, in the hope that this term will convey the emphasis on philosophical arguments, on what is said.[1]

Among exponents of this traditional approach is Cornford, who defends his translation of the Republic with the claim that he is making the dialogue more modern. Cornford's intention is, as he states in the preface, to "spare the reader time and effort".[2] In order to present a version of the Republic that is easy to follow, he omits many responses by participants in discussions because the "convention of question and answer becomes formal and frequently tedious".[3] In his interpretation of the Republic, Cornford dismisses dramatic detail as irrelevant to philosophical problems which he wishes to make clear. He justifies his disregard for literary form with the claim that, "[I]n many places the effect in English is misleading, or tedious, or grotesque and silly, or pompous and verbose".[4] He seems to ignore the possibility that Plato's intention may have been to mislead, bore, or create an effect of silliness or verbosity for a particular purpose.

From the hyletic viewpoint, content and form are separable. As Wilamowitz, of the hyletic approach, tells us, "[I]f we wish to understand the philosophy of Plato, we must

remember that his poetry must be treated as poetry".[5] That is to say, the separation of poetry (form) from philosophy (content) leads to a clearer understanding of the philosophy. The reader, then, approaches Plato's works as philosophical treatises, since literary form is unrelated to the philosophical content, according to this view.

In support of this stance is the belief that, for Plato, literary form was subordinate to content. As Grube says:

> As he kept his own art in check - or perhaps we should say in undue subjection to his reason...as he ruthlessly subordinated form to matter in his own works, so he...[6]

And Edith Hamilton agrees that:

> [N]otwithstanding his unrivaled mastery of the dialogue, he never subordinated meaning to form. Contentless art, he held, is not art.[7]

As a result of ascribing to Plato the view that form is manipulated, or is subordinated to content, hyletic interpreters of the dialogues seldom look for aesthetic values, effects, or experiences found in the literary form as they analyze content alone.

Others who support the hyletic approach defend their position with brief and unsubstantiated statements. Dewey, for example, merely asserts that the literary element is "barren and inconsequential from a pragmatic point of view".[8] Similar statements abound in hyletic treatments of Plato's dialogues. Anecdotal details and apparently trivial comments

are relegated to the literary side of Plato's works. The underlying belief is that such literary elements are "generally for stylistic reasons, and they are of no particular philosophic interest".[9] With its emphasis on philosophic content, the hyletic approach maintains that the literary elements are not only distinguishable, but also dispensable, as stylistic embellishments unrelated to philosophic content.

There are several objections to the belief that form is merely an embellishment with little or no relevance to content, as held by philosophers of the hyletic approach. As well as the obvious danger of taking any argument out of its context, there is the fact that Plato did not write straightforward philosophical lectures. Because they are in dramatic dialogue form, his writings belong to a distinct literary genre. Although we have to grant that Plato's dialogues are not merely, or primarily literature, the fact remains that the material composed by Plato is a type of literature.

When literature is critically examined, both content and form should be included in the assessment. Although content and form are theoretically distinguishable, some literary critics think the two aspects are so intertwined as to be inseparable in the evaluation of a written work. Nabokov, in Lectures on Literature, boldly states at the

outset that he is "adverse to distinguishing content from form".[10] This claim is very similar to that of Stenzel, a philosopher who approaches the dialogues from the morphological perspective. He insists that, "[F]orm and content [are] - the elements which must be inseparably combined in anything we name a work of art".[11] It seems reasonable to maintain that, in order to know the weave of an author's thought, a reader should not approach it with a preconception about what is a part of the fabric and what is a superficial embellishment.

Like the art, architecture and sculpture of classical Greece, which "readily rejected everything lacking in practical relevance",[12] Greek writing was simple, bare of ornamentation for its own sake. As Hamilton states, "Clarity and simplicity of statement, the watchwords of the thinker, were the Greek poets' watchwords too".[13] Among the dramatists who approximate the Greek paradigm is Sophocles who "strove for concise and natural dialogue".[14] The lack of adornment (which is not to say that complexity is not involved) has at its root, according to Hamilton, the Greek character which esteemed truth. "The Greeks liked facts. They had no real taste for embroidery and they detested exaggeration".[15] It seems that the use of form as a superficial embroidery of content is not consistent with the dominant tendencies of the Greek character. If form is not

merely for decorative purposes, then the literary form of a piece of work is integrally related in some way to what the writer wants to say.

If the Greeks preferred simplicity to embroidery, then it would be out of character for Plato, whose writings extol the virtues of moderation and harmony, to use literary form merely as an embellishment. Although Plato cannot always be credited with simplicity of statement, it is not plausible that the literary aspects of his dialogues are mere ornaments, unconnected to the substance of his thought. What is more reasonable is that form, the ergon element, has a practical relevance to content, the logos element, and constitutes an essential ingredient of a dialogue as a whole.

It seems that, both from the literary and the classical Greek point of view, form is not irrelevant to content. There is a kind of unity of form and function, since form has a pragmatic function. If form is not irrelevant to content, then it is not a dispensable aspect of the whole. It is unlikely that the hyletic approach, which considers form to be an incidental element, unessential to its analysis, is the correct approach. Of "philosophical" interpreters of Plato's thought, Stenzel says, "[I]f they ignore literary form, they cannot fulfill their special task of understanding what Plato's problems in themselves mean".[16] To see the content out of its literary context is to perceive

only a part of what Plato wanted his readers to understand.

Usually in opposition to the hyletic approach, is the approach through literary aspects, the morphological approach, which considers philosophical arguments as one component of a dramatic whole. This fairly recent approach to the understanding of Plato's dialogues views them as carefully constructed literary pieces, rather than as philosophical treatises. Adherents of this mode of interpretation emphasize the importance of literary form. With stress placed on literary context, the philosophical arguments, for some commentators, may play a subordinate role. Gadamer, for example, uses a phenomenological approach to the dialogues and claims to extract a new understanding of various sections. The traditional hyletic approach is insufficient for reading material of a dialogical nature, Gadamer contends. He states:

> [I]t does not seem at all reasonable to me to study Plato primarily with an eye toward logical consistency, although that approach can of course be of auxiliary importance in pointing out where conclusions have been drawn too quickly. The real task can only be to activate for ourselves wholes of meaning, contexts within which a discussion moves - even where its logic offends us.[17]

The advantages of giving primacy to the dramatic whole, Gadamer says, is that we are able to reconstruct, or reconstitute the knowledge Plato intended to communicate. This direct intuition, as opposed to indirect evidence gained

through inference of rational arguments alone, is superior, he claims, because the reader actively responds to the dialogue. The reader is addressed in a special way in the dialogues. Gadamer states:

> After all, who else but Plato said that Socrates, whatever he might begin to discuss, ultimately demands an answer from the individual whom on any occasion he has right in front of him, and that he forces the latter to account for what he is saying? The methodological primacy which the literary form of the dialogue has for an interpretation of Plato's philosophy derives from the same principle. In these dialogues we ourselves are the ones (thanks to the lasting effect of Plato's artful dialogical compositions) who find ourselves addressed and who are called upon to account for what we are saying. We understand because we are given to understand.[18]

In accord with Gadamer is Koyré whose concern is that the 'reader-auditor', as he calls it, actively responds to the dialogues. Since each dialogue is considered a dramatic composition, a reader-auditor, like a spectator at a play, must exert a personal effort in order to extract the author's meaning. Readers of Plato, says Koyré, "must collaborate with the author, understand his intentions, draw conclusions from the action that unfolds before their eyes; they must capture the meaning and become imbued with it".[19] From his comparison, Koyré elicits active participation and involvement as primary factors in the reading of the dialogues. This involvement occurs when the reader approaches the dialogues as dramatic works.

Advocates of the morphological approach contend that the hyletic view is too one-sided, since it ignores the literary element and the critical difference it may make to meaning. Stenzel criticizes Wilamowitz's separation of poetry from philosophy. Since Stenzel believes that the "philosophy of the dialogues is inseparably bound up with their literary form, and neither can be studied without the other",[20] a proper understanding of the dialogue cannot be attained by the isolation of content. It is only when a dialogue is treated as a literary or dramatic whole that understanding emerges, according to this view. In reference to a section of the Timaeus that hyletic interpreters have apparently misunderstood, Gadamer argues:

> In my view the previous explanations of this difficult section (Taylor, Cornford, and, more recently Crombie might be named here as the most important contributors) fall short of reaching an accurate understanding of this text because all of them fail to pay heed to the abrupt change in the mode of discourse here.[21]

There are two problems with the morphological approach. One is the exaggeration of the importance of literary form, particularly the dramatic impact, while underestimating the significance of philosophic content. The fact is that, especially in Plato, there is a content which is crucial; its importance should not be undermined.

Secondly, the morphological approach goes too far in its claim that form and content are inseparable. In some

cases, they are distinct enough to allow us to say that form is incidental to content, or that content is incidental to form. The distinction between form and content is possible in some instances as Plato himself indicates in the Symposium. In reference to Agathon's speech, Socrates declares that it was "a flood of eloquence" and that all present were "spellbound with the sheer beauty of his diction" (Symposium 198b). Socrates goes on to point out that the content of the speech was based on false premises. He reveals the implication that the grand manner in which a speech is made does not make up for a lack of factual content, when Agathon is driven to admit, "I begin to be afraid, my dear Socrates, that I didn't know what I was talking about" (Symposium 201c).

It is evident that the two approaches, the hyletic and the morphological, view Plato's writings differently. Hyletic interpreters treat the dialogue as philosophy, to which literary form is, at best, secondary. They believe the morphological approach is too subjective, too imaginative, to give us an accurate account of Plato's thought. Morphological interpreters view Plato's works as literature in which philosophic content may be of auxiliary importance. They contend that the hyletic approach is insensitive to subtle nuances of meaning accessible only by the dramatic route.

The problem which the reading of a Platonic dialogue presents may be illuminated by the following examples.

Example A:

> And the Seller doth hereby covenant, promise and agree with the Buyer in the manner following, that is to say: THAT the seller is now rightfully and absolutely possessed of and entitled to the said goods; AND that the Seller now has good right to assign the same unto the Buyer in the manner aforesaid and according to the true intent and meaning of this Indenture; etc.[22]

(Excerpt from a legal document)

Example B:

> [T]heir master, well accustomed to the ways of horses, seized the reins in both his hands and pulled, as men on shipboard pull an oar, hanging his whole weight backward on the reins. The mares set their jaws hard on the forged bits and carried him by force, not turning back for all his oarsman's hand, nor for the chariot when it dragged or caught.[23]

(from Euripides' play Hippolytus)

In example A, the reader's attention focusses on what is said, the content of the document. The reader need not try to 'experience', or 'become imbued' with its meaning since the structure and terminology indicate that the content is of primary importance. Yet, it is from structure and terminology that the reader recognizes this fact. Thus, even here, the form, or manner in which the content is presented, has an important function: it indicates the kind of written work that confronts the reader.

In example B, the reader recognizes by the rhythmical patterning of words, by the imaginative analogy and the overall tone, that this passage is a piece of literature. The reader may expect to experience an effect, to discover hidden levels of meaning, to 'feel' the meaning through the dramatic form. The import of the message conveyed by the content may well be minimized by the impact of the aesthetic impression experienced by the reader.

Even though form plays a role in A, as an indicator, it seems clear that the reader's attention is directed toward the content. In example B, the content conveys a message, but the dramatic form is of primary importance. The problem of how to approach each of the above excerpts seems reducible to a fairly straightforward either/or situation: either content or form is given more weight. However, consider the following:

Example C:

> The conditions to be fulfilled are these. First, you must know the truth about the subject that you speak or write about; that is to say, you must be able to isolate it in definition, and having so defined it you must next understand how to divide it into kinds, until you reach the limit of division; secondly,...
>
> (Phaedrus 277b)

Example D:

> But the driver, with resentment even stronger than before, like a racer recoiling from the starting rope, jerks back the bit in the mouth of the wanton horse with an even stronger pull, bespatters his railing tongue and his jaws with blood, and forcing

> him down on legs and haunches delivers him over to anguish.
>
> (Phaedrus 254e)

Example C 'reads' rather like the legal document in example A in that the reader's attention is on the content. Broadly speaking, the general tone of examples A and C is the explicit conveyance of information. Example D might well be a continuation, or a playwright's revised version of example B. Yet, examples C and D are from the same Platonic dialogue, which leads this reader to believe that both the hyletic and the morphological approaches, blanket prescriptions for the study of Plato, are too inflexible for writings as unique as the Platonic dialogues. I suggest that any approach to an understanding of Plato's thought that presupposes the predominance of either form or content is too rigid and inadequate.

A third kind of approach to the study of Plato is to be found in the work of Kenneth Dorter. Rather than analyzing segments of a dialogue out of context, (hyletic approach), or experiencing a dialogue as a dramatic whole, (morphological approach), Dorter advocates what has been termed the 'unific' approach. He attempts to give equal consideration to content and form and claims that the "proper perspective" of Plato's views is to be seen by "the careful reading of individual dialogues, with their parts in relation to the whole".[24] Of his approach, Dorter says:

> [N]o prior decision should be made as to the importance of unimportance of the dramatic form of the dialogue. Since Plato wrote in a literary way, whoever tries to understand him as he understood himself must consider the literary elements as well as the arguments...bearing in mind that literary as well as philosophical exegesis must be grounded in textual evidence, not free imagination, and that our approach to one must be as conscientious as to the other.[25]

Dorter's wait-and-see technique as to the degree of significance the literary element has for a particular dialogue means that no previously established rule, applicable to all dialogues, is followed. As he explains, "The extent to which the dramatic dimension may make a difference to the interpretation of the dialogue's arguments can only be decided as we proceed".[26] In his examination of the Phaedo, he finds that the dramatic dimension, as he calls it, makes a significant difference to the interpretation. Although he does not specify how much importance should be attached to dramatic form, Dorter takes form into account and the results show that form is not merely an embellishment. The dialogue is not approached merely as philosophy, nor is it approached mainly as literature. Instead, form and content are treated as interdependent elements, each of which may have something to contribute to the assessment.

Although Dorter's approach is more flexible than the hyletic and morphological approaches, it seems to imply that literary form, as a factor which might contribute to the interpretation of the arguments, is merely a supportive

element, a reinforcement of content. I suggest that the role literary form plays in Plato's dialogues is more than this. I shall argue that the functions of literary form in the dialogues justify the claim that form is indispensable to a full understanding of Plato's views.

Among scholars who recognize literary form as an integral aspect of the meaning which Plato wished to convey is R. S. Brumbaugh, who holds that:

> Plato's philosophy is reflected in the form as well as in the content of his writings; and our appreciation of the philosophic ideas depends on an appreciation of the way in which the dialogue's literary form is essential to the meaning of the abstract issues its characters discuss.[27]

I concur with Brumbaugh's view that literary form is intentionally patterned so as to echo and illustrate the content on a more concrete level and that form is essential to a dialogue's meaning. The meaning in Plato's dialogues is conveyed through both content and form, as Dorter seems to realize when he claims that "neither one can be properly understood without the other and...Plato cannot be properly understood without both".[28]

In his study of the Platonic method of inquiry, Desjardins finds the two elements, form and content, to be complementary. That is to say, not only does form reinforce content, but content reinforces what we learn through form. He argues that Plato's dialogical writings reconcile two apparent opposites, what is 'literary' and what is

'philosophical', into a unity. Desjardins' analysis finds that:

> [T]he details of incident and of argument, which taken in isolation appear trivial or in opposition, may be shown rather to reinforce one another, and our total impression of a dialogue (or of the dialogues collectively) be not weakened, but strengthened and rendered more vivid by appreciation of a superb complexity.[29]

The notion of a unity between form and content is one which is upheld by Plato. Although writing and rhetoric are topics which he addresses throughout the dialogues, there are three particular excerpts which attest to his belief in a harmony between form and content as the ideal.

In the Phaedrus, Plato draws an analogy between good writing and a living creature. As a "cogent principle of composition" (Phaedrus 264b), he holds that:

> [A]ny discourse ought to be constructed like a living creature, with its own body, as it were; it must not lack either head or feet; it must have a middle and extremities so composed as to suit each other and the whole work.
>
> (Phaedrus 264c)

The obvious idea relayed here is that a composition should be like a living organism, a unified whole in which the parts are interdependent. The living creature, like the artistic whole, is composed in manner in which all parts function together in harmony.

Socrates' criticism of Agathon's speech in the Symposium reveals that eloquence and diction do not

compensate for content which is of little worth. Plato's dislike of a grandiose discourse devoid of truthful content is evident as he writes, "[T]he uninitiated are impressed by the beauty and grandeur of your encomiums; yet those who know will not be taken in so easily" (Symposium 198e - 199a).

Perhaps the clearest exposition of Plato's belief in harmony and order in all things, including writing, is in the Gorgias. He writes:

> Well now, the good man who speaks for the best surely will not say what he says at random but with some purpose in view, just as all other craftsmen do not each choose and apply materials to their work at random, but with the view that each of their productions should have a certain form. Look, for example, if you will, at painters, builders, shipwrights, and all other craftsmen - any of them you choose - and see how each one disposes each element he contributes in a fixed order, and compels one to fit and harmonize with the other until he has combined the whole into something well ordered and regulated.
>
> (Gorgias 503d - 504a)

It seems entirely sound to infer that Plato, a literary craftsman, produced works with "a certain form", choosing each element "to fit and harmonize with the other", as he himself advocates.

From Plato's writings and from our knowledge of Greek character and attitudes, it seems that the aesthetic ideal in a piece of writing is that elements, such as form and content combine into a "well-ordered and regulated" whole. In written works, whether categorized as philosophical or literary, the paradigm would be a coalescence of content and

form. It seems plausible, and it is my contention, that the suitability of form to content and of content to form in Plato's dialogues necessitates that these two elements be seen as harmonious, as functioning together to express Plato's meaning. I shall argue that full access to an understanding of Plato is achieved only when both aspects, form and content, are recognized as integral aspects of the whole.

For this inquiry into the role of literary form, I shall use the following format for Chapters Two and Three:

I. A discussion about a dialogue as a whole.

II. An examination of the elements: A. Literary Form.
B. Content.

III. A consideration of form and content.

I have chosen the Phaedrus and the Republic for the major portion of this thesis - the former because of its many literary elements and the latter because of its profound content. I shall assess somewhat more sketchily general patterns of form recognizable in the Euthyphro and the Philebus, as representative of early and late dialogues, respectively. In Chapter Five, I propose to conclude that literary form in the dialogues discussed is an integral element in the totality of Plato's thought.

CHAPTER TWO

The Phaedrus

I. The Whole: Some Interpretations.

Perhaps more than any other dialogue, the Phaedrus has confounded readers. Interpretations of the Phaedrus have resulted in a variety of opinions about the date it was written, the central topic and the fundamental claims of the dialogue. The stance taken by Diogenes Laertius was that the Phaedrus must have been written during Plato's youth because of its poor composition.[1] In the early part of the twentieth century, H. Raeder insisted that Plato produced the dialogue in his dotage.[2] The consensus was that the Phaedrus was a feeble attempt at good literature, whether written early or late.

Based on this claim, the conventional view of the Phaedrus dissected the dialogue into parts. The introductory passage was seen as charming, but inconsequential. Of the three speeches, only the third was deemed philosophically important. An unaccountable shift from the topic of love to a superfluous appendage concerned with rhetoric and writing led to the belief that the dialogue fell into unconnected halves. Commentators focussed on the first half, littered with literary threads, which they ignored, and paid scant attention to the so-called supplementary half, which added nothing to what could be garnered from the earlier Gorgias.[3]

A. E. Taylor is in partial agreement with this traditional hyletic approach to the Phaedrus. Taylor focusses on philosophic content, neglecting the possible contribution of literary form. However, he is "careful to determine the date and historical setting assumed for each dialogue"[4] for his exegesis. Concerned with accurate dating and with what Plato said, Taylor admits to a disadvantage in his attempt to disentangle Platonic and Socratic thought because of "certain peculiarities of Plato's literary temperament".[5] He claims the second half of the Phaedrus divulges nothing which is not to be found in the Gorgias, yet he sees the second half as the main focus. This rather paradoxical position may be due to Taylor's hyletic approach, modified by his interest in historical context. He chooses "the right use of 'rhetoric'"[6] as the main topic because of his belief in Plato's adherence to Socratic tenets. Taylor explains:

> In Socrates, with whom the "tendance of the soul" was the great business of life, it is quite intelligible that a discussion of the use of rhetoric or anything else should be found to lead up to the great issues of conduct. If the real subject of the Phaedrus were sexual love, it is hard to see how its elaborate discussion of the possibility of applying a scientific psychology of the emotions to the creation of a genuine art of persuasion, or its examination of the defects of Lysias as a writer, can be anything but the purest irrelevance.[7]

Although Taylor does not approach the dialogues by the dramatic path, he does rely on historical contexts. Thus, a

slight shift from the hyletic view is evident in his belief in a nebulous continuity of the two halves and in the significance he attaches to the second half. Also, he dates the Phaedrus close to the composition of the Republic, when Plato's literary powers were, he claims, at their peak. But, Taylor's lack of consideration for literary elements leads to his view that, "In structure the dialogue is of the simplest type".[8]

In contrast to Taylor's oversimplification of the structure of the Phaedrus is the view of Derrida who follows literary threads through the dialogue and reveals that it is, in his opinion, an intricately constructed whole. He states:

> [T]he whole last section (274bff.) [is] devoted, as everyone knows, to the origin, history, and value of writing. That entire hearing of the trial of writing should some day cease to appear as an extraneous mythological fantasy, an appendix the organism could easily, with no loss, have done without. In truth, it is rigorously called for from one end of the Phaedrus to the other.[9]

In his discussion of the Phaedrus, Derrida traces the etymology of 'pharmakon' and its function in the dialogue. He contends that pharmakon is a unifying literary thread that gives the reader glimpses of what is later developed into the central topic - the art of writing. Writing, like a drug, is both a remedy and a poison. That is to say, Plato does not simply condemn writing, but sees that it has both beneficial and harmful effects.

