

- D. "Translatability" of key terms into various languages becomes of prime importance.
- E. Carefully defined specific responses must be sought within the overall pattern of the desired total response.

The above postulates, unproved though they may be at the moment, suggest that a different approach to this area of rhetorical criticism may be feasible. Since a modern speech of international consequence given by an international spokesman to a multi-national audience has to deal with markedly different problems than an intra-national speech by a domestic speaker, it is probable that the utilization of traditional rhetorical canons would be inadequate and/or unsatisfactory for description, analysis, and evaluation of the speeches of the modern diplomacy, which ". . . has been converted largely into a struggle for dominance over the minds of men."¹⁹

¹⁹ Oliver, "Speech in International Affairs," *op. cit.*, 176.

The Paradox of Plato's Attitude Toward Rhetoric

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ONE OF THE most persistently puzzling questions in the study of ancient Greek rhetoric has been that of Plato's true attitude toward rhetoric. In the fourth century B.C. the great Athenian philosopher penned dialogues which commented at length upon rhetoric and rhetoricians; today, some twenty-three centuries later, his attitude upon the subject is still partially shrouded in doubt and confusion. Thonssen and Baird have summarized it in this way:

Plato's attitudes toward a technique of speechcraft present a seeming paradox; while satirizing and condemning the art as it appeared to him during his age, he also contributed to its development so materially as to lead such an eminent scholar as W. H. Thompson to call Aristotle's epochal *Rhetoric* in effect an expanded *Phaedrus*.¹

This "seeming paradox" in Plato's treatment of rhetoric would appear to stem primarily from the divergent approaches in two dialogues, *Gorgias* and *Phaedrus*. According to Hunt, the difference between the attitudes of the two dialogues is so great that "scholars have been at pains to explain it."² *Gorgias* and *Phaedrus* are familiar enough that they require no detailed recounting here; a cursory review is

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¹ Lester Thonssen and A. Craig Baird, *Speech Criticism* (New York, 1948), p. 50.

² Everett Lee Hunt, "Plato on Rhetoric and Rhetoricians," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, VI (June, 1920), 46.

sufficient to suggest their seemingly divergent positions. In *Gorgias*, Plato's sharp censure of rhetoric and rhetoricians is unmistakable. The ideas about rhetoric which Socrates expresses in conversational dispute with Gorgias, Polus, and Callicles amount to a severe indictment of it. Through the instrument of Socrates, the dialogue declares that rhetoric is not a real "techne" (art), that it is — like "cookery" — only a type of "flattery," that it gives no real power to its user, and that it does not serve the ends of justice. Socrates at one point describes rhetoric as "the artificer of persuasion which creates belief about the just and unjust but gives no instruction about them."³ He later adds that the real task of the rhetorician is "only to discover some way of persuading the ignorant that he has more knowledge than those who know."⁴ Hunt would appear to be right when he concludes that in *Gorgias* "rhetoric is condemned utterly."⁵

In *Phaedrus*, however, Plato takes a very constructive approach to rhetoric and demonstrates a much less hostile attitude toward its study and practice. In much milder tones he again laments the shortcomings of many contemporary rhetoricians, but in *Phaedrus* he visualizes for rhetoric a position as a worthwhile art. Indeed, he outlines brilliantly what he conceives to be a true and useful rhetoric.

These, then, are the differing approaches in which some students of rhetoric have discovered the "seeming paradox" in Plato. It is our belief that the divergent approaches of *Gorgias* and *Phaedrus*, properly interpreted, do not necessarily obscure Plato's attitude toward the study of rhetoric, but rather that they may help us to understand it. For these two treatises must not be viewed as single works, independent of the rest of the Platonic dialogues; nor can they properly be studied outside the context of the historical development of Platonic thought. Jaeger cautions against this kind of limited study:

Every attempt to find systematic unity in Plato's philosophy without taking into account the historical facts of his development falls into inevitable difficulties as soon as it tries to put all his works on a level and treat them as equal authorities.⁶

Taylor sounds a similar note of warning:

To understand a great thinker is, of course, impossible unless we know something of the relative order of his works, and of the actual period of his life to which they belong. . . . We cannot, then, even make a beginning with the study of Plato until we have found some trustworthy indication of the order in which his works, or at least the most significant of them, were written.⁷

Let us, then, apply chronological perspective to the inquiry into Plato's attitudes

³ *The Dialogues of Plato*, tr. by Benjamin Jowett, "Gorgias," II (New York, 1937), 455.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 459.

⁵ Hunt, *op. cit.*, 45.

⁶ Werner Jaeger, *Paideia*, II (New York, 1944), 185.

⁷ A. E. Taylor, *Plato* (London, 1926), p. 16.

toward rhetoric. Such a method should provide a better understanding of what otherwise might seem paradoxical in the comparative study of *Gorgias* and *Phaedrus*.