Writing, rather than rhetoric or the topic of love, is also Ronna Burger's candidate for the central theme of the Phaedrus. Her interpretation, from the morphological perspective, cites literary patterns, particularly the theme of concealment, and Socratic irony, as keys to the unification of the dialogue. Burger holds that:

> The unity of the two parts of the dialogue emerges only through the examination of the love-speeches as the perfect models for illustrating the principles of dialectics, which constitute the standard for the true art of speaking; this unity Socrates ascribes to chance or fate, ironically concealing the Platonic art of writing. But behind Socrates' ironic divine possession stands the dialectic art of writing, which establishes the unity of the speeches on eros, just as it constitutes the resolution of the tension between eros and art underlying the two apparently autonomous parts of the dialogue as a whole.[10]

Burger views that Phaedrus as an organic whole. Like Derrida, she finds literary clues which establish, to her satisfaction, philosophic writing as the central theme. She argues that Plato defends a philosophic art of writing, although that defence is concealed ironically. Burger does not believe that the Phaedrus is disunited, nor that it is a condemnation of writing.

Although most commentators now agree on the literary eloquence of the Phaedrus, they continue to disagree about the unity, the central thesis, and Plato's view of written works. From the hyletic viewpoint, the dialogue lacks unity and Plato's statement that writing is inferior is accepted at

face value. From the point of view of the morphological approach, what is explicitly stated, for example, Plato's claim that written works are inferior to verbal dialectic, may be overlaid with literary clues which may reveal a different interpretation.

I shall try to show that what Plato explicitly states cannot always be accepted at face value and what appears to be the case may not completely express Plato's meaning. For example, in the prefatory note to the Phaedrus, Hamilton states that, "The Phaedrus is a conversation, not a discourse or a succession of questions and answers. Socrates and Phaedrus take a walk in the country and talk about whatever occurs to them".[11] This statement maintains that the dialogue is a conversation with subjects selected at random. If it is a haphazard conversation, then "there is no purpose in view" (Gorgias 503d - e). Since Plato claims that "each production should have a certain form" (Gorgias 503e), it seems very doubtful, and I shall argue against the claim, that the Phaedrus, a dialogue concerned with good writing, is directionless, without purpose, and a formless conversation.

Although the Phaedrus may appear, on the surface, to be a spontaneous conversation consisting of two parts, as Hamilton assumes, I shall argue that this carefully constructed dialogue is a "connected communication of thought sequence", which is the definition of a discourse. My

contention is that Plato's thought sequence, that which gives continuity to this dialogue, has literature as its subject. The Phaedrus is a pattern for what a piece of literature, or a discourse, should be. As an example of Plato's own principles of composition as cited in the Phaedrus, the Phaedrus ought to conform to those precepts. If the dialogue is a properly organized whole, then it should not exhibit a form without direction, nor fall into unconnected halves.

In summary, if the reader adopts the hyletic approach, the Phaedrus may appear to be poorly written, disunited, a casual conversation about unrelated topics, simple in structure, and to advocate verbal dialectic. From the vantage point of the morphological approach, the reader perceives a multiplicity of tantalizing literary threads which may lead to the belief that the Phaedrus is a literary masterpiece, a tightly woven, unitary discourse, complex in structure, and a defence of written works.

Through an examination of literary elements, then of philosophic content, I propose to show that the Phaedrus displays a continuity within a complex structure. With the topic of writing providing this continuity, the dialogue, a paradigm of a well-written discourse, indicates that written works take second place to dialectic in Plato's view. It will become evident that the hyletic approach, which would dissociate form from content, focussing on the latter, is an

inadequate means of understanding this dialogue. The morphological approach is equally unacceptable because it goes too far in its claims for what Plato is saying. I shall argue that an analysis of the Phaedrus requires a flexible approach for a full understanding of what Plato attempts to communicate to the reader.

II. The Elements

A. Literary Form

Opening sentences, often long-laboured by authors, are intended to provide a particular atmosphere, or mood for what is to come. The Phaedrus begins with Socrates' question, "Where do you come from, Phaedrus my friend, and where are you going?" (Phaedrus 227a). From this, it seems that an air of spontaneity and camaraderie will pervade the dialogue. Unless there is a radical change at some point, the reader must accept the author's premise: what follows is to be understood as a genial interchange between friends. As Socrates teases Phaedrus at various points throughout the Phaedrus, an air of levity is reinforced. The apparently unpremeditated meeting of Socrates and Phaedrus sets an overall tonality of casualness and introduces, in the opening sentence, the theme of motion. "Coming" and "going" explicitly establish the literary theme of motion which continues throughout the dialogue.

The setting adds to the general ambience of the dialogue, as well as introducing other literary themes. Plato depicts the setting for the discussion in great detail. With Phaedrus as his guide, Socrates goes out of his natural habitat to the country. The distinction between city and country is evident to the reader as the setting is not within the walls of learning, the city, but in a place chosen by Phaedrus, a highly sensory realm.

The graphic description of the setting focusses on the sensorial aspects of the scene. In a fragrant spot, listening to the sound of the cicadas, feeling the cool stream with bare feet, seeing trees, statuettes and images, midst all these sensory delights, Socrates and Phaedrus begin to explore the world of sense. The sense of taste, although not mentioned in this passage at 230b - c, is evident at 230d as Socrates says:

> A hungry animal can be driven by dangling a carrot or a bit of greenstuff in front of it; similarly if you proffer me volumes of speeches I don't doubt you can cart me all round Attica, and anywhere else you please.

Socrates' appetite for speeches is the reason he has followed Phaedrus. Plato reinforces the physical world of sense in the reader's mind through the use of the literary theme of "culinary terminology which recurs throughout with the regularity of a leitmotif".[12]

The theme of physical appetites makes its first appearance when we read that Lysias was "staying with Epicrates, in that house where Morychus used to live, close to the temple of Olympian Zeus" (Phaedrus 227b). A point which Plato wishes to bring out is, as Burger's research reveals:

> Morychus is a man whose fame in antiquity rested not on the minor tragedies he composed, but on his reputation for gluttony...Phaedrus, a glutton for speeches, is entertained by a feast of words from Lysias, staying in the home of a famous glutton.[13]

Also noteworthy is the fact that the gluttonous Morychus' house is close to the temple of Zeus, which means that the "feast of eloquence" (Phaedrus 227b) took place outside the jurisdiction of Zeus who "is by nature disposed to the love of wisdom and the leading of men" (Phaedrus 252e). Zeus, the philosophers' god, did not preside over the feast.

In emphasizing the physical realm, Plato mentions many specific sites or markers, such as the altar to Boreas. Although this may merely add a touch of reality to the dialogue, the places mentioned have some significance. On their way to the spot where Socrates and Phaedrus will exchange speeches, a seemingly inconsequential question by Phaedrus gives rise to the myth of Boreas and Orithyia. It is Socrates who knows exactly where the altar to Boreas is located and who recalls the myth in which Orithyia was said to have been seized by Boreas. Since this Athenian myth

illustrates the violence of uncontrollable physical passions,[14] it augments the physicalistic nature of the setting.

In relating this myth, Plato specifically mentions Pharmacia, Orithyia's playmate. Derrida picks up this studied name-dropping and says:

> Pharmacia (Pharmakeia) is also a common noun signifying the administration of the pharmakon, the drug: the medicine and/or poison. "Poisoning" was not the least usual meaning of "pharmacia"...Only a little further on, Socrates compares the written texts Phaedrus has brought along to a drug (pharmakon). This pharmakon, this "medicine", this philter, which acts as both remedy and poison, already introduces itself into the body of the discourse with all its ambivalence.[15]

Derrida's claim is that Plato wants the reader to understand the similarities between a drug and writing. The effect of writing is that:

> Instead of quickening life in the original, "in person", the pharmakon can at best only restore its monuments. It is a debilitating poison for memory, but a remedy or tonic for its external signs, its symptoms, with everything that this word can connote in Greek: an empirical, contingent, superficial event, generally a fall or collapse, distinguishing itself like an index from whatever it is pointing to.[16]

If the art of writing is the main topic, then some sense can be made of several literary themes. The 'pharmakon' theme, as traced by Derrida, is surely a literary thread connected with writing. The theme of concealment may also be relevant to written works. As Lysias, the lover, masks himself as a non-lover and as Phaedrus conceals Lysias'

text from Socrates, so the truth of a text may be concealed, as writings do not always express what an author means. There is the possibility that an author's meaning may not be communicated, but remain hidden. Writers, especially a ghost-writer such as Lysias, who writes speeches for others, and a dramatist such as Plato, are concealed from the reader. The specific places cited in the Phaedrus may be connected with writing through the notion that these sites are inert monuments. Morychus' house (227b), the sanctuary of Agra (229c), the altar to Boreas (229c), and the tomb of Midas (264c - d) are inert monuments similar to the way in which the Phaedrus is a changeless record of Platonic thought. Written works, sepulchres of thought, are dead, monuments to the writer. What should be borne in mind, and will be dealt with later is that most of these literary seeds, and especially the very conspicuous theme of the empirical world, are sown in the first half of the dialogue.

The mood and setting for the Phaedrus seem to be as carefully arranged as a stage setting. The dramatis personae are under "a tall spreading plane, and a lovely shade from the high branches of the agnos" (Phaedrus 230b). Once again, the reader may be charmed by this scene, but there is, if literary elements are taken seriously, a message imparted here. The agnos tree, symbolizing chastity, was associated with Hera who stood for temperance and sobriety, while the plane tree was associated with the frenzied madness of

Dionysus. In his paper, "Imagery and Philosophy in Plato's Phaedrus", Dorter couples this information with other evidence to reveal Socrates' change from "Heran sobriety" to Dionysiac frenzy and eventually to a philosophic attitude. Dorter claims:

> Because philosophy is a synthesis between sobriety and passion, Socrates must first experience the other component, passion. Thus, his sobriety undergoes a quick transformation when he hears Lysias' speech.[17]

There is ample literary evidence for Socrates' change from a sober, human state to Dionysiac enthusiasm. In his response to Lysias' speech, Socrates says that his reaction, due to Phaedrus' animation, makes him feel as Phaedrus does. That is to say, Socrates now joins Phaedrus' ecstatic state (Phaedrus 234d), symbolic of Dionysus' influence. Not only through Socrates' own admission, but also by the explicitly stated changes in the pattern of speech may the reader recognize a change in Socrates. In the pause which splits Socrates' first speech into two sections, the following conversation takes place:

> Socrates: Well, Phaedrus my friend, do you think as I do that I have been divinely inspired?
>
> Phaedrus: Undoubtedly, Socrates, you have been vouchsafed a quite unusual eloquence.
>
> Socrates: Then listen to me in silence. For truly there seems to be a divine presence in this spot, so that you must not be surprised if as my speech proceeds, I become as one possessed; already my

> style is not far from dithyrambic.
> (Phaedrus 238c - d)

If Socrates' pattern of speech is not far from dithyrambic, then he is coming under the influence of Dionysus with whom the dithyramb is connected. Also, Socrates began this speech when compelled by Phaedrus who swore an oath "by this plane tree" (Phaedrus 236e), linked with Dionysus.

Although Dorter sees Socrates' transformation from human sobriety to Dionysiac enthusiasm, and then to a philosophic attitude (discernable through literary form), I suggest that the transformation Socrates undergoes exemplifies the kinds of madness he enumerates in his palinode. In the palinode (Phaedrus 244a - 257a), Socrates makes a distinction between human and divinely inspired madnesses, for which specific divinities correspond. The kinds of madness are:

A. Madness resulting from human ailments.

B. Divine madness:

1. Prophetic - Apollo.
2. Mystic - Dionysus.
3. Poetic - Muses.
4. Love - Aphrodite and Eros.

Socrates' sobriety, or stolid human attitude, is apparent from his oath, "By Hera",[18] his keen awareness of his sensorial surroundings, and his inability to learn anything from the physical realm.[19]

The first level of divine madness is implicit in the dialogue and intertwined with the second level, that of mysticism.[20] Socrates divulges that he hopes to discover his own nature in accordance with the Delphic inscription (Phaedrus 230a). Delphi was the centre of worship to Apollo and Dionysus in ancient Greece. It is interesting to note that Plato places the myth of Boreas immediately before he mentions Delphi and that Apollo, the god of prophecy, lived among the Hyperboreans before going to Delphi, according to Greek mythology.[21] In the event that this rather oblique reference to Apollo is happenstance, another instance of divine influence on Socrates is evident at Phaedrus 235c - d. Socrates believes that:

> [T]here is something welling up within my breast, which makes me feel that I could find something different, and something better to say...I suppose it can only be that it is poured into me, through my ears, as into a vessel from some external source.

Whether this divine voice is that of Apollo or Dionysus is unclear, but Apollo is the divinity more likely to inspire such a feeling. Further thoughts of Apollo are prompted when Phaedrus promises the erection of statuettes at Delphi (Phaedrus 235e).

In the pause (Phaedrus 238c - e) between the two sections of his first speech, Socrates recognizes "divine inspiration" and hopes "the menace will be averted". Here,

it must be Dionysus who is referred to as the menace since Socrates points out that Phaedrus is responsible for this possession, linked with Dionysus at 234d.

The movement from level two to three is apparent as Socrates, having invoked the Muses, patron goddesses of the arts, at the beginning of his speech, acknowledges their inspiration. He says, "I knew I should (break out into verse), Phaedrus" (Phaedrus 241d). The change in the pattern of speech, from dithyrambic, associated with Dionysus, to epic verse, associated with the Muses, is clear. "My dear good man, haven't you noticed that I've got beyond dithyramb and am breaking out into epic verse, despite my fault-finding?" (Phaedrus 241e).

The shift to the madness of a lover inspired by Aphrodite and Eros may be expected at this point. Socrates, no longer ashamed of irreverent content, covers his head and eyes and delivers a "wholesome discourse" to those who know noble love and "in awe of Love himself". (Phaedrus 243b - d). As Socrates admits at the end of his palinode, he has been blessed with the lover's talent (Phaedrus 257a). Thus, the pattern of the four kinds of divine madness culminates in the madness of love in which the wantonness of physical desires is overcome by the "higher elements of mind guiding them into the ordered rule of the philosophical life" (Phaedrus 256a). From Socrates' behaviour toward Phaedrus, from the allusion

to Socrates in the depiction of the hot-blooded horse as snub nosed and from Socrates' gentle guidance of Phaedrus, toward philosophy, it appears that Socrates is the model of a lover in whom the mastery of inner forces is successfully accomplished.[22] Socrates as an ideal, with physical appetites under control, emerges after the palinode.

Socrates' hymn in praise of love sways Phaedrus from reverence for Lysias' writing ability and the desire to memorize his speech (Phaedrus 228a) to admiration for Socrates' speech and the prayer to turn toward philosophy (Phaedrus 257b). The theme of motion, introduced in the opening lines, may now be seen to take on some significance. Phaedrus, influenced by others, is moved by external forces. As advocated by Acumenus, he walks in the country for his physical health; impressed by Lysias' words, he believes him to be clever; moved by Socrates' speech, he shifts to disparagement of Lysias' talent. Phaedrus' actions and opinions originate outside himself. Burger explains Phaedrus, one whose motion is externally directed, as follows:

> Phaedrus himself is in motion, but Socrates wishes to understand that motion by discovering the stability of its source and its goal. Both the source and the goal of Phaedrus's motion, however, lie outside himself; considered in isolation from the influences which determine his own direction, Phaedrus seems incapable of representing that "self-moving motion" which Socrates later identifies as the being and logos of soul (cf. 245e).[23]

In contrast with Phaedrus is Socrates whose source of motion may be seen as internal. With his emphasis on self-knowledge and self-mastery, with his inner daimonic voice as a guide, Socrates seems to represent that which is internally directed.

Characters in a drama, or literary work, often function symbolically on several levels. In the Phaedrus, Plato seems to set up Phaedrus, on one level, as illustrative of that which is externally directed, or acted upon, whereas Socrates progresses to the point where he exemplifies that which is internally directed, or self-moved. On another level, Phaedrus may be linked with the sensible world. Because of his concern for his body, his pursuit of ordinary abilities, his dependence on physical comforts and his acceptance of others' opinions, Phaedrus' nature reflects the physical realm. Socrates, whose concern is for his soul, is interested in intellectual pursuits, disdains creature comforts, and questions others' judgements. Thus, Socrates, in contrast with Phaedrus, represents the intellectual sphere.

Although Plato often has a central myth in a dialogue, such as the Myth of Er in the Republic and the myth of an afterlife in the Phaedo, there are four myths incorporated into the Phaedrus.[24] The first of these myths, the ancient tale of the rape of Orithyia, precedes a

description of the area as perceived by the senses. This myth seems to illustrate physical passion unchecked by reason, and so underscores Plato's emphasis on physical sensations which follows. All of the prologue, of course, leads into Lysias' speech which appears to advocate a repulsive theory of physical love.[25]

Two of the other three myths also illustrate metaphorically a point that Plato is about to make literally. At 230c, Plato mentions a choir of cicadas, then goes on, at 259b - d, to relate a novel story about cicadas. Inserted between the question, "What is the nature of good writing and bad?" (Phaedrus 258d), and the reply that truth is a prerequisite for a speech to be termed good (Phaedrus 259e), the cicada story seems to be merely a digression. However, the link between the myth and the point which follows is clear: on the physical level, the music of cicadas may have a soporific effect, while on the intellectual level, the persuasive powers of a rhetorician may have a stuporous effect on an auditor's judgement. Whether a spell is cast by music or words, the listener, Plato warns, should not succumb to deceptive charms.

Also appearing as a digression is the myth of Theuth and Thamus (Phaedrus 274c - 275b) which illustrates the theory that writing is a semblance of true wisdom. Following the question of what makes writing proper or improper, and

prior to Socrates' claim that writing does little more than "remind one who knows that which writing is concerned with" (Phaedrus 275d), this myth portrays the point that written words are neither a recipe for wisdom nor for memory. Reliance on what is written dulls the memory, merely reminding "by means of external marks" (Phaedrus 275a). Thamus, the Egyptian god, makes the judgement that the effect of writing is harmful, not beneficial. Mythologically, Plato dispells the belief that writing is a boon to mankind and that its author is capable of a correct judgement about its value.

While the above three myths seem to be illustrative, that is, they illustrate a point in analogical language, the Myth of the Charioteer appears to have an explanatory function. Socrates says that, since the nature of a soul could only be explained by a god, he will have to tell the soul's nature by analogy. "[W]hat it resembles, that a man might tell in briefer compass. Let this therefore be our manner of discourse. Let it be likened to..." (Phaedrus 246a). And so, Plato uses the Myth of the Charioteer to perform an explanatory role.

Although these four myths differ, in that one is explanatory and the other three are illustrative, each performs a significant function be extending the reader's comprehension of the content. In the case of the Charioteer

myth, it describes mythologically what cannot be directly articulated, while the other myths vividly depict what is about to be set out literally. Besides the fact that these myths serve a purpose, in that they convey information of philosophical importance, it is noteworthy that so many myths are used. The myths, coupled with the plethora of literary themes, raise the question whether or not form overshadows content in the dialogue. Until the content is examined, an answer cannot be determined, but it seems obvious that there is a superabundance of literary elements in the Phaedrus. The inordinately long prologue, the many pauses, the network of themes, the abundance of myths, seem to point to a dominance of form over content. If such a preponderance exists, then we must ask if this accentuation of the literary character of the dialogue is for a particular purpose. What may be set forth tentatively are these possibilities:

A. To create aesthetic interest.

B. To show writing as the main topic.

C. Some other, as yet undetermined, purpose.

D. No apparent purpose.

It is noteworthy that the mid-point, often an important place in a Platonic dialogue,[26] is in the Phaedrus at 257c where the shift of topics, from love to writing, takes place. This shift is made more manifest by a change in pattern. From an exchange of speeches, enmeshed in the

prologue, descriptions, myths, and literary elements is a rather obvious switch to a more erudite exchange of ideas. The many literary elements which seem to dominate content up to this point diminish as an examination of writing and rhetoric begins. According to Derrida, writing has been sketchily threaded into the dialogue up to the main point where it becomes the focus. Derrida states:

> At the precisely calculated center of the dialogue - the reader can count the lines - the question of logography is raised (257c)...But what does it mean to write in a dishonourable manner? and, Phaedrus wants to know, what does it mean to write beautifully (kalós)? This question sketches out the central nervure, the great fold that divides the dialogue.[27]

But, this division does not constitute a disunity, Derrida maintains, since the theme of writing has been present, somewhat surreptitiously, from the outset. Although he denies a disunity, Derrida does perceive a division.

Somewhat in a similar vein is Burger's contention that the topic of writing provides a unity to the dialogue. She claims that the speeches made in the first half of the Phaedrus are illustrative models for the principles of dialectic set out in the second half. Indeed, a Platonic excerpt might seem to verify her opinion of the overall structure. As the Stranger in the Statesman tells Young Socrates, "It is difficult, my dear Socrates, to demonstrate anything of a real importance without the use of examples" (Statesman 277d). And a little later, the Stranger contends

that the method of example, of placing what is known alongside what is to be learned, is "[T]he easiest and best method of leading them to knowledge they have not yet reached" (Statesman 278a).

Both Burger and Derrida attempt to unify what appears to be a dialogue consisting of unconnected halves. Neither denies a kind of bifurcation, but both insist that the division does not constitute a disunity. However, if unity means a unit, a cohesive whole without any segmentation or episodic parts, then it is futile to claim that the literary theme of writing provides unity to the structure of the Phaedrus, as Derrida and Burger maintain. The structure of this dialogue is obviously episodic, divisible into segments, and falls into halves, both in form and in content. The form of the first half, consisting of the many literary elements and the three speeches, differs from the second half, which is more analytical in character. The content, or what is said, changes from the theme of love to an examination of what constitutes good writing. The division is sharply made and is made more prominent by the fact that it occurs at the exact mid-point of the dialogue. Thus, it seems that Plato is attempting to draw attention to a duality of some kind. The attempts by Derrida and Burger to minimize this schism are not convincing enough to establish unity, when there is such a division. As Charles Griswold observes in his review

of Burger's book:

> Burger minimizes the actual extent of the disunity of the Phaedrus. Still more important, though, is Burger's assumption about the nature of "unity", namely that to be "unified" means to exhibit everywhere a single theme or topic (not to the exclusion of all other topics, of course). The theme is a kind of thesis; it is the working out of a position on an issue, and so constitutes an answer to a question--a kind of doctrine, perhaps "ironically" articulated. This assumption is shared by almost all other commentators (they have their own candidates for the "single theme", of course). It seems to me, however, that if we are to think of "unity" along these lines, the Phaedrus is indeed disunified.

What seems to be more plausible than to claim unity for the Phaedrus, is to see that the two halves are not separate, or unrelated. While the first half emphasizes the physical or external world and the literary form seems dominant, the second half is an intellectual examination with literary elements more subordinate. These halves, each of the same length, present the reader with a duality, but then a theme of 'twoness', or duality runs throughout both halves. Among the pairs in the Phaedrus are two characters, two topics, two types of desire, two ruling powers in the soul, two kinds of madness, two sorts of words, a pair of procedures for dialectic, two sorts of writing, and two realms, that of wisdom and truth and that of their semblance. The central Platonic tenet that there are two levels, one associated with the sensory realm and one associated with the intellectual sphere, is reflected in the kind of duality

present in the Phaedrus, in that one half of each pair is in some way better, or valued more highly, than the other. For instance, at 276a Plato distinguishes two kinds of discourse: verbal speech and written works. He says that verbal dialectic is "brother to the written speech", but "better and more effective...than the other ". It seems plausible to assume that the halves into the which the Phaedrus seems to fall are a part of this theme of duality and that Plato considers one to be of more consequence than the other. The significance of the theme of duality cannot, at this point, be established without bringing in what the dialogue is about. To understand the reason for its presence requires that the rational arguments be examined.

This review of literary form in the Phaedrus reveals three important findings. Firstly, any discussion of form inevitably leads to some inclusion of content. To say, for example, that the Phaedrus falls into halves, or has a particular literary theme, or has an unusually long prologue is trivial. An attempt to explain the significance of any of the literary elements logically requires both form and content for a full assessment of their role in the dialogue. Since literary form, in the Phaedrus at least, seems so reflective of content, so woven into the content, the isolation of form from content is not only difficult to achieve, but also lacks a depth of meaning which would be

possible if content was not excluded from the assessment.

Secondly, the notion that literary form is just an ornament designed merely to enchant readers is dispelled. In the Phaedrus, Plato uses literary form to emphasize, illustrate, exemplify, illuminate, and explain ideas he wishes to convey. Since literary form in this dialogue performs these functions, extending the reader's knowledge of what Plato says, the claim that literary form is incidental to the whole, a decorative device easily separable from the philosophical content, is unjustified.

Finally, literary form extends the reader's understanding of the dialogue. The Myth of the Charioteer, for example, is not merely a dramatic device which psychologically reinforces Plato's view of the soul. The myth imparts a message about soul's nature which is not articulated in the rational arguments. Similarly, to understand Phaedrus and Socrates as instantiations of external and internal motion respectively, is to be more fully aware of Plato's theory of the soul's motion, a key concept in the philosophy of the dialogue. Literary form, then, discloses information which is not accessible through content alone. By imparting knowledge of Plato's philosophy through the dramatic medium, literary form extends the reader's understanding of the author's views, as shall be argued more fully in Section III of this chapter.

B. Content.

Lysias's essay argues against romantic passion and for a relationship between nonlovers. As each reason against involvement with a lover is given, a corresponding reason for accepting a nonlover is cited. In pointing out various consequences, Lysias argues from a practical, self-interested point of view. What is wanted, he says, is "that the business should involve no harm, but mutual advantage" (Phaedrus 234c). His defence of a business-like attitude toward love is an "amusement", according to A.E. Taylor, as this morally reprehensible theory would be offensive "even to the section of Athenian society which practised "unnatural" aberrations".[29]

Socrates praises the literary style of the speech in an effusive manner, but disagrees with Phaedrus' claim that the content is more comprehensive than that of any other speech on the subject. In response to Phaedrus' suggestion, Socrates agrees to speak on the same topic, and at the same length, as the previous speech. Stating that he will use the same "essential points" (Phaedrus 236a) as Lysias, Socrates, allowed to assume that the lover is not as sane as the nonlover, begins his discourse with a definition of love. It is, Socrates asserts, "some sort of desire" (Phaedrus 237d). Of the two possible kinds of desire, one is innate, an inborn craving for pleasure, while the other is an acquired desire

for what is best. Although sometimes harmonious, these two kinds of desire are often in conflict. It is when one type of desire gains mastery over the other, that the second one is pulled toward the goal of the one in control. This description of desire, Socrates says, leads up to his definition, which is:

> When irrational desire, pursuing the enjoyment of beauty, has gained mastery over judgement that prompts to right conduct, and has acquired from other desires, akin to it, fresh strength to strain toward bodily beauty, that very strength provides it with its name - it is the strong passion called love.
>
> (Phaedrus 238b - c)

By making the distinction between two kinds of desire, Plato has distinguished between one's judgement of what is good and one's desire for pleasures associated with the body. This opposition between the 'good' and the 'pleasant' means that when one pursues physical pleasure, it is an irrational action, when one's judgement is not in accord with the passions. In effect, Socrates' speech is ethically on a higher level than Lysias's because for the latter the condemnation of love was for the purpose of recommending a calculating love, whereas Socrates' censure is founded on a lack of rational judgement.

Under three headings, mind, body and possessions, Socrates details the harmful effects that one who acquiesces to a lover's overtures may expect. He concludes that such a relationship would impede mental development, would be

detrimental to physical health, and ruinous to property and possessions. He does not argue for a relationship between nonlovers; he does not give reasons why a nonlover would be a better choice than a lover. Instead, he depicts the dire consequences which would ensue if a boy yields to a lover. When pressed by Phaedrus, Socrates concedes that, "[T]o each evil for which I have abused the one party there is a corresponding good belonging to the other" (Phaedrus 241e). However, in the speech itself, Socrates does not argue for a relationship between nonlovers. He merely argues against romantic passion. Through the omission of recommending a relationship with a nonlover, the inference is that this speech is not as morally repugnant as the previous one. The dialogue is progressing, or moving, toward a loftier speech of moral rectitude.

In response to his inner voice, Socrates recants this speech, claiming it "was a terrible theory" (Phaedrus 242d). He offers a second discourse in deference to Eros and to those cognizant of noble love.

At this point (Phaedrus 243e), the reader might well ask why Plato has expended so much time and effort on a theory he does not espouse. The first third of the Phaedrus reveals little of philosophic import. It is obvious that Socrates' speech is better organized than Lysias's and that it is from a slightly different perspective, namely, from the

point of view of one who pretends he is not in love. But the fact remains that the philosophic content is, as yet, negligible.

The next segment of the Phaedrus is the exoneration of love. Socrates wants to show that the madness of lovers may be divinely inspired and "fraught with the highest bliss" (Phaedrus 245e). Since this speech is in response to his internal voice, we may assume that its viewpoint will be in accord with his beliefs.

Madness, Socrates explains, is not only the ordinary madness of love, but also that which is heaven-sent. From a description of the achievements of prophecy, mysticism and poetic madness, each a form of madness superior to "man-made sanity" (Phaedrus 244d), he begins to establish a lover's madness as the fourth kind. To prove this form of madness as heaven-sent, the argument begins with a brief examination of soul. This change to a discussion of the nature of soul as the foundation for a beneficial form of love indicates a departure from all that has gone before. Until now, the focus has been on physical love as it affects a particular man. Here, at a more general level, a kind of spiritual love is introduced and based on soul, rather than on the body.

From the statement, "All soul is immortal, for that which is ever in motion is immortal" (Phaedrus 245c), Socrates deduces that the essence and definition of soul is

self-motion. As always in motion, soul cannot come into being nor pass away. The soul's movement cannot originate outside of itself, for this would mean that its movement could be halted. The soul, then, is self-moved, its motion coming from within itself. "[M]oreover this self-mover is the source and first principle of motion for all other things that are moved" (Phaedrus 245c - d), claims Socrates, implying that soul is the origin of all animated things. From the 'proof' that soul is self-moved, the inference is that soul is immortal.

Motion and movement are stressed in this description of soul as self-motion. As to soul's nature, Socrates states that he can only tell what it resembles since only a god could tell what it is. With the image of charioteers and pairs of horses, of gods with their teams, Plato again emphasizes movement and power.

In the Myth of the Charioteer, Plato describes a tripartite soul as a "union of powers" (Phaedrus 246a). His insistence on a unity of the soul's 'parts' and his account of the soul's progress through the heavens is an expression of his moral concerns. "Happiness and concord" are for those in whom "the higher elements of mind" guide them "into the ordered rule of the philosophical life" (Phaedrus 256a - b). In analogical language, Plato sets out his view of a soul's nature, his moral concerns and his eschatological beliefs.

From 257c, the more familiar Platonic dialogue ensues. Socrates manipulates his friend's opinions to show him that writing itself is not deserving of reproach, but that the thesis, the content, may be. "[I]n speaking and writing shamefully and badly, instead of as one should, that is where the shame comes in" (Phaedrus 258d). Under the heading of "all literature", Plato sets out the conditions which "a good and successful discourse" should fulfill (Phaedrus 258d - 259e).

The first point made is that "a knowledge in the mind of the speaker of the truth about his subject" is a prerequisite. Although Phaedrus objects to this criterion, using the Sophist's argument that what is believed, or thought to be true by the audience is what is important, Socrates, with the example of a horse and a donkey, shows that to persuade someone to accept what is wrong can be ridiculous. Socrates makes the step from "horse" and "donkey" to good and evil to ask:

> [A]nd when by studying the beliefs of the masses he persuades them to do evil instead of good, what kind of crop do you think his oratory is likely to reap from the seed thus sown?
>
> (Phaedrus 260c - d)

In addition to knowledge of the truth of his subject, for a speech to be in the realm of an art, rather than a knack, the orator must be able to persuade by means of a skillful technique. This ability, either oratorical skill or

literary expertise, demands a knowledge of the subtler nuances of words, Socrates says. Words such as "just" and "good", where there is no clear identification of meaning, need to be fully clarified in order to avoid misleading the hearer, or reader. The ambiguity, the lack of unity and of logical progression in Lysias's speech lead Phaedrus to agree that its content was empty and its form lacked good style. In comparison, Socrates' first speech, since it began with a definition of the topic and continued in an orderly fashion to establish and develop the theme that a lover is deleterious to a boy, is a better speech.

This apparently random conversation, which moves from the question of criteria for good writing to aspects of laudable rhetoric, interspersed with very brief criticisms of the previous speeches, then back to the original topic of writing, finally presents the conditions which make speech writing an art. They are:

1. A knowledge of the truth about the topic, such that a definition of the subject is possible, then a division into all possible kinds.
2. From an awareness of the soul's nature, the speaker (or writer) should style the discourse to correspond to the nature of the listener (or reader).

Knowledge of one's subject and of psychology are the basis of rhetoric and written works. As well, the foundation

of the art of dialectic underlies all spoken and written words that merit attention. Socrates says:

> But, far more excellent, I think, is the serious treatment of them, which employs the art of dialectic. The dialectician selects a soul of the right type, and in it he plants and sows his words founded on knowledge, words which can defend both themselves and him who planted them, words which instead of remaining barren contain a seed whence new words grow up in new characters, whereby the seed is vouchsafed immortality, and in its possessor the fullest measure of blessedness that man can attain unto.
>
> (Phaedrus 276e - 277a)

The 'serious treatment' of subjects such as justice and beauty demands a dialectical interchange between living participants, where thoughts can be defended and clarified. It is when these thoughts are implanted in another that they become permanent. As Taylor states, "If it is to be rightly understood, it needs the living voice of the author to explain and defend it".[30] The spoken word has a reality, of which the written word is an image. "For ignorance of what is a waking vision and what is a mere dream image of justice and injustice, good and evil, cannot truly be acquitted of involving reproach, even if the mass of men extol it" (Phaedrus 277d - e). That is to say, written works are the semblance of verbal dialectic. (Phaedrus 278a). To write or plant words in the listener's soul does not sow understanding, a knowledge which is imprinted. The lack of clearness, completeness, and seriousness assigned to writing

(Phaedrus 278a) preclude written works from attaining the same status as dialectic. The best that can be said of any writer is that he may be assigned the title 'philosopher', provided he fulfills the following requirements:

1. A "knowledge of the truth" of his work.
2. Ability to "defend his statements when challenged".
3. Ability to "demonstrate the inferiority of his writings out of his own mouth".

(Phaedrus 278c)

Obviously, words cannot defend themselves, nor voice inferiority. Written words, the offspring of their creator, need a living father to defend them, to interpret meaning. A written text takes second place to the spoken word, as the epithet 'poet' is inferior to 'philosopher' (Phaedrus 278c - e).

This brief exegesis of the Phaedrus reveals, I think, Plato's concern to lead Phaedrus, and others like him who are influenced by speechwriters, poets, and rhetoricians, toward philosophy. From Phaedrus's reaction to Lysias's speech, it is evident that Phaedrus was impressed with the style and diction. That is, with the words, not with what they expressed. Phaedrus's opinion, "What do you think of the speech, Socrates? Isn't it extraordinarily fine, especially in point of language?" (Phaedrus 234c), is one of enthusiasm, particularly for the style of the speech.

Phaedrus is impressed with the persuasiveness of the speech. Since the dialogue goes on to offer speeches of a better form and with higher values, it seems that one of Plato's interests is to point out that literature should promote what is good. Plato emphasizes that literature must express what is true, and he illustrates, not only by Socrates' palinode, but also by the dialogue as a whole which progresses to a philosophic inquiry, that literature must cultivate the nobler aspects of men's souls.

Plato's argument for soul's immortality, as expressed in the Phaedrus, is important because of its explicit identification of soul with the principle of motion. This concept of soul appears to be not on the level of an individual, but one of soul in general. As Dorter notes, "[I]n the Phaedrus the relationship between soul as the principle of motion and as individuated is deliberately left ambiguous".[31] However, Plato's statement that soul is self-moved and a first principle, source of all that comes into being, is a significant addition to his concept of soul.

Since the concern of this section is with the logos element, it seems clear that there are two matters under consideration in the Phaedrus. There is the topic of love, which occupies the first half, and there is the topic of literature, taken in its broadest sense, which is the focus of the second half. There is, therefore, a division in the

dialogue which seems to constitute a disunity. This apparent disunity is intensified by the segmentation, or episodic shape, of the discussion between Phaedrus and Socrates. It is easy to lift out segments, for example, any of the three speeches, or either half, from the whole. Whether the claim that there is a lack of unity, evident in the two topics which are seemingly unrelated and in the segmented nature of the whole dialogue, is justified will be considered in the next section.

III. Form and Content

In Section II A of this chapter, the Phaedrus was examined for literary aspects. From the myriad of literary elements evident in the dialogue, the themes of concealment, sites, pharmakon, motion, duality, and of the physical world were noted. It was pointed out that Phaedrus exemplified the material world and external motion, while Socrates, who progressed through the stages of madness, exemplified the intellectual realm and internal motion. The claim was made that the myths, which are superabundant, explain or illustrate a point in the philosophy of the dialogue. As well as performing a supportive function, that of emphasizing and illustrating content, literary form contained information which extended the reader's understanding of Plato's views. Plato's view of the nature of soul, for example, is not articulated by arguments, but by literary means. The

reader's understanding of soul's motion may be extended by tracing the characters as instantiations of kinds of motion. In these instances where form extends the reader's understanding of Plato's thought, form, in imparting information not contained in the 'philosophy', goes beyond being supportive of content. Further examples of Plato's views expressed through literary form will be given in this section.

It was concluded that the separation of form from content, a task not easily achieved, did not reveal the full significance of the role of literary form in the dialogue. Since literary form was employed in various ways, such as emphasizing and exemplifying ideas, the claim was made that form could not be categorized as merely decorative. Furthermore, the demarcation of form and content was obscured by the fact that what might be termed 'literary' extended the reader's understanding of the 'philosophical' views presented.

In Section II B, the exposition of philosophic content revealed Plato's concern for the promotion of what is noble and good in literature, and his prerequisite of three kinds of knowledge for good writing or speech making: knowledge of the subject matter, knowledge of the nature of soul, and a knowledge of words and how to use them. The subjects, love and literature, seemed to present a definite

division in the dialogue.

Depending on the point of interest from which the Phaedrus is approached, different interpretations of the dialogue seem possible. If the focus is on literary form, and the dialogue approached as literature, then literary elements may seem to provide a kind of unity, even though there is a shift in the pattern of the dialogue. If literary elements are emphasized, it seems clear that form serves a useful purpose, in that it may emphasize, illustrate and clarify arguments, and extend our comprehension of Plato's thoughts. Form and content seem to be inseparable from this perspective. On the other hand, an approach to the dialogue which attempts to single out philosophic content may disclose a disunified dialogue, since there seems little relation between the two subjects, love and writing, or rhetoric. From this approach to the dialogue, it seems possible to separate form. What I hope to show in this section is that some of the discord shown above may be resolved when the dialogue is approached without prior assumptions about the importance of either form or content. The Phaedrus is a whole, of which form and content are integral aspects. A fuller understanding of the dialogue is possible when we do not attempt to negate the importance of either element.

The question of whether or not form overshadows content in the Phaedrus must first be considered in order to

gain some comprehension of the dialogue as a whole. In a quantitative comparison, there is little doubt that literary elements have a greater magnitude. The prologue (227a - 230a), the conversations between the three speeches (234c - 237b; 241d - 244a), the break in Socrates' first speech (238c - e), and the Myth of the Charioteer (246a - 257b) dominate the first half where the speeches themselves (230e - 234c, 237b - 238c and 238e - 241d, 244a - 246a) are of little philosophical value. In the second half, the philosophic discussion is repeatedly interrupted. The cicada story (258e - 259d), the myth of Theuth and Thamus (274c - 275b), the analogies (medicine at 270b and farming at 276b are examples), and the epilogue (278c - 279c) break the flow of thought. If a qualitative comparison is made, literary form again seems prominent, as it is the literary quality, not the profound content, which distinguishes the Phaedrus. Jeffrey Mitscherlingk states:

> As a piece of literature, the Phaedrus is indisputably a masterpiece. The beauty of its language is unparalleled among the dialogues. Indeed, throughout the dialogue Socrates is continually remarking that he has lapsed into poetic diction.[32]

In contrast with this high degree of literary merit is the paucity of philosophic content. A.E. Taylor thinks, "[T]hat while it [the Phaedrus] supplements the Gorgias in its conclusions about the value of "style", it modifies nothing

that was said in the earlier dialogue".[33] Although it may be said that the Phaedrus corrects, rather than supplements, the conclusions of the Gorgias, the philosophic content of the Phaedrus is meagre. Josef Pieper asserts that, "[S]cholars tell us that none of these three speeches, which take up a good half of the entire dialogue, means anything at all in terms of content; that they are rather mere samples, rhetorical models and practical pieces".[34]

Also tipping the scales in favour of literary form overshadowing content, is the fact that there are either quotations from, or allusions to various poets a total of twenty-eight times in the Phaedrus, a rather high proportion in comparison with other dialogues.[35]

That the literary character of the Phaedrus is accentuated, and that the reader's attention is directed toward literary form seems clear. The question why this should be so remains, for the moment, unanswered.

The assumption that Plato is taking only Lysias, or even other contemporary writers who may compose a dubious form of rhetoric, to task is belied by several instances where Plato makes it clear that his objections refer to past and future writers. In each of the following instances, it is Socrates who speaks:

> Is it incumbent on us, Phaedrus, to examine Lysias on this point, and all such as have written or mean to write anything at all, whether in the field of

> public affairs or private, whether in the verse of the poet or the plain speech of prose?
> (emphasis added) (Phaedrus 258d)

> But if you can help us at all through what you have heard from Lysias or any one else, do try to recall it.
> (emphasis added) (Phaedrus 272c)

> [T]o Lysias and all other composers of discourses, secondly to Homer and all others who have written poetry whether to be read or sung, and thirdly to Solon and all such as are authors of political compositions under the name of laws.
> (emphasis added) (Phaedrus 278c)

> They have shown that any work, in the past or in the future, whether by Lysias or anyone else, whether composed in a private capacity or in the role of a public man...
> (emphasis added) (Phaedrus 277d)

With the knowledge that literature, that is, all composed writings, is of paramount importance in the dialogue, and that Plato's remarks are not directed toward Lysias alone, another important point needs to be developed. It is the claim that Plato's Phaedrus is a parody of Euripides' Hippolytus.

That Plato was familiar with Euripides' writings is obvious from the fact that Euripides is referred to on fifteen occasions and quoted seven times in the dialogues.[36] Among these quotations is one at 199a in the Symposium taken from the Hippolytus, which is proof of Plato's acquaintance with that work.

Euripides' dramas are distinguished by long, expository prologues, episodic scenes and love themes.

Euripides dwells on physical, photographic details and draws out the psychological side of his characters. In a similar vein, the Phaedrus has a long prologue, is episodic and has love as a topic. Plato's graphic depiction of the setting invites comparison with Euripides' attention to physical details. As was stated earlier, Plato's description of the surroundings seemed as carefully arranged as a stage play or drama. And it is in the Phaedrus that Plato brings in a psychology of soul.

Besides these general similarities are numerous specific instances which, I suggest, confirm my belief that the Phaedrus is imitative of the Hippolytus. The Hippolytus works within a framework shaped by the goddesses Aphrodite and Artemis who begin and end the play. In the Phaedrus:

> The dialogue is framed, as it were, by two figures, one at the beginning, and one at the end. The first one is Lysias the famous speech-writer, who appears on the scene in the most suitable mask; he is the scroll in Phaedrus' left hand. He remains present in this guise throughout the dialogue. The second is Isocrates, the no less famous speech-writer, who is conjured up by Phaedrus and given stature and dignity by Socrates turned prophet (278e 10ff., cf. 242c 3 - 5). We get only a glimpse of him. One emerges a past master of bad writing, the other full of promise of becoming a writer of truly superior standing and perhaps even going beyond that to greater things. Between these two extremes (ἄκρα - 264 c5) young Phaedrus, the ardent lover of speeches...[37]

In the Phaedrus, then, the drama takes place within the framework of bad writing and good writing as symbolized by Lysias and Isocrates. In the Hippolytus, the play is framed

by Aphrodite, who opens the play and "stands for the principle of sex...almost a symbol of a primitive life force", and Artemis, who is present at the end of the play and "symbolizes perhaps the ascetic ideal, purity, mental and spiritual self-discipline".[38] The notion of the goddesses representing "diametrically opposed ideals"[39] is reflected in the contrast of Lysias and Isocrates who typify opposing standards and are placed at each end of the Phaedrus.