Although the exact dates for the writing of *Gorgias* and *Phaedrus* have not been unanimously fixed, there is sufficient agreement among modern scholars to indicate the proper time relationship between the two dialogues. Platonic scholars like Lewis Campbell, George Grote, W. H. Thompson, Wincenty Lutoslawski, A. E. Taylor, and Werner Jaeger all place *Gorgias* as the earlier dialogue and *Phaedrus* as a product of a more mature period. The earliest estimated date for *Gorgias* is Taylor's 393 B.C.⁸ Jaeger believes it was written sometime between 395 and 390 B.C.,⁹ and Lutoslawski fixes its literary birth between 390 and 387 B.C.¹⁰ It would seem accurate enough to list 390 B.C. as an approximate date for *Gorgias*.

The date of origin for *Phaedrus* cannot be so closely estimated. Many writers have been content with the observation that it is not an early dialogue, while others have been indefinite in their estimates. Taylor, for example, declines to pin down the date beyond saying that it probably was later than the *Republic* and earlier than *Theatetus*.¹¹ This would place its writing somewhere between 387 and 367 B.C. A more definite date is that of Lutoslawski, who estimates it at about 379 B.C.¹² Jaeger, on the other hand, fixes it as late as 362 B.C.¹³

Whether we accept 379 B.C. as the approximate date for *Phaedrus*, or use Jaeger's later date, the same general conclusions regarding the chronology of *Gorgias* and *Phaedrus* may be drawn. *Gorgias* was among Plato's earlier dialogues. It was written a few years after the death of Socrates, 399 B.C., and shortly before the foundation of the Academy, 387 B.C. *Phaedrus*, on the other hand, was written at the height of Plato's career. It appears to have been completed at least ten years after *Gorgias*, and at a time when the Academy was well-established.

What significance, then, should be attached to the time interval of somewhere between ten and twenty-five years between Plato's composition of these two dialogues touching upon rhetoric? Gomperz apparently thought that interval to be important when he wrote:

In the *Phaedrus* we have a reconsideration of the same question which, in the *Gorgias*, was disposed of by a passionately hostile verdict. This time the wholesale condemnation of rhetoric is not repeated. What the judicious critic of the earlier dialogue says to himself today, Plato said to himself in the interval between the composition of the two works.¹⁴

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 104.

⁹ Jaeger, *op. cit.*, III, 303.

¹⁰ Wincenty Lutoslawski, *Origin and Growth of Plato's Logic* (London, 1897), pp. 212 and 277.

¹¹ Taylor, *op. cit.*, III, 299-300.

¹² Lutoslawski, *op. cit.*, p. 352.

¹³ Jaeger, *op. cit.*, III, 352.

¹⁴ Theodore Gomperz, *Greek Thinkers*, III (New York, 1905), 20.

Jaeger also finds significance in the lapse of time between the two dialogues. He notes that Plato had "an early style, a middle style, and an admittedly late style," and he ascribes *Gorgias* to the early period and *Phaedrus* to the middle period. He adds that "not only the poet and his style, but the thinker and his thought were transformed with the passing years."¹⁵ Commenting directly upon the two dialogues in question here, Jaeger writes that "*Phaedrus* can be understood only as a new stage in Plato's developing attitude to rhetoric."¹⁶

The evidence indicates, then, that *Gorgias* belongs to an earlier period of Platonic history than does *Phaedrus* and that changes in Plato's approach to rhetoric were effected during the interval between the two works. It would seem probable that there were forces other than mere attrition of time and continued reflection acting upon the attitudes of Plato in the period between *Gorgias* and *Phaedrus*. A better understanding of his revision in approach and attitude may be gleaned, perhaps, from a review of pertinent historical facts.

Two intervening events which probably exerted influence on Plato's approach to rhetoric were, first, the formation of his own Academy and, second, the success of the rhetorical school of Isocrates. The Academy, founded about 387 B.C.,¹⁷ centered its instruction in philosophy. Within a few years its pupils began to teach, and it is possible that Plato began to revise his estimate of rhetorical training during that time. Lutoslawski notes that Plato himself, possessing great natural eloquence, had never needed such rhetorical training and gives this as the reason "why he contemptuously defined rhetoric in the *Gorgias* as a kind of flattery." Then Lutoslawski adds:

His first opportunity for noticing the usefulness of some rhetorical artifice must have arisen at a time when his pupils began to teach, and he first observed that some of them, with all the knowledge inherited from the Master, were less capable of imparting it than others . . . their deficiencies in teaching may have led Plato to some reflections on rhetoric, which he embodied in the *Phaedrus*.¹⁸

It seems reasonable to hypothesize that problems attendant upon instruction at the Academy may have inspired in Plato a new interest in rhetoric and a more optimistic evaluation of its potential usefulness.