The names, Lysias and Phaedrus, sound like the dramatis personae Hippolytus and Phaedra of Euripides' play in which the major theme is a one-sided love affair, unrequited passion. Of Hippolytus, after his long speech, it is said that he is "a born singer of spells, a vocal wizard",[40] while Phaedra, the victim of the force of passion, longs to go to "some dewy little spring of virgin waters and lie still under poplars in the deep grasses of a field to sleep".[41] Although the Lysias-Hippolytus and Phaedrus-Phaedra similarity is not one of exact correspondence, there is a degree of resemblance in the 'vocal wizardry' of Lysias whose speech is from a self-interested point of view and Hippolytus who is self-centered. The description of a grassy tree-shaded refuge for Phaedra may be compared with the setting in the Phaedrus.

Even more imitative are the literary themes. Beside the major theme of unrequited and improper passion in the

Hippolytus are the themes of deception, writing and pharmakon.

Deception, the act of concealment, is evident when Phaedra attempts to conceal her love for Hippolytus, when she is betrayed by her nurse, and when she conceals the truth in a written accusation of Hippolytus. The false accusation, written on a tablet, is referred to as though it had life:

> The tablet shouts, shouts for revenge!...I have learned what a song! from this letter as though it has breath.[42]

The notion of writing as a living creature is evident in the Phaedrus at 264c; the unreliability of writing in providing the truth is at 275c.

It is notable that the first mention of a drug (pharmakon) appears in the Hippolytus in connection with two kinds of love and with writing:

> There are two loves, the one not bad, the other a disaster to the house. But if the case were clear, this double thing would not be written with a single name. So then, since I have long been of this mind, no kind of drug or philtre could corrupt or make me see the question otherwise.[43]

Another instance of the pharmakon theme links a drug with rhetoric:

> And there are charms to sing and spoken spells - a drug of some kind will occur to us.[44]

Here, drugs and writing are seen as charms:

> Somewhere in the house are philtres and allaying balms for love-...Then we must take some token of the man you now desire, some writing or some shred cut from his cloak, to join two charms in one.[45]

Love-sickness, seen as a disease, is thought to be curable by

medicine,[46] while words are said to be capable of poisoning the mind.[47]

As well, there is in the Hippolytus a description of Hippolytus, the charioteer, struggling to control his horses. The Myth of the Charioteer is reminiscent of the passage in Euripides' play (see pp. 9 - 11).

The above comparison of the Hippolytus and the Phaedrus, although by no means exhaustive, shows too many similarities to be coincidental. Plato's insistence in the Phaedrus on the importance of playfulness in writing, taken with the atmosphere of conviviality and the acknowledgement that the whole of the dialogue has been a "literary pastime" (Phaedrus 278b), a paidia, seem to substantiate the claim that the Phaedrus is a light-hearted imitation of a serious work - a parody.

Several points follow from the claim of a correspondence between the dramas. First, the pattern of the Phaedrus follows, to a great extent, the scheme of the Hippolytus. In the Platonic dialogue, the unusually long prologue, the emphasis on physical details, the episodic style, and the framework of opposites reflect the Euripidean play. Also, the long-standing debate about why the Phaedrus is direct dialogue, when other dialogues of this period are indirect, might be resolved by the simple explanation that an indirect style would be beyond the parameters dictated by the structure of the play, Hippolytus. As a parody of the Hippolytus, the structure of the Phaedrus

observes the guidelines set by its model.

As a parody of the Hippolytus, the Phaedrus should, and does, echo themes present in the earlier drama. The magnitude of the literary elements, as well as the particular themes of pharmakon, writing, and concealment, are understandable on the basis that they are appropriated from the original work. It is inevitable that a dialogue designed, in part, to emulate the work of a renowned poet should be extremely poetic in character.

However, the Phaedrus is not simply a parody of the Hippolytus. The dialogue goes beyond the portrayal of human emotions and literary expertise to reveal Plato's concern with the content expressed in written works and in rhetoric. The demoralizing influence of drama, such as Hippolytus, and of speeches, such as Lysias', should be, Plato contends, recognized as harmful to an audience. Rather than depict licentious human behaviour for those who, like Phaedrus, accept received opinion uncritically, poets and speechwriters should compose works with "a knowledge of the truth" (Phaedrus 278c). The truth, for Plato, is a reality beyond the material world. Accordingly, in the Phaedrus, he stresses the theme of duality and motion. He describes man, not only as a physical being struggling to control his passions, but as a being with a spiritual element. The themes of duality and motion are noticeably absent in the

Hippolytus wherein man does not move out of physical confines. That there is a sphere of noble love, of intellectual pursuits, of spirit, is made amply clear by the repeated themes of duality echoed by the two 'halves' of the dialogue. They serve as examples of the duality of man. The ideal in man is when these two aspects are reconciled. "Grant that I may become fair within, and that such outward things as I have may not war against the spirit within me" (Phaedrus 279b - c).

The structure of the Phaedrus, then, is dictated, to some extent by the structure of the Hippolytus. Yet, as Plato surpasses Euripides in poetic skill, he outranks him in philosophic insight. The inclusion of philosophic content, of the depiction of man as virtuous, of an examination of writing and rhetoric necessitates a dialogue with levels of meaning and with a complex structure. The apparent halves of the dialogue, with topics of love and writing, may be seen as cohesive when Euripides, the poet who dramatized passionate love, is understood to be one level of meaning in the Phaedrus. The link between ostensibly disparate subjects, love and writing, is forged through Euripides' Hippolytus, whose latent presence underlies Plato's dialogue.

The split at the mid-point of the Phaedrus is also apparent on the level of literary form, since the pattern and mode of inquiry change. However, with the realization that

Plato is concerned to reveal a second aspect of man, overlooked by Euripides and Lysias, namely that of soul, the two sections of the dialogue fuse together. The emphasis on physical appetites which pervades the beginning of the dialogue fades away as the Myth of the Charioteer, Plato's charioteer, not that of Euripides, introduces the notion of soul as self-moved, man as inner-directed. It is with an inner compulsion for the truth that the second half of the dialogue seeks principles for writing, and in so doing, discovers the virtues of poetry and philosophy. The bodily appetites, the 'black horse' with which man must contend, are a part of man's nature, but there is also that element which engages in dialectic, as Plato shows by dividing his dialogue into a half which emphasizes the physical realm and literary skills (techne), and a half which illustrates the intellectual sphere of rational thought. As body and soul were somehow conjoined in man, according to Plato, so the two parts of the Phaedrus, representing physical and rational man, display a continuity within a complex structure.

It is fitting that in a dialogue pertaining to writing there should be a predominance of literary elements and an aesthetically superior style. The grandiloquence of the Phaedrus is eminently suitable for the content. The possibilities cited earlier as reasons why Plato would accentuate the literary character of the Phaedrus are

twofold: Plato intended to create aesthetic interests and to point to writing as the main topic. When the writings of Lysias and others, such as Euripides, were of such persuasive literary style with what Plato perceived as offensive content, a rebuttal would contain a view of more exemplary content, cloaked in superlative, and possibly excessive, literary form. In the Phaedrus, the many literary themes relating to writing, the examples of discourses, the allusions to all writers, and the preponderance of literary form over content justify the claim that the central topic of the dialogue is writing. By accentuating the literary character of the dialogue, Plato not only creates an aesthetic effect, but also indicates the importance of the theme of writing.

The usual argument that the Phaedrus contains a defence of philosophic writing rests on the belief that, since the dialogue is a form of dialectic, the involvement of the reader with Plato's written work indicates a correspondence with living speech. As Burger states, after distinguishing between hieroglyphic writing and alphabetic writing as reflective of the distinction between "the dialectic exchange of logos and the monological recital of muthos",[48]

> Insofar as it represents the fruit of the seeds of knowledge sown by Socrates in the ground of Plato's soul, sowing in turn its own seeds in the ground of the soul of its readers, the dialogue itself

> constitutes the model of the immortal process of dialectics. The generation of legitimate logoi through the dialectic art - which transcends the distinction between speech and writing - exemplifies that immortal "self-moving motion" which Socrates first presents as "the truth about the nature of soul divine and human" (cf. 245c).[49]

Although I agree with Burger's view that the dialogue is a model of the dialectical process and that it exemplifies self-moving motion, the fact remains that the dialogue is a silent written work. It is inert, in the sense that it cannot respond to the reader's questions as is possible in verbal dialectic. Plato's defence of philosophic writing does not, in my view, attempt to raise the status of his own writing to that accorded living speech. Burger's claim that the distinction between speech and writing is transcended through Plato's dialectic art is not justifiable. Her excessive reliance on the concept of irony as masking Plato's defence of writing is too interpretive, since it lacks sufficient textual support. In many instances where Plato makes the distinction between writing and speech, it is the latter which is preferred. The result of Plato's art, although it has a dramatic character and invites the reader to enter into a dialectic encounter, remains a written text. As such, it lacks voice inflection, gestures, human animation, and knowledge of context, all of which contribute to understanding and are possible only with direct speech. The distinction between written works and speech is not

overcome, or transcended, as Burger thinks. The fact that Plato wrote in dialogue form is, in part, an expression of his reluctance to be misinterpreted. Since the preference for "verbal testimony of witnesses...in business arrangements and in the law courts", and for "eye-witness-accounts" by historians, and for "face-to-face relationships"[50] was a part of the fabric of Greek society, communication of ideas through written works was subordinate. The importance of oral communication among Greeks, as opposed to literature, should not be undermined.

> The reality, as Plutarch's Syracusan tale implies, is that classical Greek culture was essentially an oral one, in which ideas as well as their literary expression were transmitted and debated primarily by word of mouth, publicly and privately. Plato was not being merely eccentric when he expressed distrust of books (Phaedrus 274 - 8) or when he cast his philosophical treatises in the form of dialogues. His reasons were his own, the logical consequence of his conception of the nature of philosophical inquiry, but he would have met little disagreement among his contemporaries.[51]

As written works were considered inferior to oral communication by the Greeks, so, I believe, did Plato think that they were images of living speech, and as such, second best to the original (Phaedrus 276a).

As an image of the original, the Phaedrus, a discourse on writing, is itself a pattern for a discourse. The prerequisites for speech writing, included under the more general term 'writing', are:

1. Knowledge of the subject matter, that is to say, "you

must know the truth about the subject that you speak or write about".

2. Knowledge of the nature of the soul of the listener or reader, which means that you must "discover the type of speech appropriate to each nature, and order and arrange your discourse accordingly" (Phaedrus 277b - c).

It is interesting to note that when Plato reiterates the types of knowledge a writer should have, he omits the third kind of knowledge, that of words and how to use them which was specified earlier (Phaedrus 261c - 264b). This omission leads to the likelihood that knowing words and their usage is now (277b - c) relegated to a skill and not to knowledge.

Knowledge of the truth of the subject under discussion means that "you must be able to isolate it in definition", so as to "divide it into kinds" (Phaedrus 277b). In his first speech, Socrates does follow this principle, but the second principle states that a speech is to be ordered and arranged according to the nature of the soul of the listener. So, it seems that the first speech of Socrates is addressed to Phaedrus, while the Phaedrus as a whole is addressed to the reader:

Plato tells us that:

> [A]ny discourse ought to be constructed like a living creature, with its own body, as it were; it

> must not lack either head or feet; it must have a middle and extremities so composed as to suit each other and the whole work.
>
> (Phaedrus 264c)

A living creature is composed, according to Plato, of a body and a soul. The body is of the physical, visible realm; the soul is akin to the realm of Forms. Plato follows this precept in that he has composed the Phaedrus like a body. The dialogue is of a complex structure; it is inert and inanimate. The first part of the dialogue stresses the sensible realm of the body. Yet, as well as sensory perception, there is rational perception. As their rational aspect, the centre of their being, living creatures have a soul. Analogously, this rational aspect is displayed in the second part of the dialogue. That these two parts are in some way conjoined, like the body and soul, to resemble a living creature is apparent through the notion of the soul as self-moved and immortal. The Phaedrus, seen as an inert passive body of work, is concerned with movement, with the direction that a man's life takes. The reader is swayed, first by Lysias' speech, then by Socrates' response, attracted by Plato's theory of noble love and friendship, drawn by the poetic imagery, and responsive to the sheer beauty of the dialogue. Like the soul which animates the body, the Phaedrus is ever in motion. Like a living creature, then, the Phaedrus is composed of interdependent

parts and has inherent motion. The discourse has been arranged to move the reader from a view of human passions to a sphere where reason is the guiding force. Three kinds of speeches have been displayed, but it is in the Phaedrus as a whole that the reader sees the kind of persuasive rhetoric which follows the precepts for a good discourse.

The Phaedrus, then, is a carefully crafted discourse, not merely a spontaneous conversation consisting of two autonomous parts. The structure of the dialogue is complex, yet there is a continuity as the reader is moved beyond the highly sensorial opening scene to glimpse the sphere of reason. "[P]assing from a plurality of perceptions to a unity gathered together by reasoning" (Phaedrus 249b - c), the reader of the Phaedrus may recognize that the 'parts' of the dialogue, like the body and soul of a living organism, function together in harmony.

It is clear that if the reader disregards what is poetic, or literary, in the Phaedrus, then a full understanding of the dialogue is impossible. Among the many important functions that literary elements perform is that of reinforcement of the rational arguments. For example, Plato's claim that the soul is self-moved is emphasized by Socrates' instantiation as a concrete example of internal motion. Because literary form illustrates and reinforces

philosophic content, the form cannot be considered an ornamentation with no practical purpose.

Plato uses form not only as a reinforcement of content, but also as a means of clarification. His notion of the nature of soul is clarified by the Myth of the Charioteer; his belief that written works are but a semblance of wisdom is made clear in the myth of Theuth and Thamus. His idea that writing may be both beneficial and harmful is evident through the literary theme of pharmakon.

The information revealed through literary form goes beyond merely reinforcing and clarifying content. Some of the message Plato wishes to impart to the reader may be understood only through the literary elements. Plato's insistence on the subordination of physical appetites to reason is depicted by the transformation that Socrates undergoes in the dialogue. The Phaedrus, when understood as parody of the Hippolytus, makes Plato's concern that literature should express what is noble and good apparent to the reader. It is by means of literary form that Plato communicates his concern that literature should express what is true and cultivate what is good. In the Republic, Plato makes this concern explicit when he examines "both the matter and the manner of speech" (Republic 392c). The matter or content, is to be true (Republic 377c - 392c) and the manner,

or form, is to be restrained (Republic 392c - 398b). Plato's beliefs that literature shapes men's souls (Republic 377c) and has the power to corrupt (Republic 605c) are among his reasons for censorship in the Republic. In the Phaedrus, this same concern is clearly made through literary form. Plato's disapproval of Euripides' Hippolytus conveys this message. Through the dramatic impact of the dialogue, the reader himself is enjoined to respond to this appeal to more worthy and erudite pursuits than those associated with the physical realm of which Euripides wrote.

Knowledge of Plato's thought in the Phaedrus, what he intended to communicate to the reader, will be only partial if literary elements are pushed aside. Philosophic content is but one aspect of the whole. In a similar manner, to overemphasize dramatic elements is to misinterpret what Plato is saying, as is the case with Burger's interpretation of Plato's views on written works. Further, form and content are so intertwined in the Phaedrus, each such an integral part of the whole message, that the distinction is often blurred. Plato, philosopher and poet, communicates with the reader through his philosophy and his poetry. As philosophical capability and literary skill constitute essential features of Plato, the man, so, I believe, do philosophic content and literary form constitute integral

aspects of a Platonic dialogue. Together, form and content inform the reader and inspire a philosophic journey.

The literary form exhibited in the Phaedrus is of two kinds. One of these is existential dramatic structuring[52] whereby there is an exemplification of an idea. This type of literary structure is apparent in the dramatis personae of the dialogue: Phaedrus exemplifies the physical realm and external motion; Socrates represents the intellectual sphere and internal motion. As instantiations of ideas, the characters reflect those concepts and expand their meaning through their actions, interactions, and assertions.

The Phaedrus is also methodologically structured,[53] which means that the dramatic structure is patterned so as to reflect a method cited in the work. In the Phaedrus, Plato outlines a method for a good discourse. Socrates uses his verbal skills to lead Phaedrus toward philosophy and intellectual pursuits. This method of persuasion echoes the method which Plato employs, that of directing the reader's attention from physical details of the setting and from physical love to a philosophical analysis and toward contemplation. As Socrates displays oratorical skills, as prescribed by the dialogue, so Plato uses his literary expertise to design a dialogue which inspires dialectic, as a proper discourse should.

Whether this literary structuring is evident in other dialogues, whether literary form plays such an important role, and whether Plato uses form as a means of communicating his ideas to the reader to such an extent as he does in the Phaedrus need to be explored before the claim that form is an integral aspect of the Platonic dialogues can be justified.

CHAPTER THREE

The Republic

I The Whole: Some Interpretations.

The network of literary themes in the Phaedrus is comparable to the multitude of interrelated philosophic issues raised in the Republic. This broad scope precludes the possibility of dealing with the whole of this complex dialogue. However, I shall consider three specific areas in order to establish whether or not literary form plays a significant role in these sections. The sections I will examine are:

A. Books I and II to 367e.

B. Book V.

C. Book X, 595a - 608b.

Impressions of the Republic seem to run the gamut of possible interpretations. One commentator believes that Plato "expounded his system in his Dialogues, the most famous of which is the Republic, a sketch of his ideal state",[1] while another writer argues that Plato never had a system, in the sense of a philosophic system, but allows that the dialogues do "contain a Platonic "doctrine" ".[2] One author holds that the Republic is a reconstruction of an ancient civilization[3], yet another writer counters that this dialogue is a genetic account of political life.[4] Still other commentators do not find politics to be the main focus. A.

E. Taylor, for example, sees the attainment of eternal salvation as the central theme.[5] At one time or another, it seems that every topic in the Republic has been asserted to be 'the' primary concern. Interpretations of the dialogue even extend to the conviction that the whole of the Republic may be categorized as a myth.[6]

Although I would not claim that all controversies about the Republic could be settled by an agreement as to the role of literary form, and hence a more uniform approach to the dialogues, I do contend that some arguments stem from a difference in attitude toward literary structure. The degree to which literary form is taken into account in an assessment of a Platonic dialogue often determines the conclusion drawn. If literary form could be shown to be not merely a decorative device, but a relevant aspect which has a practical bearing on an interpretation, then it should be granted that the hyletic approach is inadequate. Similarly, if literary form is a significant element, but still a separate level of meaning, to assume it to be the more important level would require further argument. Rather, a flexible two-fold approach which acknowledges the contribution of both content and literary context might staunch the flood of misunderstandings which result from either the separation of form from content or the overestimation of the literary character of a dialogue.

One such dispute reflects two different approaches to the Republic. On the one hand is the view held by Nettleship, among others, that, "The first half of Book X is disconnected from the rest of the Republic, and the transition to the subject of art and poetry, which is here made, is sudden and unnatural".[7] This jarring shift of topics, he finds, "breaks the continuity of the Republic". He states:

> It [section 1 of Book X] does not bear in any way on the last section of Book X, in which the immortality of the soul is treated, and which would naturally follow at the end of Book IX, forming a fitting conclusion to the whole work. Further, within each of these two sections it is easy to see the traces of more than one redaction of the same topic.[8]

Nettleship's approach to the dialogue may be understood through his opening sentence in his Introduction: "The Republic, though it has something of the nature both of poetry and of preaching, is primarily a book of philosophy".[9] The philosophic content is of primary importance for Nettleship who regards dramatic form as somewhat of an impediment to philosophical clarity. He makes the following statement about Plato's imagistic manner of writing:

> The result of this tendency is to make his writing more vivid, but it is misleading and gives unnecessary occasions for retort. The order in which Plato's thoughts follow upon one another in the Republic is logical, but the dramatic or the picturesque medium through which he is constantly presenting his ideas disguises the logical structure of his work.[10]

Presumably, Nettleship's interpretation will separate what is "misleading" and what "disguises" the philosophic content. The wall between what is "picturesque", the literary form, and what is "logical", the content, is carefully constructed by Nettleship. This hyletic approach reaches the conclusion that the Republic lacks continuity at Book X, 595a - 608b.

On the other hand, some commentators are prepared to take what I believe to be the correct approach to the Platonic dialogues. Among such authors is Allan Bloom, who realizes that a Platonic dialogue is "neither poetry nor philosophy; it is something of both, but it is itself and not a mere combination of the two".[11] Of the first section of Book X, which Nettleship claims has no bearing on the second section, Bloom finds the transition at the end of Book IX "surprising" at first glance, but with grounds which "help to clarify...this final consideration of poetry".[12]

Underlying Bloom's interpretation of the Republic is his conviction that literary structure should be taken into consideration. He writes:

> Plato is commonly understood to have had a teaching like that of Aristotle and to have enclosed it in a sweet coating designed to perform certain didactic or artistic functions but which must be stripped away to get to the philosophic core. We then have Plato the poet and Plato the philosopher, two beings rolled into one and coexisting in an uneasy harmony. This is the fatal error which leads to the distinction between form and substance. The student of philosophy takes one part of the dialogue as his special domain and the student of

> literature another as his; the translator follows suit, using great license in the bulk of the book and reverting to a care appropriate to Aristotle when philosophy appears to enter.[13]

For Bloom, the barrier between form and content is a mistake. It limits the reader's understanding of writings as unique as the Platonic dialogues. His insistence on a unity of form and content leads to his view that the shift of topics at the end of Book IX has some justification which, as we shall see, dispels the charge of discontinuity.

I will consider the apparent disruption of the structure of the Republic at Book X for the salient literary elements in Section II A, then for the philosophic content in Section II B, and finally from the point of view which unifies form and content in Section III.

Prior to the consideration of this problem, the same format will be used to ascertain which of the three approaches affords the best understanding of the section up to 367e of Book II, commonly called the introduction. Book V (449a - 480a) will be reviewed from the three points of view in order to discover whether literary form is a significant aspect of this section. It will be argued that a lack of concern for literary form, as well as undue attendance to literary form, are inadequate means to a full understanding of Plato's thought.

II. The Elements

A. Literary Form. Books I and II to 367e.

The majority of Plato's dialogues of the middle period are reported, or indirect, accounts. Included in this group is the Republic, for which this form of composition is well-suited. The past tense of the narrative and the unspecified audience to whom the account is directed create a sense of timelessness and universality. The author, afforded a greater latitude with the indirect dialogue form, may allow the conversation to flow in an uninterrupted manner or may slow the action by interjecting reminders that this is a reported, not a direct, account. The narrator is able to express his opinions and observations, thus adding his reflections to the proceedings. The narrator's observations allow the reader greater insight into Socrates' views, while the flexibility permitted to the author gives him a greater measure of control over the drama which is useful in a long and complex work.

The dramatic date for the Republic is c. B. C. 421, a time of peace and prosperity in Athens.[14] Periods of peace, free from disturbances and violence, are apparently conducive to theoretical discussions. The setting is also appropriate. It is in Polemarchus' house in the Piraeus, a busy centre for trade and commerce at the time. Significantly, it is not within the confines of a provincial environment, nor with a

partisan group, that the ideal state emerges. It is amidst a congenial, yet multifarious, assemblage in a cosmopolitan centre during a period of calm that an intellectual discussion about a just state takes place.

The carefully crafted opening scene contains some interesting information. At the outset, Socrates asserts:

> I went down to the Piraeus yesterday with Glaucon, son of Ariston, to pray to the goddess; and, at the same time, I wanted to observe how they would put on the festival, since they were now holding it for the first time.
>
> (B. Republic 327a)[15]

Here, Socrates gives two reasons for his presence in Piraeus: his piety and his curiosity about novel events. At 328a, we find that his curiosity is the stronger trait as he is tempted to return to Piraeus to observe a torch race on horseback. An inquisitive nature is, of course, the mark of a philosopher. The torch race is never seen by Socrates. Instead, "[T]he conversation, also an innovation and itself innovating, takes the place of that torch race and is parallel to it".[16]

Having observed the daytime festival, Socrates had set out for Athens with Glaucon when Polemarchus caught sight of them. Polemarchus urges Socrates to stay for the torch race, a festival "that will be worth seeing" (B. Republic 328a). These instances of spectacles and the repetition of words connected with the faculty of sight indicate the emergence of a literary theme. The faculty of sight, "the

most sunlike of the organs of the senses" (B. Republic 508b), proves to be a useful literary theme. From a consideration of sight in the world of particulars (Book VI, cf. 507b), Plato moves easily into a discussion about the realm of universals (B. Republic 508b). As vision requires light as the necessary condition for seeing in the physical world, so knowledge of the Forms requires the Idea of the Good as the necessary condition in the realm of intelligibles. The eye is compared to the soul (B. Republic 508d) which "sees", or grasps, the Forms "with thought" (B. Republic 510d). The literary theme of sight is employed in the Divided Line: "Then take a line cut in two unequal segments, one for the class that is seen, the other for the class that is intellected" (B. Republic 509d). In the Allegory of the Cave, the ability to see is analogous to the ability to grasp reality (B. Republic VII 514a - 519a). The literary theme of sight, apparent from the beginning of the dialogue, heightens the reader's awareness of this concept and illustrates analogically the notion of seeing intellectually. This central literary theme[17] has a direct bearing on the subject matter of the dialogue.

The image of Polemarchus' slave ordered to stop Socrates' return to Athens in the opening scene is, according to Bloom, a "dramatic prefiguration of the whole political problem".[18] He states:

> This little scene prefigures the three-class structure of the good regime developed in the Republic and outlines the whole political problem. Power is in the hands of the gentlemen, who are not philosophers. They can command the services of the many, and their strength is such that they always hold the philosophers in their grasp. Therefore it is part of the philosophers' self-interest to come to terms with them. The question becomes: to what extent can the philosophers influence the gentlemen? It is this crucial middle class which is the primary object of the Republic and the education prescribed in it. In this episode, the first fact is brute force, leading to the recognition that no matter how reasonable one may be, everything depends upon the people's willingness to listen. There is a confrontation here between wisdom, as represented by Socrates, and power, as represented by Polemarchus and his friends.[19]

Through the explicit depiction of the three-class structure and, implicitly, the problems to be addressed, Plato's opening scene points out in concrete dramatic form what is to be examined theoretically. This method, of sketching dramatically what is to be argued in more abstract terms, gives a concrete reality to the philosophic arguments.

> "[T]he 'ergon elements achieve ultimate significance...as providing empirical data and establishing a vital and relevant context for the critical and discursive arguments; they put the latter in touch with immediate reality; and this, of course gives Plato's arguments a reflective penetration and precision that they otherwise do not have".[20]

As a dramatic sketch of the philosophic content, the opening scene in the Republic lends a vitality to the arguments. In recognizing that the dramatic context reflects the philosophic content of the dialogue, and that the drama

captures the essence of the discursive arguments, the separation of the arguments from their literary context does not seem to be a reasonable approach to a dialogue. The ergon element is a practical means of access to the logos element. To disregard the dramatic elements is to reject the notion of the dialogue form which approximates a shared inquiry, the proper way to philosophize, according to Plato. As a concrete example of what the dialogue is about, the opening scene prepares the reader for the arguments to follow.

> There is no danger in a dialogue of losing sight of the tension and relevance that holds between the concrete and the abstract; the persons and situations are individuals and concrete, the theme of discussion, when the dialogue is one with Socrates, is a world of meanings and ideas that lie behind and structure concrete appearances and flow.[21]

Because of the relevance of the concrete to the abstract, a full comprehension of the dialogue seems possible only when these two aspects are taken into consideration.

The central characters in the Republic exhibit characteristics commensurate with their arguments. As stated earlier, Socrates shows a marked degree of intellectual curiosity and is representative of wisdom. Cephalus, bent on his religious duties, is a very old man. His view of justice involves honesty and giving what is due to gods and men. This fleeting glimpse of Cephalus reveals an authority figure who upholds traditional values. Cephalus bequeaths his

beliefs to his son, Polemarchus, who accepts the argument unhesitatingly. Polemarchus uses an external authority, Simonides, to argue that justice is rendering every man his due. Polemarchus, as the heir of traditional beliefs, exemplifies those who accept received opinions without a proper assessment of them. "[T]he belief that it must be right to help friends and harm enemies...was a traditional maxim of Greek, morality".[22] As Socrates rejects this view as too vague and obscure, since he shows that "it is never just to injure anyone" (B. Republic 335d), the reader may understand that Polemarchus is representative of unreflective inherited opinion.

Thrasymachus' assertive personality is apparent from his explosive entrance into the conversation. Having been restrained, he "could no longer keep quiet; hunched like a wild beast, he flung himself at us as if to tear us to pieces...And he shouted into our midst" (B. Republic 336b). Not surprisingly, he upholds the idea of a "superman who will try to outdo everyone else and go to any lengths in getting the better of his neighbours".[23] Socrates' reaction to Thrasymachus is, he claims, one of fear and, "with just a trace of a tremor" (B. Republic 336d - e) in his voice, he placates Thrasymachus. Thrasymachus' contention that justice is "the advantage of the stronger" (B. Republic 338c) echoes his own forceful personality. As the concept 'stronger'

widens to include knowledge and the ability to rule, Thrasymachus' definition of justice as 'might is right' proves to be untenable. As a rhetorician, unconcerned with morality, Thrasymachus exemplifies the position he attempts to defend. He displays a kind of knowledge as he uses arguments derived from experience. His skill as a rhetorician is no match for the Socratic art of dialectic. Thrasymachus' humiliation is evident when he blushes (B. Republic 350d). "The apparently shameless Thrasymachus, willing to say anything, is revealed in all his vanity, for he blushes. He has no true freedom of mind because he is attached to prestige, to the applause of the multitude, and hence their thought".[24]

Glaucon puts forth a form of the social contract theory. Underlying this theory is the assumption that, "[I]f all these artificial restraints were removed, the natural man would be left only with purely egoistic instincts and desires".[25] Instincts and desires are features of Glaucon's character. In Bloom's opinion:

> Glaucon is a man of intense desires, and his daring is in the service of those desires. He is, to use Socratic language, an erotic man, one who lusts to have as his own all things which appear beautiful and good.[26]

Like Glaucon, Adeimantus is motivated by egoistic impulses, but of a lesser strength. His defence of injustice is not so much in argument form as it is an exposition of the

rewards of injustice, particularly as injustice seems to be the easier route to follow, according to the poets. Bloom differentiates between Glaucon and Adeimantus as follows:

> As Glaucon was daring, Adeimantus is moderate; as Glaucon turned to nature, Adeimantus turned to opinion; as Glaucon paid attention to what he saw, Adeimantus pays attention to what he hears.[27]

Adeimantus' account of justice and injustice is less theoretical than Glaucon's. He presents more practical, common sense observations. The difference in character between Glaucon and Adeimantus continues throughout the dialogue. "From this point on, the brothers stay in character: it is Glaucon who follows the more technical and abstract discussion as respondent, while Adeimantus comes on stage to offer objections that an ordinary man might make, to work out details of application, to check Socrates' accounts of inferior states and errors in content of pure poetry".[28]

The main characters delineated early in the Republic are instantiations of the ideas they present. This literary device, the existential structuring of the dramatis personae, extends the reader's knowledge of the philosophical discussion. For example, the examples which Socrates uses in his conversation with Polemarchus are common, taken from the practical arts, but with Glaucon, a more intellectual man, he uses mathematical examples and hypothetical situations in his portrait of justice. Since Plato believes that knowledge of the type of soul of the listener is a determining factor in

persuasive oratory (Phaedrus 271d), the reader gains more insight into the characters through the kinds of arguments and examples Socrates uses. In understanding that each character represents, or 'exists' as, a particular point of view, the reader is able to comprehend current views more fully and to judge whether Plato's idea of justice would be satisfactory for these diverse types of characters. Understanding the nature of a character who has certain beliefs leads to a better understanding of his ideas. Accordingly, the reader's knowledge of the arguments and the reasons why particular arguments and examples are used is extended through existential dramatic structuring. The interplay of characters, their ideas, their actions and reactions contribute to a fuller understanding of Plato's just state and the difficulties which various people perceive in such a possibility.

In this section of the Republic (327a - 367e), the pattern of speech changes. When Socrates is in conversation with Polemarchus, each speaker addresses the other with very brief remarks. From 332a to 336b, that is, the whole of the discussion between Polemarchus and Socrates, the dialogue largely consists of a short sentence in question form followed by an even shorter response. When an occasional remark is made, it too is brief. Socrates uses examples freely, such as cooking, farming, boxing, shoemaking, and

sailing. All the examples are concerned with everyday functions men perform.

Thrasymachus, a rhetorician, objects to this style of argument.

> He is angry because Socrates and Polemarchus had been engaged in a dialogue. He sees this as a form of weakness. The participants in a dialogue obey certain rules which, like laws, govern their association; they seek a common agreement instead of trying to win a victory. The very art of dialectic seems to impose a kind of justice on those who practice it, whereas rhetoric, the art of making long speeches without being questioned - Thrasymachus' art - is adapted to self-aggrandizement.[29]

Accordingly, when Thrasymachus and Socrates are engaged in inquiry the pattern of speech becomes less of a series of cursory sentences. The exchange between these two consists of varied sentence lengths, with Thrasymachus showing his oratorical skill in one long effort from 343a to 344c. As well as a difference in form, there is a difference in the strength of Thrasymachus' argument.[30] Through his references to experience in support of his position, he is revealed as an empiricist.[31]

Once again the pattern of speech changes when Glaucon and Adeimantus present their views. Since both want to know what justice in itself is, apart from external rewards, and since both put forth hypotheses as to the nature of justice and injustice, the dialogue with Socrates reaches a higher intellectual level. The argument against the intrinsic worth

of justice is now generalized. "If the topic under discussion were geometry or chemistry, it would be clear that a shift has been made here from experience to hypothesis".[32]

Although it seems clear that there are distinct changes in the patterns of speech, and differences in the kinds of authority appealed to, an assessment of the significance of these notable dissimilarities can only be made when both literary form and philosophic content are taken into account. This will be dealt with in Section III of this chapter.

With the conclusion of Adeimantus' general account of justice and injustice, the stage is set for Socrates to begin his explication of what justice is (B. Republic 367e). Up to this point, there has been an acknowledgement of current theories. From this point on, Socrates will demonstrate the nature of justice in the state and in the individual soul. Seen in this light, all that has preceded is an introduction to the main body of the text. As an introduction, this section (327a - 367e) performs what is often assumed to be the task of introductions in Plato's writings, that of 'charming' the reader. The reader is charmed, or drawn into the inquiry though the dialogue form, which engages the reader on a more personal level than is possible with a treatise. Plato's introductions do invite the reader to participate, but they also have a second function. As

Desjardins explains:

> The second function of a Platonic introduction is to confront us with empirical or pragmatic conditions to which the discussion that comprises the main body of discourse is intended to be immediately relevant, both in form and in content. It is to present concretely, intuitively, as it were 'in a flash', the problems and solutions proposed, which are to be developed consecutively and in detail in the main body of the dialogue. The practical consequences of these will be spelled out on the dramatic level and in such a way as closely to parallel and to support the abstract and theoretic part of the discussion. But it is this preliminary presentation of parts as determined by their relation to one another and to the whole which establishes the relevance and drift of subsequent action and discursive argument.[33]

I suggest that the introduction to the Republic is from Book I, 327a to Book II, 367e, and that it does confront the reader with a concrete presentation of the theoretical discussion which follows. By the dramatic prefiguration of Socrates in a socio-political atmosphere where an individual may pursue the function to which he is best suited, and by the presentation of popular beliefs about justice, graphically portrayed, Plato establishes a dramatic context which is relevant to the discussion to follow. He illustrates, in concrete form that man has a choice of directions to pursue, as will be made clear when both content and form are considered (Section III).

Other literary themes will also become apparent when content and form are examined, but they are neither as prominent nor as abundant as in the Phaedrus. Yet they are,

as I shall argue later, necessary aspects of a full understanding of the dialogue. Literary form is suitable for, and harmonious with, the content.

2. Book V

In Book V (B. Republic 449a - 480a), the opening scene echoes the opening scene in Book I. Polemarchus once again holds Socrates back, although this time it is restraint from proceeding to a discussion of four forms of badness in government, rather than physical restraint. By having Polemarchus initiate this pressure, the parallel with Book I is more transparent. As legal terminology was employed in the initial scene in Book I at 328b, line 3, so it reappears in Book V at 450a, lines 4 - 5 and at 451b, lines 7 - 9. All this is to emphasize a new beginning in the dialogue. Socrates says, "How much discussion you've set in motion, from the beginning again as it were" (B. Republic 450a). The reader may understand from this reenactment of the original opening scene that a new level of complexity is to be broached. "Plato more than once hints that the argument so far has been carried on at a superficial level".[34]

Socrates is about to develop very problematic and innovative concepts - the equality of women, the community of children, and the philosopher-king. That he realizes the problems involved with such ideas is evident from his

explicit statement of hesitancy and doubt (B. Republic 450c - d). That he recognizes that these concepts are untried may be understood from his use as kuma, translated as wave, but with the secondary meaning of foetus.[35] The reader is apprized of Socrates' awareness of how radical his ideas are (B. Republic 452d), but, as he says, "We mustn't be afraid of all the jokes" (B. Republic 452b). He proceeds, then, to give a straightforward account of women, children and the philosopher-king in the ideal state. Apart from a very few instances,[36] there is little reference to the poets. Plato not only keeps his allusions to the poets at a minimum, but also curbs his own poetical contributions. There are no myths, no conspicuous pauses or changes in the pattern of speech, no outstanding imagery or analogical language and no literary elements to distract the reader from the intensity of the argument with Glaucon. Like Examples A and C (pp. 9 - 11), the content is of the utmost importance. Plato does not want poetic allusions or imagery to intrude. The reader's attention is directed toward the content, to what is said.

3. Book X, 595a - 608b

In the course of outlining the pattern of the ideal state and the just man, Plato limits both the content and the form of poetry in the education of the guardians. In content, literature is not to contain immoral tales; in form, poetry which is imitative is disallowed (Book III 386a -

398b). By the end of Book IX, the structure of the ideal state and the resolution of what justice is seems complete. Yet, the Republic continues with a more rigorous attack on poetry and a concluding myth on the afterlife. It seems clear that the Myth of Er, with its emphasis on religion, balances the overall structure of the Republic which began with the appearance of Cephalus who left to perform his religious observances. In his old age Cephalus turns away from bodily appetites and toward religious duties. Since the end of his life is near, Cephalus' concern is with preparations for death. The last half of Book X (B. Republic 608c - 621d), with its concern for the rewards and punishments of life after death, brings Cephalus before the reader's mind. Thus, the concluding myth gives a symmetry to the dramatic structure of the dialogue. The problem is: how does the second consideration of poetry (B. Republic 595a - 608b) fit into the overall scheme?

The fact is that we can understand this second attack on poetry only when the overall structure and purpose of the Republic is recalled. It will be remembered that one of Socrates' aims has been the education of Glaucon. As an educable young man influenced by the views of the Sophists, Glaucon is shown another view of life by Socrates. "The choice between the philosophic and tyrannic lives explains the plot of the Republic".[37] At the core of the ideal state

is the philosopher;[38] in the soul of the philosopher is the supremacy of reason. In his identification of philosophy with justice and of tyranny with injustice, Socrates describes the life of the just man as one in which all elements of the soul are in harmony. The enlightment of Glaucon by Socrates does not culminate in a pattern laid up in heaven, by which a man may "found a city within himself" (B. Republic 592b), because even this possibility is at risk when philosophy is in a subordinate position. To remove whatever stands in the way of philosophy as the seat of authority is a necessary step. Accordingly, Socrates addresses the long-standing tradition of the poet as the arbiter of philosophy.

Prima facie, it appears that Socrates banishes Homer and all poetry. Socrates finds that Homer is not acceptable as a teacher since he merely writes of heroic virtues and deeds, but has never performed them. "The tactic assumption of the argument is that it is better to be a doer than a knower, or that knowledge is only tested in action - in benefits to other men".[39] Homer's knowledge, is found to be insufficient. Not only does the poet have an incomplete view of the whole of man's nature, but also his inability to explain his reflections points to his lack of understanding. As Socrates says, "He himself doesn't understand, but he imitates in such a way as to seem, to men whose condition is

like his own and who observe only speeches, to speak very well". (B. Republic 601a).

It is notable that this second criticism of poetry focusses on Homer. Although Achilles is a central topic in Book III, here it is Homer, the venerable Attic poet, who seems to be the subject of censure. This is appropriate because Achilles is associated with the content of Homeric poetry, whereas the objections to poetry in Book X focus on the form of poetry as composed by poets, such as Homer, who are deemed imitative. It is not the immoral elements in the content of Homeric tales, but the mimetic character, that is to say, the form, of poetry which is at issue here.

By attributing a mimetic quality to poetry which is found to be a third remove from the truth, Plato is able to say that poets are imitators. Mimesis itself is undesirable in the ideal state while imitators, those who produce imitative works, are banished. The objections to Homer and his work in this section attempt to give a supremacy to philosophy over poetry, thus reversing the long-standing situation between poets and philosophers, but it is by using Homer as representative of imitative poets that Plato points to the Sophists and the general cultural malaise he perceived as prevalent in Greek society. By this time Homer was no longer the dominant sphere of influence, but the Sophists were.[40] The Sophists' art of rhetoric and its influence on

current thought are similar to that once held by Homer. With a strongly mimetic flavour and with stress placed on the manner in which something is said, the Sophists' persuasive techniques, their deception and partial knowledge seem to be implied by Plato's criticisms. Although Homer is the ostensible culprit, he is a vehicle whereby the current poets, the Sophists, are attacked.

> At the beginning of this section (595c), Plato presents a theory of "imitation", which cannot be evaluated properly as long as it is viewed as a generally valid philosophy of art (the construction of which Plato never envisaged) instead of as a weapon with which he intends to defeat the artists, and especially the poets, of his time.[41]

At the core of this criticism and exile of poetry is "the pernicious influence of the teachings of the Sophists".[42]

From the point of view of literary form, a shift is evident with the re-introduction of poetry at Book X. Although the pattern of speech does not change significantly, and there is no apparent break in the flow of conversation, there is a change. Book IX closes as follows:

> "But in heaven", I said, "perhaps a pattern is laid up for the man who wants to see and found a city within himself on the basis of what he sees. It doesn't make any difference whether it is or will be somewhere, for he would mind the things of this city alone, and of no other.
>
> "That's likely", he said.
>
> (B. Republic 592b)

Although there seems to be an air of finality about the above statement, it is notable that the verbs are either in present

or future tenses. Indeed Book IX concludes with future tense verbs which create a forward-looking tone. Plato opens Book X with:

> "And, indeed", I said, "I also recognize in many other aspects of this city that we were entirely right in the way we founded it, but I say this particularly when reflecting on poetry".
> (B. Republic 595a)

This statement has an obvious air of reflection with verbs either in the present or the past tense. From this difference in tone, as is evident through the tenses of the verbs, and the reflective quality, there is a slight shift apparent between 592b and 595a. The possibility that the shift is deliberately made will be argued in Section III of this chapter.

B. Content

1. Books I and II to 367e

There is a general agreement among scholars that the opening section of the Republic (327a - 367e) relates current Athenian theories about justice. Cephalus, the originator of the first theory presented, claims that right actions are those which are honest. His brief appearance is followed by Polemarchus who is prepared to stand behind the claim that justice is "speaking the truth and giving back what one takes" (B. Republic 331d).

Of Socrates' discussion with Polemarchus, Nettleship states:

> The argument with Polemarchus falls into two sections. In the first he is gradually led to feel that he does not in the least know what he meant by his maxim from Simonides, that he is at the mercy of anyone who can manipulate his definition better than himself, and that his words can be made to mean things quite the contrary to what he does mean.[43]

In the first part of the argument (up to 334b), Socrates clearly leads Polemarchus, gaining assent on the smallest item before proceeding. This method is the typical Socratic argument whereby the participant is led to a state of aporia. Polemarchus acknowledges, "But I no longer know what I did mean" (B. Republic 334b).

From this negative conclusion, Socrates goes on to examine Polemarchus' opinion, "[T]hat justice is helping friends and injuring enemies" (B. Republic 334b) with the clarification of the terms, "friends" and "enemies". Friends are now those who not only seem to be good, but also are good, while enemies are those who both seem to be enemies and are bad. Socrates employs examples taken from the practical arts, such as horsemanship, to draw Polemarchus toward the agreement that the definition is untrue. What Socrates does in this argument is, through a comparison of the practical arts with the concept of morality, to focus on the words 'good' and 'harm' to the point where the inevitable conclusion is drawn: good and evil are contradictories. What

is good, such as the just man, can never be the cause of evil. The definition of justice, as proposed by Polemarchus, is untrue and the dispute is resolved.