A second historical factor which may well have influenced the more constructive treatment of rhetoric in *Phaedrus* was the emergence of a new kind of rhetorical training at the school which Isocrates established in 392 B.C.,¹⁹ a school which flourished as a successful rival to the Academy as long as both founders lived. Of this success, Jaeger says: "The rhetor, the political pamphleteer and ideologist, has never since found himself in so favorable a position or commanded

¹⁵ Jaeger, *op. cit.*, II, 93-94.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, III, 185.

¹⁷ Lutoslawski, *op. cit.*, p. 327.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 326-327.

¹⁹ Thonssen and Baird, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

such a widespread influence throughout an entire nation."²⁰ It would be an injustice, however, to imply that the popular success of Isocrates' school would be sufficient to stimulate in Plato a renewed and adjusted interest in rhetoric. The sounder ethical and political foundation of Isocrates' instruction was undoubtedly more significant. Isocrates directed his efforts toward producing informed statesmen, leaders whose rhetorical training was never divorced from moral and ethical considerations. Although Plato and Isocrates differed materially on many points, there seems little reason to doubt that Plato's complimentary reference to his rival in the closing passage of *Phaedrus* was a sincere one. In that passage, Socrates observed that "his [Isocrates'] character is cast in a finer mold" and that "he has an element of philosophy in his nature."²¹ Jaeger writes of this reference to Isocrates that "Plato praised his distinguished opponent, and added to his praise an allusion to the deep spiritual bond between their two spheres of teaching."²² Jaeger also says of this eulogistic reference:

It shows that at the time Plato was writing the book he was once again keenly interested in the problem of rhetorical education which he had already discussed in *Gorgias*, and that something of his new interest must have been due to the great new developments in rhetoric which are associated with the name of Isocrates — although we may feel inclined to minimize the generous praise given to him here. . . . If modern research is correct in placing *Phaedrus* late in Plato's career, then this expression of his attitude to the school of Isocrates is surely most important.²³

The founding of his own Academy and the emergence of a different and higher type of rhetoric under the leadership of Isocrates probably exerted a strong influence upon Plato. Thus the application of pertinent historical facts to the interpretation of *Gorgias* and *Phaedrus* contribute to a better understanding of Plato's attitude toward rhetoric.

Often overlooked is one other historical tradition which provides a clue to the full development of Plato's attitude toward rhetorical instruction. It also casts further doubt on the popular belief in Plato's hostility to the study of rhetoric. Both Taylor and Jaeger confirm the tradition established by earlier scholars that rhetoric became a course of study at the Academy during Plato's later years. It is not certain whether Plato himself lectured on the subject, but Aristotle undoubtedly did so while the Academy was still under Platonic guidance. Jaeger writes of this new course in rhetoric:

His purpose in giving the course was to answer the demand for formal education; he was adding rhetoric to complement the existing courses in dialectic. But it was also an attempt to put rhetoric on a more scientific footing.²⁴

²⁰ Jaeger, *op. cit.*, I, 54.

²¹ *Dialogues*, *op. cit.*, "Phaedrus," 279.

²² Jaeger, *op. cit.*, I, 190.

²³ *Ibid.*, 184.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 185.

We have in this study made an attempt to gain a better understanding of the attitudes of Plato toward rhetoric. Two methods have been employed: (1) the application of chronological perspective to the writer's most significant rhetorical treatises and (2) the interpretation of those treatises in the light of historical facts which may have influenced their author. Viewed in this light, *Gorgias* and *Phaedrus* seem easier to understand and appear less paradoxical than otherwise. This kind of approach makes it possible also to see in Plato's attitude toward rhetoric a developmental pattern which proceeds from almost unqualified hostility to constructive theorizing to practical instruction. From this viewpoint, the popular myth of complete Platonic hostility to rhetorical instruction can be rejected, and the link often suggested between Plato's *Phaedrus* and Aristotle's *Rhetoric* can be more securely forged.

Speech Therapy and Speech Improvement

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THE QUALIFIED speech therapist is a highly trained clinician whose talents are neither fully appreciated nor fully utilized in the average public school system. In most cases the therapist is isolated in an out-of-the-way room and sees only a small segment of the school population, the parents of children enrolled in the speech program, a handful of teachers, and an occasional administrator. The larger portion of the school population seldom, if ever, comes in contact with or benefits by his services. Those who do meet the therapist often are left in doubt as to his real purpose in the school. This problem goes hand in hand with others which reduce the efficiency and effectiveness of the therapist. First, the "stigma effect" (being taken out of the classroom for therapy and, hence, being judged to be *different*) often produces in the speech handicapped child a passive resistance to therapy. Second, the speech program becomes so over-loaded with minor articulatory and "baby-talk" cases that the child with seriously disordered speech is robbed of his just share of clinic time, and the number of corrected cases is far too small. Third, the therapist is required to cover several schools a week which produces weird scheduling, transportation, and equipment problems. Fourth, the therapist finds little or no time to conduct a preventive program. And, fifth, the therapist has a minimum of time to confer with parents and teachers for case-study and to demonstrate methods that will assist in "carry-over" speech activities at home and in the classroom.

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