The argument with Thrasymachus also falls into two parts: 338c - 347e and 347e - 354c. In the first section, Socrates works toward a clarification of Thrasymachus' contention that justice is "the advantage of the stronger" (B. Republic 338e). For Thrasymachus, morality is a convention in a society where rulers devise rules for their own advantage. His concept of justice, then, has no moral content. Taylor states:

> As Thrasymachus states the case, there is really no such thing as moral obligation. What men call "right" is "the interest of the superior"...The theory is that right or morality is a synonym for conformity to νόμος (the institutions and traditions of the community).[44]

Socrates, in keeping with the 'actual' circumstances Thrasymachus describes, reasons that rulers, as ordinary human beings in existing circumstances, are not infallible. Since they are capable of making mistakes, their attempts at self-aggrandizement, which Thrasymachus takes to be the purpose of ruling, are not always to their own advantage. Socrates traces the implications which result from the definition in his investigation of the meaning of the terms 'advantage' and 'stronger'. Socrates holds that there is an art of ruling which is not for the sake of self-interest, but

is in the best interests of the men who are ruled. While Thrasymachus argues in concrete terms, Socrates pursues the abstract meaning of the terms involved in the definition. As Nettleship observes:

> We feel that Thrasymachus is thinking all the time of certain concrete facts, as we call them, while the argument against him is not concerned with the question what the facts of life are. It merely asks whether, assuming the facts of life to be as Thrasymachus states them, they satisfy certain abstract conceptions.[45]

Because Thrasymachus and Socrates argue on different levels, the dispute is not satisfactorily resolved. Socrates says, "So, I can in no way agree with Thrasymachus that the just is the advantage of the stronger. But this we shall consider another time". (B. Republic 347d - e).

In the second part of the argument, Socrates addresses the question of whether or not "the life of the unjust man is stronger than that of the just man" (B. Republic 347e). Again, Socrates' argument is on an abstract level as he searches for the principle underlying the concept of the just man. Thrasymachus attempts to defend his position that the unjust man's life is happier. The argument features an analysis of terms, implications of those terms and examples taken from experience. The discussion reveals:

> [S]everal things which justice cannot be; that various leading conceptions, those for example, of art, wisdom, function, interest, have been analyzed; and further it has been shown the theory of Thrasymachus in its naked form will not account for the facts - that consistent and thoroughgoing

> selfishness will not give one a working principle of life at all.[46]

Socrates, maintaining a position of professed ignorance, expresses his lack of knowledge of "what the just is" (B. Republic 354c), although there is agreement that "injustice is never more profitable than justice" (B. Republic 354a); the argument concludes unsatisfactorily. Thrasymachus is not really convinced of Socrates' position, but he has now "grown gentle" (B. Republic 354a) and so relinquishes the argument.

In the wake of this unsettled dispute, Glaucon and Adeimantus present less extreme versions of the social contract theory. Glaucon suggests that, for the majority, justice is practised unwillingly from "an incapacity to do injustice" (B. Republic 359b). If it were possible to commit injustices without being detected, then there would be no reason to be just. Glaucon wants Socrates to truly persuade him that justice itself is a better course than injustice. Thus, an answer to Glaucon will point out whether justice is good by nature or by convention.

Apart from people's opinions of justice and injustice, and from what appears to be a just or an unjust man, Adeimantus asks Socrates for proof that justice has an intrinsic value. "Now don't only show us by the argument that justice is stronger than injustice, but show what each in itself does to the man who has it that makes the one bad

and the other good" (B. Republic 367b). The task for Socrates is now clear:

> The effect of the two speeches, taken in conjunction, is to impose on Socrates the task of indicating, by a sound analysis of human nature, the real foundations of morality in the very constitution of man, and of showing how education and religion can be, and ought to be, made allies, not enemies, of a sound morality.[47]

Up to this point in the Republic (367e), current beliefs about justice and injustice have been laid out. The role of justice, as perceived by contemporaries of Socrates, is unnatural, both in men and in society. The artificiality of Greek society and the superficiality of man, apparent in these introductory challenges, demand a detailed and persuasive answer. Each participant in this introduction contributes a 'slice' of Athenian life. The aged Cephalus, with his preparations for an after-life, is the manifestation of the old order. His son, Polemarchus, exemplifies the unreflective youth in society. His views are easily dispatched. Representative of new, tractable and intelligent elements of society are Glaucon and Adeimantus. It is vulnerable, yet perceptive youths like these whom Plato hopes to influence. His arguments for an ideal state must appeal to all elements of society: the old, the callow, and especially, the intelligentsia.

Book V

It would be unsatisfactory to attempt a brief overview of the philosophic content of a section of the Republic as controversial as Book V. Since my purpose is to direct attention to the vital role of literary form in the dialogues, I shall, in section III of this chapter, compare translations of parts of Book V. In order to show that literary form is essential to a full understanding of Platonic thought, I will contrast one translation which rejects literary form with another version which incorporates what may be termed literary form into the translation. It will be evident that, even in sections where it is not prominent, literary form is a necessary aspect of the whole.

3. Book X, 595a - 608b.

With philosophic content as a lens through which the structure of the Republic is viewed, the shift of topics at the end of Book IX is particularly conspicuous. Cornford sees the concluding section of Book IX as "the final answer to Thrasymachus' contention, restated by Glaucon's opening speech at 360E, p. 245 [of his translation], that injustice pays when it goes unpunished".[48] All that remains to be addressed, according to Cornford, is "The question of rewards and punishments after death, expressly excluded at the outset"[49] which are found in the Myth of Er. The insertion of a second attack on poetry and the arts, he claims, has

"the air of an appendix, only superficially linked with the preceding and following context".[50] As a possible reason for this interjection, he speculates that the first part of Book X is Plato's response to criticisms of Book III, possibly already in circulation. Like Nettleship, Cornford believes that "Plato had been attacked by critics for what he had previously said about poetry, and that he therefore returned to the subject with greater animus, prepared to go a good deal further".[51]

Both Nettleship and Cornford, in their attempts to understand the shift of subjects, look to external factors. Rather than accept the contribution of the ergon element to their interpretation, they account for the transition by casting about in historical circumstances. Their highly speculative assumption, that the 'digression' is due to current criticisms, is not plausible in view of Plato's acknowledged literary craftsmanship. To interpose a segment on poetry into an otherwise logically structured whole would be inconsistent with Plato's care and concern for dramatic structure. It is unreasonable that Plato would repeatedly revise and hone the opening of the Republic,[52] to meet his exacting literary standards if the structure as a whole was flawed. It does not follow from the fact that there is a surprising shift of topics that this change is inadvertent. Rather more likely, since Plato is a philosopher and a poet,

is the claim that the transition is premeditated partially to elicit attention and that reasons for the transition are to be found in the text itself. The charge of faulty literary construction in a writer's most important work is a consequence of a partial view of Plato's work. Gadamer, who notices the shift, does not infer that there is a break in the continuity of the dialogue. He finds:

> There is good reason that Plato places his critique of the poets in two prominent places in the Republic and explicitly elaborates it there.[53]

Gadamer's 'good reasons', Bloom's 'grounds' and other justification for the return to the subject of poetry will be examined in Section III.

III Form and Content

1. Books I and II to 367e

In the examination of literary elements in the Republic, the claim was advanced that, seen as an introduction, this section (327a - 367e) performs two functions: that of drawing the reader into the inquiry and of a concrete presentation of what is to follow. Rather than merely providing a charming ambience, the dramatization portrays dramatis personae whose existences are self-instantiations of their philosophies. Each reflects the philosophy he espouses. "Philosophy in this mode is radically reflexive and its presentation, consequently, self-

referential".[54] Therefore, a full understanding of the philosophy demands that the nature of the character and his actions (the ergon element) be taken into account along with his assertions (the logos element). The interplay of the existent characters and the discussions into which they enter is the interaction of actions and ideas, that is to say, of form and content. Since the dramatic stage is set, and the characters are delineated in the introduction, it is incumbent upon the reader to appreciate the contribution of the literary elements.

> In the discussion of the divided line, for example, the particular illustrations [are] chosen to fit the nature of the interlocutor; in order to see the whole problem, the reader must ponder not only the distinction of the kinds of knowing and being but its particular effect on Glaucon and what Socrates might have said to another man .[55]

The arguments in the Republic, arguments ad hominem, may be more fully comprehended when the nature of Socrates' opponent, as revealed by literary elements, is recognized as relevant to argument. Since a character in the Republic is an instantiation of an idea, and since Socrates addresses his argument to the man, the introduction, in which the character's nature is presented, is an integral part of the whole. Friedländer's comments on Plato's introductions are particularly apt for the Republic:

> One thing, at least, is certain: in Plato, philosophy does not begin at the first point of dialectical discussion, but has already begun in

> the preliminary casual conversation or in the playful or serious imagery of the frame.[56]

Plato's purpose in the introduction to the Republic goes beyond a dramatization to enchant the reader. The drama is, through the interplay of characters and ideas, an integral part of the philosophy. Plato's introductions, as Proklus understands them:

> [W]ere invented neither for the sake of dramatic suspense nor the historical subject, but they help to determine, from the very beginning, the philosophical objective of the dialogue.[57]

In the Republic, through what is termed existential structuring, the characters 'exist' as, or are symbolic of, various ideas. This literary device reveals a greater knowledge of Platonic thought for the careful reader. For example, "Socrates, as represented by Plato, is philosophical existence itself".[58] Few would deny that "Socrates is always in the dialogues of Plato the representative of the true philosophic spirit".[59] Representing tradition and experience is Cephalus, an aged man whom Socrates treats with respect and consideration. From the interaction of these two characters, the reader may understand that philosophy respects tradition and experience. As Nettleship says:

> In Cephalus we have the gathered experience of a good man of the generation which was just passing away when Socrates was beginning his philosophical work. Philosophy comes to learn from this experience, not to criticize it...Accordingly, when the criticism begins and the experience is to be analyzed, Cephalus gives way to his son.[60]

The existential structure in this case shows Plato's view that philosophy may learn from experience and tradition. There is no access to this viewpoint unless both form and content are considered integral elements of Platonic thought.

With both form and content as means of access to Platonic thought, another kind of structure is evident in Books I and II to 367e, that of methodological structuring.[61] This employment of a method which is discussed in the dialogue shows the deliberate patterning and structuring of the dialogue. In the Republic, Plato patterns the opening of the dialogue after the Divided Line. This literary device may be detected in the following way.

At the outset of the Republic, Plato presents the views of Cephalus and Polemarchus. Cephalus' fleeting presence is followed by the discussion with Polemarchus. The pattern of speech is brief and fast-paced; the examples given are fleeting images of the practical arts. Brumbaugh suggests that the kind of knowledge displayed by Cephalus and Polemarchus, based on convention and conjecture "can count at best for εἰκασία".[62]

With Thrasymachus as the second interlocutor, the pattern of speech changes and the intellectual level of the argument progresses. Taking the content of the argument, in which the world of experience is appealed to, together with the evidence garnered from the literary element, it becomes

evident that Plato is employing the Divided Line. The inquiry with which the Republic opens follows the stages of the Divided Line.

This is particularly clear with the appearance of Glaucon and Adeimantus. With their entrance, as commentators agree, a higher intellectual level is reached. Their general accounts of justice and injustice are hypotheses. They are thinking in more abstract terms than the previous two participants. Glaucon and Adeimantus, capable of hypothetical thinking, are at the level of διανοία. This methodological structuring, indicated by the changes in the patterns of speech, is dictated by the Divided Line.

With the conclusion of the hypotheses of Glaucon and Adeimantus, Socrates goes beyond the stages and levels presented thus far as he enters the level of noesis. This fourth segment of the Divided Line is distinguished as:

> [T]hat other segment of the intelligible I mean that which argument itself grasps with the power of dialectic, making the hypotheses not beginnings but really hypotheses - that is, steppingstones and springboards - in order to reach what is free from hypotheses at the beginning of the whole.
> (B. Republic 511b)

The comparison with the dramatic structure of the Republic is apparent. Plato uses the hypotheses as springboards for his power of dialectic.

Brumbaugh states:

> [I]t seems clear that the organizing principle of the discussion has been the divided line. A

diagram brings this out:

CEPHALUS: EIKASIA, AND
POLEMARCHUS: EIKASIA::
THRASYMACHUS: PISTIS, TECHNE::
GLAUCON: DIANOIA, HYPOTHESIS::
SOCRATES, ADEIMANTUS: DIANOIA, ALTERNATIVE HYPOTHESIS
SOCRATES: ATTEMPT AT SYNTHESIS INTO A THEORY

> We move from hearsay to a discussion which tries to criticize, compare and transcend "hypotheses", not being content with deducing the consequences of each of them. This will be exactly the function of the art of "dialectic" when we meet it in the ideal curriculum of Book VII of the Republic.[63]

Although the above account of the methodological structure of the Republic in Books I and II to 367e is admittedly sketchy, I believe there is enough evidence to claim that Plato crafted the introduction to the Republic in a deliberate fashion. If the literary structure is such that it employs what is philosophically argued, then a full understanding of Plato's writings demands that literary form be accepted as an integral part of Plato's philosophy.

Once the contention that the Divided Line is actually employed in the Republic is accepted, other literary themes become apparent which substantiate this theory. In the famous opening line of the dialogue, Socrates says, "I went down to the Piraeus" (B. Republic 327a - emphasis added). At 367a Adeimantus concludes, "This, Socrates, and perhaps yet more than this, would Thrasymachus and possibly someone else say about justice and injustice, vulgarly turning their powers upside down" (emphasis added). Direction, particularly

the direction of inquiry and the direction a man's life may take, is not only an integral part of the philosophic content of the Republic, but also a recurring literary theme. As a literary theme, vertical direction emphasizes the ascent and descent of the Divided Line.

> The vertical movement - after its ascent from guess and trust to rational hypothetical-deductive method in Books I and II is a straightforward ascent and descent of the levels of the line.[64]

Without attempting a full explication of the Divided Line and its employment in the Republic, it seems reasonable to claim that the literary elements of Books I and II are deliberately and carefully employed by Plato. They are not merely ornamental. The dramatic presentation of a scene which prefigures the philosophic problems to follow is not merely a ploy to engage the reader. It is the beginning of the philosophical content. Literary themes, such as the theme of sight, reinforce the content. The existential structuring gives the reader insight into Plato's views which is not possible through content alone. The methodological structuring emphasizes and illustrates an important aspect of Plato's philosophy. The literary devices used are closely related to the philosophic content and are an integral aspect of what Plato wishes to convey.

2. Book V

As noted earlier, Book V marks a new beginning at a more profound level of inquiry. Once the parallel with Book I is made, Plato makes little use of poetic imagery, literary themes and dramatic devices as he portrays a serious discussion about the 'three waves'. In this technical discussion, attention is centred on what is said. The content, like that of the excerpt from the legal document (Chapter 1, p.9), is of primary importance. The argument must be acceptable to someone like Glaucon, who wavers between the tyrannic and the philosophic life. Yet, Plato does not abandon the dialogue form since he sees philosophy as a shared inquiry. The dialogue form is the manner in which the philosophy is couched. Although Plato conveys problematic ideas in Book V, the manner in which these ideas are presented has some significance as well as what is said.

As a speaker may use intonations and gestures to assist his verbal explanations, so a writer may use dialogue form to explicate how agreement is reached. Since Plato is not only arguing for what he perceives to be the best state, but also against a particular order, it is necessary to take questions and responses into account. It is only by understanding why, for instance, Glaucon questions one point but assents to another, that the reader will know his views. Bloom, in defence of his attempt at a literal translation of

the Republic, says of the dialogue form:

> He [Socrates] must persuade them; every step of the argument is directed to their particular opinions and characters. Their reasoned assent is crucial to the whole process. The points at which they object to Socrates' reasoning are always most important, and so are the points when they assent when they should not. Each of the responses reveals something, even when the responses seem most uninteresting.[65]

In Book V, where content seems to overshadow form, the form is still an important element. Cornford, interested in the content and not in the form, brings his pre-judgements into his translation of the Republic. His version of Book V, 462c is:

> And this disunion comes about when the words 'mine' and 'not mine', 'another's' and 'not another's' are not applied to the same things throughout the community. The best ordered state will be the one in which the largest number of persons use these terms in the same sense, and which most nearly resembles a single person. When one of us wounds a finger...[66]

In contrast to Cornford's interpretation, which is in the form of a statement, is Bloom's translation of the same segment:

> "Doesn't that sort of thing happen when they don't utter such phrases as 'my own' and 'not my own' at the same time in the city, and similarly with respect to 'somebody else's'?"
>
> "Entirely so".
>
> "Is, then, that city in which most say 'my own' and 'not my own' about the same thing, and in the same way, the best governed city?"
>
> "By far".

> "Then is that city best governed which is most like a single human being? For example, when one of us wounds a finger..."[67]

In Bloom's translation, the method by which Socrates and Glaucon reach agreement is clear. Socrates questions Glaucon, who responds to each point. Glaucon is asked his opinion about the sharing of things in a well-governed community. Glaucon's responses may be examined by the reader to see if he agrees with Glaucon's assent. The over-all tone of Bloom's translation is one of an exchange of opinions, even though Socrates is the dominant speaker. When these questions are put in statement form, the effect is one of didacticism, not of shared inquiry. For Plato, reaching agreement through dialectic, sharing opinions is the proper way to philosophize. Cornford's translation of this passage, for example the phrase "the best ordered state will be", seems to imply a command for the ordering of the state. The Republic is not a treatise on forming the ideal state, nor a demand for communal property. In contrast, Bloom's translation, which tries to conform to the original Greek, more closely parallels the author's preference for philosophy as shared inquiry. There is a difference between asking if someone agrees with your opinion, as opposed to a blatant statement, which, when in written form, reflects tonal differences, easily detected by the reader.

One other comparison of translations might suffice to

show that the alteration of the structure of an argument affects the reader's conception of what is said. On the spectre of children watching wars, Bloom translates Plato as saying:

> "Then this must be the beginning, making the children spectators of war. And if we further contrive something for their security, everything will be fine, won't it?"
>
> "Yes".
>
> "In the first place", I said, "won't their fathers, insofar as is human, be not ignorant but knowledgeable about all the campaigns that are risky and all that are not?"
>
> "It's likely", he said.
>
> "Then they'll lead them to the ones and beware of the others".
>
> "Right".
>
> "And as rulers", I said, "they'll presumably set over them not the most ordinary men but those adequate by experience and age to be leaders and tutors".
>
> "Yes, that's proper".[68]

Socrates, aware of a natural rejection of the notion of children as spectators to war, submits the idea and its precautions for his friend's consideration. The quotation marks slow the reader's comprehension of what is presented. The effect is one of care and attention: "[E]verything will be fine, won't it?" On the other hand, when one reads Cornford's version of the same passage, the effect given is that of a command:

> Granted, then, that the children are to go to war as spectators, all will be well if we can contrive that they shall do so in safety. To begin with, their fathers will not be slow to judge, so far as human foresight can, which expeditions are hazardous and which are safe; and they will be careful not to take the children into danger. Also they will put them in charge of officers qualified by age and experience to lead and take care of them.[69]

Since Socrates' motive is the conversion of Glaucon to a life in which philosophy plays a role, it seems unlikely that the above quotation would be persuasive because of the manner in which it is stated. The peremptory tone, evident in such phrases as "they will be careful", and "they will put them in charge of officers", is not likely to persuade a recalcitrant listener, whereas the softer tone of Socrates' questioning in Bloom's translation has a quality which is more persuasive.

The manner in which something is said may act as a qualifier to what is said. Although the content in both translations is primarily the same, there is a degree of difference. This difference, when one is attempting to persuade a listener, may be crucial since <u>how</u> a thing is said affects <u>what</u> is said.

Perhaps the most salient point is that Plato wrote in dialogue form. Plato's opinion, consistent throughout his writings, is that dialectical discussion is the most effective means of achieving knowledge. The dialogical character of the Platonic dialogues is fundamental to an understanding of the way in which philosophizing is to be carried out. Thus,

the question and answer format is necessary to what Plato wants to espouse. Literary form, in this chapter of the Republic, is still an integral aspect of a full understanding of Plato's views.

3. Book X, 595a - 608b.

It seems clear that the re-opening of a subject already dealt with takes the reader of the Republic by surprise. Evident both in the literary form and in the content, the shift at 595a is, at first glance, startling. If we reject the fanciful notion of external pressures brought to bear on Plato, then it is possible that the resumption of the topic of poetry is deliberately planned. Friedländer asks:

> Why is this topic so important to Plato that he assigns it such an unexpected place? Had he not previously treated this subject while discussing the musical education of the guardians (394 et seq.)? Why, then, return to something that apparently had already been disposed of?[70]

By placing any part of a written work in a position where it seems out of place, that segment attracts greater attention. On the assumption that the section from 595a - 608b is of particular concern to Plato, it follows that he might situate that portion in a conspicuous place.

Gadamer contends that this second attack on poetry is not an afterthought, nor the result of criticism by others. He holds that this section is premeditated. It is:

> [A] decision made as a result of having been taken with Socrates and philosophy, made in opposition to the entire political and intellectual culture of his time, and made in the conviction that philosophy alone has the capacity to save the state.[71]

What Gadamer does not realize is that the actual place in the dialogue of the second criticism of poetry supports his interpretation. The fact that the criticism is placed between the completion of Plato's concept of justice and the poetic myth of Socrates means that this subject stands between the possibility of justice and the teachings of the philosopher. It is a subject which poses a threat to the supremacy of philosophy. The political and cultural milieu was, at the time, one which quoted Homer as an authority, but which looked to the Sophists for guidance and education. In order to "save the state" he has proposed and to establish philosophy as paramount, Plato points to the one thing that needs to be rectified before philosophy can elucidate 'truths' which do not represent reality, but which inspire philosophy.

It is, then, the need for reformation of the current state of affairs which is Plato's reason for a second attack on poetry. An aspect of the reassertion of the exile of poets from the just state which is in accord with the conviction that the criticism is directed particularly against current poets, that is to say, against the Sophists,

is the emphasis on mimesis. "For that the imitative, more than anything, must not be admitted looks, in my opinion, even more manifest now that the soul's forms have been separated out" (B. Republic 595a). It is precisely by focussing on mimesis that the Sophists, noted for their illusionistic skills, are brought to mind. With their deceptive techniques, the Sophists gave precedence to the manner in which a thing was said over the truth of the content. Their concern was with form, not with content.

The association between the Sophists and form goes beyond their emphasis on this element. They are credited, if credit is due, with originating the distinction between form and content.[72] With the implementation of this distinction, the Sophists demonstrated a proclivity for persuasive oratory. Mitscherlingk says of the Sophists' use of the form-content distinction:

> This distinction underlay as a fundamental methodological principle both their teaching (of eristic and rhetoric) and their political activity (of forensic oratory). The desired end-- be it in philosophical argumentation or public speaking-- was to be attained through persuasion, and this persuasion relied primarily not on what was said but on how it was said...Nevertheless, it was Plato's conviction, whether right or wrong, that the Sophists had exercised a harmful influence in the Athens of his youth, an influence the effects of which had become more evident by the early fourth century. And this harm he believed to have been principally located precisely in the elevation of form qua appearance to a status above that of content and truth.
>
> It was the welfare of the polis, along with that of the individual soul, which Plato had always in

> mind, and he saw this welfare endangered by the ubiquitous utilization of the methodological principle discovered and promulgated by the Sophists.[73]

The argument that section 595a - 608b is a carefully planted and subtle censure of poets past and present is strong. As stated earlier, it is unlikely that Plato would allow flaws in the structure of this important work. To mar the structure with a reply some critics, when a rebuttal could be made in a separate dialogue, is not feasible for one who writes with skill and care. It is more reasonable to believe that Plato would address a suspected threat to his proposals before Socratic poetry, which is to replace former imitative tales, can be established as supreme. If philosophy is to be pre-eminent, then all that is in conflict with this possibility must be subordinate. It is with this final clearing of the pathway to the new regime that Plato is able to present philosophic poetry. Bloom says:

> Men need poetry, but the kind of poetry which nourishes their soul makes all the difference in the understanding of their nonpoetic lives...It is still poetry, but poetry which points beyond itself.[74]

The philosopher, who understands man's soul, is to be the arbiter of what may be told.

In summary, literary form in the three sections of the Republic reviewed in this chapter is integral to a full understanding of Plato's views. In Books I and II to 367e, literary form is carefully patterned so that what will be

argued for is concretely present in the opening segment. The characters are self-instantiations of various viewpoints current at the time and they represent levels of the Divided Line. The information Plato divulges through the literary dimension in this segment is an aid to comprehension of his philosophy and is crucial to a better understanding of the totality of his thought.

Although it does not seem that literary elements play a role in the serious discussion of Book V, the careful reader may detect the subtle way in which literary form makes a difference to meaning. A translation such as that of Cornford, who finds the question and answer form of inquiry boring and tedious, does not take dramatic effect into account. The question and answer format is necessary not only to convey the sense of careful consideration of each point in this problematic section by slowing down the reading of the content, but also to convey the sense of shared inquiry that Plato advocates. When the inquiry is transformed into treatise form, part of Plato's thought is obscured. As Goethe says:

> Difficult though it might be to detect it, a certain polemical thread runs through any philosophical writing. He who philosophizes is not at one with the previous and contemporary world's ways of thinking of things. Thus Plato's discussions are often not directed <u>to</u> something but also directed <u>against</u> it.[75]

Through the omission of Glaucon's remarks, Cornford

suppresses what it is Plato is arguing against and changes the tone of the discussion from one of shared inquiry to an authoritative command.

The dispute over the "jarring shift" at 595a may well be settled if attention is given to a constitutive element of Plato's means of expression - literary form. Plato's reproach of existing authorities needs to be made before the reformed poetry can be put forward. Breaking with mimetic poetry and the spirit of Sophism, Plato offers a poetry which is in harmony with his ideal state. Gadamer contends:

> In opposition to this sophist paedeia, Plato advances an arbitrarily and radically purified poetry, which is no longer a reflection of human life, but the language of an intentionally beautified lie. This new poetry is meant to express the ethos which prevails in the purified state in a way which is pedagogically efficacious.[76]

The domination of previous influences must be forestalled before the poetry of philosophy appears. This new poetry "aims at truth and, therefore, it will not only be pleasant as the old art was but also useful...for the state and the life of man".[77]

It seems plausible to conclude that the hyletic approach to the Republic is inadequate. Literary form is so closely related to content, such an integral aspect of the meaning Plato expresses, that the hyletic view, which sees literary element as merely decorative, is no longer tenable.

On the other hand, the morphological approach is not without problems. Since Plato is read primarily with a view to understanding his philosophy and since it is unreasonable, and impossible in some instances, to focus on the aesthetic experience, the morphological approach is also inadequate to the task of understanding Plato's meaning. Accordingly, an approach which neither disregards nor overemphasizes literary form must afford the best understanding of Plato's thought.

CHAPTER FOUR

I The Euthyphro

In this section I shall point out what is conveyed to the reader through the literary elements in the Euthyphro. It will become clear that the message imparted through the dramatic medium is more than merely the amplification of rational arguments. Indeed, what Plato communicates through literary form will be totally missed if the reader chooses to ignore this integral aspect of Platonic thought.

The main topic of conversation between Euthyphro and Socrates is piety. There are no digressions into side issues, nor is there a profound analysis of the subject. Euthyphro, a self-professed expert on religion, and a seer, advances definitions of piety. He begins with great confidence in his knowledge of religious matters (Euthyphro 4e - 5a), but eventually realizes that the conversation is not progressing toward agreement. "Now, Socrates, I simply don't know how to tell you what I think. Somehow everything that we put forward keeps moving about us in a circle, and nothing will stay where we put it" (Euthyphro 11b). Euthyphro does not doubt his own knowledge nor that he and Socrates share a common viewpoint on what constitutes piety. This belief, that he and Socrates are in accord on such matters, is also evident at 3c when Euthyphro links himself

with Socrates: "[T]hey are jealous of all such people as ourselves". However, Euthyphro and Socrates have different ideas about piety. For Taylor, it is this difference which forms the basic interest of the dialogue. He states that, "As usual, no final result is expressly arrived at, but the interest lies in the comparison of two different conceptions of what "religion" is".[1] The negative result is reached when Euthyphro abandons Socrates who wishes to "go back again, and start from the beginning to find out what the holy is" (Euthyphro 15d). Euthyphro is loathe to continue an exchange which has "come full circle to the point where it began" (Euthyphro 15b).

Yet, there is more to the Euthyphro than an exchange of ideas on piety and a negative conclusion. The reader must ask why Plato chooses Euthyphro as the interlocutor, what significance may be attached to the setting, and, in general, what is transmitted through the dramatic medium. The answers to these questions will reveal a greater comprehension of Platonic thought than is possible through an analysis of the arguments alone.

The dramatic form of the Euthyphro is in keeping with the apparent simplicity of the philosophic content. There are no multi-layered levels of meaning, nor complex, interwoven literary themes. The form is harmonious with the content which is a straightforward, unsophisticated attempt

to define piety.

Socrates' partner in the discussion is also unsophisticated, or perhaps naive. Euthyphro's naiveté is evident in his assumption that he and Socrates share the same views on religious matters. As a priest, Euthyphro ought to be knowledgeable about piety and impiety, but his various definitions of piety point to his compartmentalization of moral acts. He claims to know what piety is, but his charge against his father, that is, what he is doing is considered an act of filial impiety. This discrepancy between knowing and doing, between knowledge and action, indicates that Euthyphro does not know what piety is. The action he is taking, charging his father with a criminal offence, seems to be an impious act. Yet, Euthyphro claims that, "[T]he holy is what I am now doing, prosecuting the wrongdoer" (Euthyphro 5d). For Plato, to know what is right is to do the right. Wisdom is the harmony between knowledge and action. Thus, the dramatic characterization of Euthyphro portrays a man who does not know what true piety is, and yet one who does not hesitate to commit a serious act without adequate knowledge.

On the other hand, Socrates, as a dramatic character, is an instantiation of piety, since he knows the reasons for his actions. Charged with impiety, Socrates symbolizes the pious man. As Brumbaugh states:

> Of the two, as Socrates' questions challenge the simple assumptions that religion is a subdivision

> of barter and exchange, or what gods act without motivation, or that if we have textbooks on piety we don't need reason, it seems clear that Socrates is a man of religious sensitivity and piety.[2]

Socrates' search for a definition of piety, by which all forms of piety might be known, cannot be found in Euthyphro's answers which are all on the level of particulars. He fails to realize that his act, that of prosecuting his father, is impious because he does not know what piety is. To know what piety is, would be to know its "essential form" (Euthyphro 6d), to explain "the essence of it" (Euthyphro 11a), according to Socrates. Such knowledge would enable Euthyphro to recognize his action as one of impiety. Socrates says ironically, "If you did not know precisely what is holy and unholy, it is unthinkable that for a simple hireling you ever would have moved to prosecute your aged sire on a charge of murder" (Euthyphro 15d). The fact is that what Euthyphro has is not knowledge, but belief. Euthyphro's inability to define piety and his action of impiety are evidence that Euthyphro's 'knowledge' is in the realm of opinion. Socrates is aware of this as he states, "But now I am sure that you think you know exactly what is holy and what is not" (Euthyphro 15d - e).

It is through the dramatic characterization of Euthyphro, as one in whom 'knowledge' and action do not coincide, that the reader may draw out Plato's views on what constitutes knowledge. His depiction of Socrates is one of a

pious man unjustly charged with impiety. It is the communication between these dramatis personae, these instantiations of impiety and belief, and of piety and knowledge, that provides the existential context for the dialogue and that actually reveals what piety is and what it is not. The dramatic confrontation of these characters not only creates dramatic action and tension, but also portrays a concrete instance of what is discussed. It is through the interplay of drama and argument, of form and content, that more than the mere search for a definition of piety emerges. Although a negative conclusion is reached, the careful reader, one who takes both the literary and the philosophic elements under consideration, realizes that, for Plato, piety is not all of morality or virtue. Rather, "All virtue is knowledge of good, and consequently any whole of human conduct...genuine "goodness" is a unity".[3] Plato's thoughts on piety, on knowledge and conduct, and on virtue and conduct begin to unfold when form and content, the dramatic instantiations and the more abstract arguments, are taken together. As the dramatis personae are interwoven with the arguments, the reader should realize that the aspects, form and content, are sometimes complementary and sometimes provide a tension. But, it is through both aspects that Plato communicates his philosophy. Piety is not defined, but the reader is directed toward an understanding of what piety

is through the character of Socrates and the questions he asks.

The dramatic setting of the Euthyphro serves to illuminate Socrates' character as one who is able to converse with an acquaintance when his own trial is imminent. As interesting as this depiction of Plato's mentor might be, the dramatic setting in which the question of piety is raised is even more significant when we pursue the question of why Plato would set the topic of piety in such a setting. The dramatic context within which the question of piety is raised is that of an atmosphere of urgency and of death.

The atmosphere of urgency, or immediacy, is apparent in the abrupt beginning as the reader plunges into this presumably chance meeting. Without preamble or salutation, Euthyphro asks, "This is something new? What has taken you from your haunts in the Lyceum, and makes you spend your time at the royal porch?" (Euthyphro 2a). The sudden departure of Euthyphro at the end of the dialogue seems to be a spur of the moment decision, as he exclaims, "Another time, then, Socrates, for I am in a hurry, and must be off this minute" (Euthyphro 15e).

This sense of urgency is intensified by the direct dialogue form. Whereas an indirect, or reported dialogue produces an atmosphere of indeterminate time, a direct dialogue creates a feeling of present, or immediate time.

The awareness of time, and the setting, which is at the very door of the court, points to the imminence of Socrates' trial.

The fact that the impending trial of Socrates is introduced into the dramatic structure brings in the context of death. The reader knows that Socrates' death will be the outcome of his trial. Euthyphro's appearance is also related to theme of death, since it is as a result of a slave's death that Euthyphro is at court. The lightly sketched literary themes of imprisonment and freedom heighten the reader's awareness of the pervading atmosphere of death. The theme of imprisonment is particularly noticeable in the repetition of the word 'shackle' at 9a. Freedom is referred to by Socrates as he talks of "wings to fly away with" at 4a, the statues of Daedalus at 11c and 11d, and of escape from Meletus' indictment at 15e.

Thus, the topic at issue, that of piety, is set in an atmosphere of urgency and death. It seems clear that Plato recognizes that religious matters, such as piety, are more pressing in the face of approaching death. Plato imparts this feeling of urgency through literary form, since a mere analysis of what is needed to define piety can never convey this sense of urgency.

If we note that in the Republic, Book I, Cephalus, who is preparing for death, is busily engaged in religious

matters and observances, Plato's message in the Euthyphro becomes clear: in the face of death we have to make very sure that what we know and what we do are in harmony. The characterization of Euthyphro depicts one in whom knowledge and action are not harmonious. Mocking those who are so arrogant in their actions that they never consider whether they know what they are doing, Plato establishes in the Euthyphro what he elaborates in later dialogues: wisdom is the concord between knowledge and action.

It is particularly evident in the Euthyphro that literary form is a means Plato uses to convey his philosophy to his readers. It is also apparent that extreme approaches to the dialogue, such as the hyletic or the morphological, are inadequate to the task of understanding the meaning which Plato expresses. Neither the analysis of the arguments nor the experience of dramatic effects is sufficient for the purpose of understanding Plato's thought. The notion of the characters are instantiations of piety and impiety, when taken in conjunction with the philosophic content, extends the reader's knowledge of the meaning of the dialogue. A more comprehensive understanding demands that content and form be recognized as integral aspects of the whole.

II The Philebus

The Philebus, a complex dialogue, investigates two contentions of what constitutes the good life for man. Protarchus, who takes over the discussion from Philebus, holds that "the good for all animate beings consists in enjoyment, pleasure, delight, and whatever can be classed as consonant therewith" (Philebus 11b). Socrates contends that "thought, intelligence, memory, and things akin to these, right opinion and true reasoning, prove better and more valuable than pleasure for all such beings as can participate in them" (Philebus 11b - c). The juxtaposition of these rival theories provides the platform from which an analysis of reason and pleasure is begun.

Socrates alludes to the possibility (11d and 14b) that neither pleasure nor reason is adequate, and so "some third thing" may be best for man. In the inquiry, several avenues are investigated, many of which appear to be digressions from the matter at hand. For example, the conversation turns to the problem of the one and the many at 14d. From commonplace instances, Socrates pushes this controversy to a more general, or universal level. Protarchus remarks on Socrates' "curiously roundabout methods" (Philebus 19a). After an account of the limit and the unlimited, and before they determine "to which kind reason and knowledge belong" (Philebus 28c), Protarchus

comments, "Proceed, as you like, Socrates, and please feel no concern about being lengthy" (Philebus 28d).

The dialogue, then, is not, as Taylor thinks, "a straightforward discussion of the question whether the "good for man" can be identified either with pleasure or with the life of thought".[4] The relevance of some of the side issues addressed is questioned again by Protarchus and Philebus at 18d. As the literary theme of a hunt, which runs throughout the dialogue, shows us, this is not a straightforward account. Rather, it is in the nature of a search, a dialectical inquiry, into the good life for man. What is found to be unreasonable is discarded (30c). The method of inquiry is an investigation into various avenues of thought on the issue. Socrates says:

> And ought we not merely to think fit to record the opinions of other people without any risk to ourselves, but to participate in the risk and take our share of censure when some clever person asserts that the world is not as we describe it, but devoid of order?
>
> (Philebus 28e - 29a)

Socrates and Protarchus "participate" in the inquiry. This sharing of views and exploring of ideas are the ingredients of dialectic. The Philebus is a series of transitions from one topic to another in the attempt to reach agreement on what constitutes the good life. The reader is led through "a labyrinth of verbal twistings and turnings which at times appear to be unrelated to the initial question",[5] as the

participants themselves recognize.

Eventually, an ordering of the constituents of the good life is achieved. It is characterized by the notion of a mixture, since reason and pleasure are not self-sufficient. The "most valuable thing in our mixture, that which makes an arrangement of this sort commend itself to us all" is "measure and proportion", the components of which are "beauty, proportion and truth" (Philebus 64c - 65a). Knowledge of what is best for man is reached.

Hamilton, who chooses to ignore literary form, says of the Philebus:

> Little or nothing would be lost if Plato dropped the dialogue form and made Socrates deliver a lecture, or left him entirely out and put the subject into an essay, for Socrates himself does not come through.[6]

Hamilton completely misses the message conveyed through literary form. Plato's point is not to elucidate Socrates' personality, but to illustrate the kind of life which is best - a life in search of knowledge by means of dialectic.

For Plato, the means to wisdom or knowledge is the dialectical mode of inquiry. In the Philebus, Socrates leads his interlocutors through the maze of constantly shifting passages. The dialogue is an illustration of the doing of dialectic, the crucial method by which we seek knowledge, according to Plato. The literary pattern of the dialogue is specifically contrived to represent the "curiously roundabout

methods" which participants in dialectic pursue in the search for knowledge. The dialogue, as a pattern for dialectical activity, cannot be cast in lecture, or essay form, since to do so would be to obscure, or nullify, Plato's meaning. He is not simply telling the reader what the good life is; he is showing the reader how to proceed for such an attainment. The quarry, the good life for man, is to be found in the activity of dialectic.[7]

From the content of the Philebus, the reader may learn the constituents of the good life. From the literary form, the reader may understand that the route to such a life, and the life itself, is not always pleasant and easy. Cornford's comment that, in many places, "[T]he manner of Plato's discourse...is...misleading, or tedious, or grotesque and silly, or pompous and verbose"[8] seems particularly apt for the Philebus. The reader may envy Philebus who sleeps through most of the dialogue as Plato conducts the reader down many fruitless paths. The Philebus is tedious reading as the reader is misled into thinking that perhaps the next segment will produce an answer to the question at issue. But, it is the manner in which the discourse is presented that is, in fact, crucial to Plato's meaning. The good life is sometimes tedious, sometimes painful or pleasurable, as is the dialogue itself. In the Philebus, the dialogue becomes the message: if one pursues intellectual tasks it is not,

Plato would have us know, a comfortable and simple life. As he makes clear in the Republic, the life of the philosopher, one who would attain the good, is a difficult and demanding life. Plato contends that philosophers must be:

> [T]ested in the toils and pleasures of which we then spoke...We must exercise them in many studies, watching them to see whether their nature is capable of enduring the greatest and most difficult studies or whether it will faint and flinch as men flinch in the trials and contests of the body.
> (Philebus 5Ø3e - 5Ø4a)

The best human life, as Plato maintains repeatedly, is a life in search of knowledge. As the literary form in the Philebus makes clear, this life is a mixture of reason and pleasure, its goodness brought about by due measure and proportion. The Philebus illustrates this kind of life dramatically. Klein says:

> Yes, the dialogue is pleasurable and painful indeed, in addition to dealing with pleasure and pain in speech. And is there any need to mention the pain and pleasure one feels in reading, or listening to the dialogue in all its complex and inordinate convolutions?[9]

Plato illustrates the best kind of human life in the literary pattern of the Philebus, but not all are of a temperament to follow the arduous pathway. It is the nature of some people, "when confronted with studies" to act as follows: "They are not easily aroused, learn with difficulty, as if benumbed, and are filled with sleep and yawning when an intellectual task is set them" (Republic 5Ø3d). Perhaps, the verbosity of the Philebus had this effect on Philebus.

The fact that Plato illustrates the best human life in search of knowledge in a literary way does not dispel its importance to the reader who would know Plato's philosophy. The separation of form and content is a refusal of Plato's invitation to follow his intellectual pathway to the philosophic enterprise.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusion

I have attempted throughout this thesis to point out various roles that literary form plays in a few of Plato's dialogues. In the Phaedrus, literary themes and elements were shown to be particularly prominent. Although conspicuous, the 'literary' side of the dialogue was suitable for, and harmonious with, the 'philosophic' side which dealt with rhetoric and writing. Form, not only reflecting and reinforcing content, but also extending the reader's knowledge of the meaning of the dialogue, revealed a greater understanding of the work when taken in conjunction with content. Form was found to be an integral part of the dialogue as a whole. As an example of the morphological approach to the dialogue, Burger's analysis proved to be too reliant on dramatic effects. Overly dependent on the notion of irony, a notoriously difficult concept to determine, her claim that the Phaedrus was a defence of writing was unsubstantiated by textual evidence. Similarly, Hamilton's contention that the Phaedrus was a random conversation was disproved by an examination of the carefully patterned structure of the dialogue. An interpretation which neither ignored literary form nor subordinated content was shown to be the most plausible and defensible approach to the Phaedrus.

As in the Phaedrus, literary form in the Republic was an essential part of Plato's attempt to convey his philosophy to the reader. The personal qualities and characteristics of individuals partaking in the dialogue indicated that they were instantiations of different viewpoints, extending the reader's understanding of the arguments. Used to convey information, to exemplify a method, to elucidate arguments and to condemn an old order, literary form was ever present and never without a purpose. The subtle interplay of form and content indicated that both elements were necessary for a full understanding of the work. Indeed, some sections, such as the reintroduction of poetry in Book X, did not make sense if literary form was ignored.

The conjunction of form and content in the Euthyphro provided further justification for the claim that a full understanding of a Platonic dialogue demands recognition of the significant contribution and distinct function of literary form. Literary form, again harmonious with content, evoked an atmosphere of urgency and death as the context. Plato's views on piety could not be conveyed merely through an analysis of the arguments. Thus, the literary context, the characters, the background, the dramatic effect were necessary to convey Plato's full meaning.

The structure of the Philebus proved to be patterned in a deliberate fashion. As Socrates led his interlocutors toward knowledge of the best human life, so Plato led his readers through a dialectical pathway, showing that the best life is the search for knowledge through dialectic. Again, this insight is gained by means of literary form.

What is consistent throughout these dialogues is the use of a dialectical form of communication with the reader. It is obvious that the notion that Plato "ruthlessly subordinated"[1] form to content, and that form is a superficial embellishment unrelated to content, is a misinterpretation. In a similar fashion, the attempt to interpret his meaning through an emphasis on the dialogue as a dramatic whole is unacceptable because the contention that form is separable from content underlies this approach. In some instances, it is impossible to determine this distinction. Thus, the presupposition that form and content are separable, with more weight given to one than the other, in insupportable. Since Plato's works are a unique blend of form and content, it is unreasonable to approach a dialogue wit a preconception as to the importance of either form or content. A Platonic dialogue is an organic whole, a conjunction of literature and philosophy.

The traditional mode of understanding Plato's thought was to neglect the literary element. Beginning with

Schleiermacher, the pendulum swung to an exaggeration of literary form in an interpretation. This led one commentator to remonstrate:

> In my opinion the current emphasis (on literary aspects) is excessive; the messages which are read out of such events as Thrasymachus' blush and Socrates' going down to Piraeus are so speculative as to be arbitrary, and this approach to Plato is a literary rather than a philosophical one. The focus should not be on the significance of isolated allusions but on what is said and on its truth.[2]

While I agree with the claim that isolated allusions to minor events are highly speculative, the fact is that these events are not isolated. They are an integral part of an organic whole. When such events can be linked with what is said, and literary patterns unearthed, the 'literary' is found to illustrate, reinforce, clarify, and extend what is deemed 'philosophical'. The search for philosophic 'truth' in Plato's writings demands that what is literary be included in the interpretation. What is arguable about the above comment is the assumption that a literary approach is incompatible with a philosophic approach. Since Plato's dialogues exhibit a harmony of form and content, surely the correct approach is one which combines literary criticism and philosophical analysis.

Recent forays into Platonic scholarship confirm the advantages of an approach which views a dialogue as a unified whole, but does not subordinate either form to content or

content to form. In his analysis of the Gorgias, for example, Charles Kahn concludes that:

> This double character of the elenchus, as an examination of the truth and coherence of the interlocutor's life as well as of his propositional claims, and finally as a test of the harmony between life and the claims - this complex nature of the elenchus is reflected artistically in the interplay between the personal and the dialectical, between the dramatic and the logical structure of the refutation. So we need something like literary criticism in addition to philosophic analysis in order to understand what is going on.[3]

The obvious care with which Plato crafted each dialogue demands that the literary aspects to be counted as an integral part of the whole.

With a dual access to an understanding of a Platonic dialogue, the reader's task is difficult. He must be aware of both elements without reading more into the dialogue than is actually there. However, the possibility that literary form may be exaggerated is no greater evil than the amplification of what is said without the qualification of how it is said. The content, what is said, cannot be fully understood or appreciated without the form, how it is said. Form and content are not separate pathways through a Platonic dialogue. Form and content are harmonious. They work together to convey meaning. Thus, the reader who would fully understand a Platonic dialogue must realize that form and content together lead to that understanding.

> Every argument must be interpreted dramatically, for every argument is incomplete in itself and only the context can supply the missing links. And every dramatic detail must be interpreted philosophically, because these details contain the images of the problems which complete the arguments. Separately these two aspects are meaningless; together they are an invitation to the philosophic quest.[4]

NOTES TO CHAPTERS

Chapter One

1 Hyletic is a term coined by Husserl to express the notion of the material data of consciousness. Husserl distinguishes the material, or hyletic data from that which 'informs' or gives meaning to formless matter. He states:

> [I]n the whole phenomenological domain...this remarkable duality and unity of sensile ὕλη (hyle - matter, and intentional μορφή (morphe - form, shape) plays a dominant part. In point of fact these concepts of matter and form thrust themselves right to the front when we bring before the mind clear intuitions of one kind or another or clearly shaped valuations, services, volitions, and so forth.
>
> Edmund Husserl, Ideas (New York, 1962), p. 227.

As well as adopting the term hyletic from Husserl, I shall use his contrast between hyle and morphe as the basis for the following terminology to be used throughout this thesis:

An approach to Plato's writings which concentrates on his philosophical arguments will be called a hyletic approach.

An approach to Plato's writings which focuses on the literary, or dramatic form of his works will be called a morphological approach.

2 Francis M. Cornford, The Republic of Plato (London, 1945), p. vii.

3 Ibid., p. vii.

4 Ibid., p. v.

5 As quoted by Julius Stenzel, Plato's Method of Dialectic (New York, 1973), p. 51.

6 G. M. A. Grube, Plato's Thought (Boston, 1968), pp. 207 - 8.

[7] E. Hamilton and H. Cairns, eds., Plato: The Collected Dialogues (Princeton, 1961), p. xiv. Hereafter, all bracketed references are to this text unless otherwise noted.

[8] As quoted by Paul Desjardins, The Form of Platonic Inquiry (Yale, 1959), p. 49.

[9] David L. Hitchcock, The Role of Myth and Its Relation to Rational Argument in Plato's Dialogues (Ann Arbor, 1974), p. 53.

[10] Vladimir Nabokov, Lectures on Literature (New York, 1982), p. 9.

[11] Stenzel, op. cit., p. 15.

[12] Flavio Conti, How to Recognize Greek Art (New York, 1979), p. 7.

[13] Edith Hamilton, The Greek Way (New York, 1973), p. 53.

[14] John Gassner, Editor, A Treasury of the Theatre, Volume One (New York, 1935), p. 31.

[15] E. Hamilton, The Greek Way (New York, 1973), p. 54.

[16] Stenzel, op. cit., p. 22.

[17] Hans-Georg Gadamer, Dialogue and Dialectic (New Haven, 1980), p. 5.

[18] Ibid., p. 128.

[19] Alexandre Koyré, Discovering Plato (New York, 1945), p. 5.

[20] Stenzel, op. cit., p. 10.

[21] Gadamer, op. cit., p. 177.

[22] Bill of Sale Form. Newsome and Gilbert, Ltd., Canada. Form 344.

[23] Euripides, Hippolytus, trans. D. Sutherland (Lincoln, 1960), p. 56.

[24] Kenneth Dorter, Plato's Phaedo (Toronto, 1982), p. 3.

[25] Ibid., pp. 3 - 4.

[26] Ibid., p. 9.

[27] Robert S. Brumbaugh, Plato for the Modern Age (Westport, 1979), p. 13.

[28] Dorter, op. cit., p. x.

[29] Desjardins, Paul, The Form of Platonic Inquiry. (Yale, 1959), p. 16.

Notes to Chapter Two

1 Jacques Derrida, Dissemination (Chicago, 1981), p. 66. Derrida notes that:

> It was at first believed that Plato was too young to do things right, to construct a well-made object. Diogenes Laertius records this "they say" (logos sc. esti, legetai) according to which the Phaedrus was Plato's first attempt and thus manifested a certain juvenile quality.

2 Ibid., p. 67.
Derrida quotes H. Raeder's Platons Philosophische Entwicklung (Leipzig, 1905) as follows:

> In 1905, the tradition of Diogenes Laertius was reversed, not in order to bring about a recognition of the excellent composition of the Phaedrus but in order to attribute its faults this time to the senile impotence of the author: "The Phaedrus is badly composed. This defect is all the more surprising since it is precisely there that Socrates defines the work of art as a living being. But the inability to accomplish what has been well conceived is precisely a proof of old age".

3 A. E. Taylor, Plato: The Man and His Work (London, 1960), p. 319.
Taylor states:

> In taking leave of the Phaedrus, we may note that while it supplements the Gorgias in its conclusions about the value of "style", it modifies nothing that was said in the earlier dialogue.

4 Ibid., p. vii.

5 Ibid., p. 24.
Taylor claims that:

> Further special difficulties are created for us by certain peculiarities of Plato's literary temperament. Unlike Aristotle, he does not introduce himself and his opinions into his dialogues. He is, in fact, at great pains, with the instinct of the great dramatist, to keep his own personality completely in the background.

6 Ibid., p. 300.

[7] Ibid., p. 300.

[8] Ibid., p. 300.

[9] Derrida, op. cit., p. 67.

[10] Ronna Burger, Plato's Phaedrus (University, 1980), p. 5.

[11] E. Hamilton and H. Cairns, eds., Plato: The Collected Dialogues (Princeton, 1961), p. 475.

[12] Kenneth Dorter, "Imagery and Philosophy in Plato's Phaedrus" in Journal of History of Philosophy, Volume 9, 1971, p. 280, n. 3.
Dorter cites 227b6, 235d1, 236e8, 238a6, b2, 241c8, 243d4, 246e2, 247a8, d2-4, e3, 6, 248b5, 7, c2, 251c8, 255d1, 259c1-4, 260d1, 265e3, 270b6, 276d6, as instances of culinary terminology.

[13] Burger, op. cit., p. 127, n. 3.

[14] Meyer Reinhold, Past and Present (Toronto, 1972), p. 184.

[15] Derrida, op. cit., p. 70.

[16] Ibid., p. 110.

[17] Dorter, op. cit., p. 281.

[18] Ibid., p. 280.
In Hackforth's translation this remark is "Upon my word" at 230b2.

[19] Ibid., pp. 280 - 1.
After he perceives their chosen spot, Socrates make the rather extraordinary statement at 230d that, "I'm a lover of learning, and trees and open country won't teach me anything, whereas men in town do". Beside the obvious implication that learning, for Socrates, is by dialectic, the claim that he won't learn anything from nature sounds odd, especially when, at 275b, he suggests that trees and rocks impart a kind of prophetic wisdom. The difference lies in the state of the hearer since, "It was when they were mad that the prophetesses at Dodona achieved so much" (244b). I agree with Dorter's estimation:

> Socrates' strange remark that the places and trees do not wish to teach him anything, coupled with his later disclosure that trees are capable of teaching

> men, as at Dodona, cannot but be suggestive. And in light of Socrates' distinction between sober omen-reading and mantic prophecy (in which Dodona is an explicit example), there is an inescapable suggestion that the apparent futility of Socrates' examination of the locale is due to his sober reliance on the human senses.

20 The popularity of Dionysius in ancient Greece became a problem because of the freedom and irrationality the cult espoused. In the sixth century B.C. the Dionysiac cult was coalesced with the worship of Apollo at Delphi. Reinhold states:

> In a remarkable compromise the priests of Delphi officially assimilated the Dionysiac cult of the saviour god with that of the prophetic god, and henceforth Dionysus shared Delphi with Apollo, even if in a secondary role.

Reinhold, op. cit., p. 124.

The coalescence of worship of Dionysius and Apollo led to a fusion of the two gods, in that each represented a side of man's nature - the rational and the irrational. I presume that Plato was well aware of this union and, by implication, of mysticism and prophecy. Accordingly, I believe that the blurring of the first and second levels of divine madness in the Phaedrus is justified.

21 Reinhold, op. cit., p. 80.

22 Taylor, op. cit., p. 309, n. 1.

Taylor concurs with the point that Socrates exemplifies noble love. Taylor states:

> The power and insight with which this account of the conflict between the spirit and the flesh is written should not mislead us into supposing that it must be concealed autobiography. Comparison with what Alcibiades says in the Symposium about the relations between himself as a boy and Socrates suggests that the model for Plato's picture of the lover who has come through the severest temptation unsmirched is to be found in Socrates and his behaviour to the beautiful and petulant boy.

23 Burger, op. cit., p. 9.

[24] It is beyond the scope of this thesis to discuss the question of what constitutes a myth. For the purpose of this thesis, myths will be included among literary elements, along with ancedotal stories, similes and allegories.

[25] A. E. Taylor, op. cit., p. 302.
I concur with Taylor's view that acquiescence to a nonlover would be repulsive to Athenians.

[26] K. Dorter, Plato's Phaedo (Toronto, 1982), p. 72.

[27] Derrida, op. cit., pp. 68 - 9.

[28] Charles Griswold, "Review of Plato's Phaedrus by Ronna Burger" in Independent Journal of Philosophy, Volume IV, p. 160.

[29] Taylor, op. cit., p. 302.

[30] Ibid., p. 316.

[31] Dorter, Plato's Phaedo (Toronto, 1982), p. 44.

[32] Jeffrey Mitscherlingk, The Image of a Second Sun: Plato's View of Poetry (Guelph, 1983), p. 412.

[33] Taylor, op. cit., p. 316.

[34] Joseph Pieper, Enthusiasm and Madness (New York, 1964), p. xiv.

[35] Mitscherlingk, op. cit., pp. 170 - 180. Mitscherlingk lists poets quoted and/or referred to in Plato's dialogues in Index III.

[36] Mitscherlingk, op. cit., pp. 306 - 313.

[37] Jacob Klein, A Commentary on Plato's Meno (Chapel Hill, 1965), p. 13.

[38] Hazel Barnes, Essayist, "The Hippolytus of Drama and Myth" in Euripides' Hippolytus, D. Sutherland, trans. (Lincoln, 1960), p. 78.

[39] Ibid., p. 80.

[40] Euripides, Hippolytus, D. Sutherland, trans., (Lincoln, 1960), p. 48.

[41] Ibid., p. 13.

[42] Ibid., p. 42.

[43] Ibid., p. 22.

[44] Ibid., p. 25.

[45] Ibid., p. 26.

[46] Ibid., p. 34.

[47] Ibid., p. 44.

[48] Burger, op. cit., p. 91.

[49] Ibid., p. 101.

[50] M. I. Finley, ed., The Legacy of Greece (Oxford, 1984), p. 17.

[51] Ibid., pp. 16 - 17.

[52] Existential structuring is the dramatic employment of an idea, such as a character used to represent a particular faction of society. The reader may gain insight into that segment of society through that character's role. Existential structuring is also possible in a drama as a whole, as the whole of a literary piece may be an instantiation of an idea. Of existential structuring, Brumbaugh says:

> The meaning of an idea is given by the actions of the characters who accept it, as well as by what they assert. The characters in each drama actually undergo some development as the discussion moves on. The dialogue as a whole may present us with a case of self-instantiation which adds to or qualifies the ostensible "conclusion" of its argument.

Robert S. Brumbaugh, "The Divided Line and the Direction of Inquiry" in Philosophical Forum (Boston), Volume 2, pp. 172 - 3.

[53] Ibid., p. 173.

Brumbaugh states that methodological structure is when:

> [T]he statement of a method takes place in a context where the method in question is employed and illustrated in leading up to the formulation of it. In the middle dialogues, both of these types of self-instantiation [methodological and existential] are employed simultaneously.

Notes to Chapter Three

[1] H. Mac L. Currie, Editor, The Individual and the State (London, 1973), p. 13.

[2] J. Klein, A Commentary on Plato's Meno (Chapel Hill, 1965), p. 9.

[3] Karl Popper, The Open Society and Its Enemies (Princeton, 1971), pp. 45 - 6.

[4] Robert Zaslavsky, Platonic Myth and Platonic Writing (Washington, 1981), p. 149.

[5] A. E. Taylor, Plato. The Man and His Work (London, 1960), pp. 265 - 6.

[6] Zaslavasky, op. cit., p. 149.

[7] R. L. Nettleship, Lectures on the Republic of Plato (London, 1958), p. 340.

[8] Ibid., pp. 340 - 1.

[9] Ibid., p. 3.

[10] Ibid., p. 10.

[11] Allan Bloom, The Republic of Plato (New York, 1968), pp. x - xvi.

[12] Ibid., pp. 426 - 7.

[13] Ibid., p. xv.

[14] Many commentators suggest B.C. 411 as the dramatic date for the Republic (cf. Bloom p. 440, n. 3), but Taylor's argument for B. C. 421 is persuasive:

> The year, 411, assumed as the dramatic date by some commentators, is about the worst of all possible choices. It is rendered impossible by the fact that in the Republic, Cephalus, the father of Polemarchus and Lysias, is still alive, though an old man. The date is thus before his death and the removal of his sons to Thurii, whence they returned, after a good number of years, to Athens in 411 (Vit. Lysiae. c. 1).

A. E. Taylor. Plato. The Man and His Work (London, 1960), p. 263, fn. 1.

15 Bracketed references prefaced by B. refer to Allan Bloom's translation of the Republic which will be used almost exclusively in this chapter.

16 Bloom, op. cit., p. 311.

17 Bloom cites forty-two references to 'seeing' in the Republic. See Index of Subjects, p. 485.

18 Bloom, op. cit., p. 441, fn. 6.

19 Ibid., pp. 311 - 2.

20 Paul Desjardins, The Form of Platonic Inquiry (Yale University, 1959), pp. 10 - 11.

21 Robert S. Brumbaugh, Plato for the Modern Age (Westport, 1979), p. 50.

22 Francis M. Cornford, The Republic of Plato (London, 1945), p. 12.

23 Ibid., p. 32.

24 Bloom, op. cit., p. 336.

25 Cornford, op. cit., pp. 41 - 2.

26 Bloom, op. cit., p. 345.

27 Ibid., p. 342.

28 Robert S. Brumbaugh, "The Divided Line and the Direction of Inquiry" in Philosophical Forum (Boston, 1971), p. 181.

29 Bloom, op. cit., pp. 325 - 6.

30 Brumbaugh, op. cit., p. 180.

31 Ibid., p. 180.

32 Ibid., p. 181.
Gadamer also remarks on the shift that occurs with the entrance of Glaucon and Adeimantus. He says:

> At the beginning of book 2 Plato's two brothers enter into the dialogue and the discussion here is

> thereby set off from what has preceded it. The questioning does in fact move to another level.

Hans-Georg Gadamer. Dialogue and Dialectic (New Haven, 1980), pp. 81 - 2.

[33] Desjardins, op. cit., p. 50.

[34] Cornford, op. cit., p. 144.

[35] Bloom, op. cit., p. 459, n. 16.

[36] In Book V, there are indirect references to material from Herodotus at 453d, to Aristophanes' Ecclesiazusae at 461c - d, and to Hesiod's Works and Days at 468e. There is a play on words taken from Pindar at 457b. The direct references are to Hesiod's Works and Days at 466c and to Homer's Iliad at 468d and 468d - e.

[37] Bloom, op. cit., p. 425.

[38] It is not surprising that Plato sets this key notion, that of the philosopher as ruler, at the mid-point of the Republic. Friedländer notes:

> The inner structure of the Republic, in turn, is determined by the thesis that the true rulers and the true philosophers are identical; it contains, at its very center (473CD, 499B), the pointed epigram of the Seventh Letter about the philosopher-kings.

Paul Friedländer. Plato. An Introduction, Volume I (Princeton, 1969), pp. 10 - 11.

[39] Bloom, op. cit., p. 430.

[40] Although Homer was cited as an authority, the Sophists were more influential. J. A. Mitscherlingk states that, "[E]ducation at this time, at every level, was almost entirely monopolized by the Sophists".
J. A. Mitscherlingk. The Image of a Second Sun: Plato's View of Poetry (Guelph University, 1983), p. 15.

[41] Friedländer, op. cit., p. 42.

[42] Mitscherlingk, op. cit., p. 97.

[43] R. L. Nettleship, Lectures on the Republic of Plato (London, 1958), p. 17.

[44] Taylor, op. cit., p. 268.

[45] Nettleship, op. cit., p. 28.

[46] Ibid., p. 47.

[47] Taylor, op. cit., p. 272.

[48] Cornford, op. cit., p. 315.

[49] Ibid., p. 315.

[50] Ibid., p. 315.

[51] Nettleship, op. cit., p. 341.

[52] Laertius, Diogenes. Lives of the Philosophers, (Chicago, 1969), p. 103.

[53] Gadamer, op. cit., p. 47.

[54] Brumbaugh, op. cit., pp. 172 - 3.

[55] Bloom, op. cit., p. xviii.

[56] Friedländer, op. cit., p. 233.

[57] Ibid., p. 232.

[58] Ibid., p. 235.

[59] Nettleship, op. cit., p. 15.

[60] Ibid., p. 15.

[61] For a full account of the methodological structure of the Republic see R. S. Brumbaugh's article "The Divided Line and the Direction of Inquiry" in Philosophical Forum (Boston, 1971), pp. 172 - 199.

[62] Brumbaugh, op. cit., p. 180.

[63] Ibid., p. 182.

[64] Ibid., p. 105.

[65] Bloom, op. cit., p. xvi.

[66] Cornford, op. cit., p. 163.

[67] Bloom, op. cit., p. 141.

[68] Ibid., p. 147.

[69] Cornford, op. cit., pp. 169 - 170.

[70] Friedländer, op. cit., pp. 118 - 119.

[71] Gadamer, op. cit., p. 47.

[72] Mitscherlingk, op. cit., p. 13.
Mitscherlingk refers to W. Tartarkiewicz who "has pointed out (that) we are indebted to the Sophists for the discovery (or invention) or the distinction between form and content". See Wladyslaw Tartarkiewicz, ed. J. Harrell, History of Aesthetics, Volume I (Warszawa: PWN - Polish Scientific Publishers, 1970), pp. 98 - 99.

[73] Mitscherlingk, op. cit., pp. 13 - 14.

[74] Bloom, op. cit., p. 428.

[75] As quoted by Gadamer, op. cit., p. 39.

[76] Gadamer, op. cit., p. 58.

[77] Friedländer, op. cit., p. 122.

Notes to Chapter Four

1 A. E. Taylor, Plato: The Man and His Work (London, 1960, p. 147.

2 R. S. Brumbaugh, Plato for the Modern Age (Westport, 1961), p. 41.

3 Ibid., p. 41.

4 Taylor, op. cit., p. 408.

5 B. Lidsten, "On the Transitions in Plato's Philebus" (McMaster University, 1977). Unpublished paper, p. 41. Of the transitions in the Philebus, Lidsten maintains that they:

> Form an intricate dialectical path which not only leads us closer to the solution sought, but at the same time demonstrates why the opening assumptions are incorrect...These transitions are the steps in the dialectical path through which we are led...closer to the truth. pp. 41 - 2.

6 E. Hamilton and H. Cairns, Plato: The Collected Dialogues (Princeton, 1961), p. 1086.

7 Lidsten, op. cit., p. 42.
Lidsten's analysis of the Philebus concludes that:

> The constant shifting of discussion in the dialogue is necessary to show both where the good life can be found and why it is good. In addition, these transitions serve as a method of refutation and elucidation concerning the wrong directions in which we might be led. The transitions are the activity, the doing of dialectic. By utilizing this method, Plato has at once elucidated his beliefs, shown the way of inquiry and immersed the reader in this method of procedure. The transitions are thus intrinsic both to leading us closer to the truth and in explicating the intellectual staircase which will take us there.

8 F. M. Cornford, The Republic of Plato (London, 1945), p.v.

9 J. Klein, "About Plato's Philebus" (St. John's College, 1971). Unpublished paper, p. 20.

Notes to Chapter Five

1 G. M. A. Grube, Plato's Thought (Boston, 1968), p. 207. Grube maintains that Plato "ruthlessly subordinated form to matter in his own works".

2 D. Hitchcock, The Role of Myth and Its Relation to Rational Argument in Plato's Dialogues (Ann Arbor, 1974), p. 110.

3 Charles H. Kahn, "Drama and Dialectic in Plato's Gorgias" in Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy, Julia Annas, Editor (Oxford, 1983), p. 76.

4 A. Bloom, The Republic of Plato (New York, 1968), p. xvi.

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