INTRODUCTION

1. APPROACHING THE *PHAEDRUS*

Plato's dialogues are masterpieces of the literary representation of philosophical conversations. Yet the *Phaedrus* stands out even in Plato's corpus. The dialogue's formal structure makes evident the main topics.[1] After the opening scene establishes Ph.'s enthusiasm for Lysias' rhetorical art and S.'s intention to examine it, Ph. reads Lysias' speech on *erōs* aloud to his companion, whereupon S. delivers extempore two speeches on *erōs* of his own. Then, just past the halfway point, the dialogue undergoes its most overt change in style and substance as S. shifts from the rhetorical presentations on *erōs* to a dialectical inquiry into the nature of good discourse. The inquiry is concerned mostly with the art of rhetoric, but concludes with a consideration of written texts and dialectic. Beyond the topics that are given formal prominence – *erōs*, rhetoric, dialectic, written texts – other important themes that arise in the conversation include philosophy, beauty, play, the soul, the gods, the sophists, and the nature of *technē*.

Beyond the forms of discourse that structure the dialogue – the rhetorical speeches of the first half, the dialectical inquiry of the second half – S. addresses Ph. in friendly and ironic conversation, in allegories and myths, in didactic argument, in studied artificial language. S. prays; he quotes and invents verse; he mocks sophistic pretenders to rhetorical art. S.'s second speech on *erōs*, his "palinode" as he calls it in imitation of Stesichorus' poem of that name (243a2–b6, 257a3), is so imaginative and large that it threatens to dominate the dialogue as a whole. But it is prevented from dominating because in the following dialectical inquiry, as an example of rhetorical discourse, it is relegated to a status that is secondary to and less serious than dialectic (265c8–d2n.). To present this complex web of topics and forms of discourse, Plato adopts the simplest dialogue form, direct speech between S. and a single interlocutor.[2] The conversation begins, proceeds, and ends with captivating, unbroken naturalness, as if the whole thing were no more than a simple conversation between friends.

Since antiquity readers have sought to articulate what the dialogue as a whole is about.[3] Beyond the intriguing nature of the problem, they have felt encouraged, or perhaps provoked, to make the attempt by S.'s comment on the need for design in artistic discourse, which he calls "logographic necessity" (ἀνάγκην λογογραφικήν, lit. "necessity in the composition of discourse," 264b7).

[1] The synopsis in the appendix displays the contents of the dialogue.
[2] McCabe 2006 on the dialogue forms used by Plato.
[3] The earliest extant commentary on the *Phaedrus*, by the Neoplatonist Hermias of Alexandria (fifth century CE), opens with a discussion of the dialogue's σκόπος, "aim," which is a way of formulating the question of unity (Hermias 8.15–12.25). On Hermias, see note 69 below.

S. makes the comment while criticizing Lysias' speech in the dialogue, but it is clearly implied that S.'s point applies to all artistic discourse (264b6–8n.), which surely includes the *Phaedrus*. So Plato suggests that the *Phaedrus* too has design even though the dialogue is so rich and multifaceted that an account of its thematic unity continues to be elusive.[4] Nevertheless, the very act of reading forces us to believe in, and seek for, some structuring design.[5] One approach is to consider what S. means by "logographic necessity" and how it characterizes the dialogue's plot. As it unfolds, the plot shows how Ph., under S.'s influence, moves away from Lysias and towards S., away from sophistic rhetoric and towards philosophy.[6]

2. DESIGN, COMPLEXITY, AND THE PLOT

S. employs the term "logographic necessity" (the only instance in Plato's corpus) while he is considering how persuasion can be produced by art (πείθειν τέχνηι, 260d8; 261c9–d1n.). Only a speaker who has knowledge of the subject matter of his discourse is in a position to persuade by art; such a speaker persuades by moving the auditor step by step from the view which he or she holds at the outset to the view which the speaker wants the auditor to hold at the conclusion (261e5–262c3). In a discourse that produces this effect by art, the author will have composed the parts of the discourse and placed them in a particular order so that as a whole the discourse produces the desired effect on the auditor (264c3–6n.). By "parts of the discourse" (τὰ τοῦ λόγου, 264b3) S. means not formal elements such as introduction, narrative, and conclusion, which he disparages (266d7–e4, 267d2–4), but the steps of the argument that move the auditor from his or her initial view to the view which the speaker wants the auditor to hold at the end (262a2–3n., 262b6–8).

In denying that Lysias' speech possesses design, S. points out that the speech seems to begin at the end and to have been thrown together at random, and that there is no reason why any of the parts of the speech should occupy the place it has rather than any other place (264a5–b8). S. also compares a grave epigram composed for Midas, in which the four lines that constitute the epigram can stand in any order, and it makes no difference to the effect of the whole (264c8–e2). Hence in speeches that possess design there is a compelling reason, related to the persuasive goal of the speech, for the elements of the discourse to be what they are and be set out in a particular order. There is also a compelling

[4] Werner 2007 is a comprehensive review. It is anachronistic to expect thematic unity, which is distinct from the question of design, in literary and dramatic works of classical Greece (Heath 1989).

[5] For the basis of this natural view of reading, cf. Hirsch 1976.

[6] The term "sophistic rhetoric" covers the complete range of rhetorical theories put forward by the sophists. This usage follows Plato's (260d1n., d4n.), to whom the differences among the sophists' rhetorical theories were trivial (266d5–269d1). What all forms of sophistic rhetoric have in common and what renders them all futile is the notion that a speaker can persuade by art without knowledge of the subject of his discourse (Introd. 4).

quality to the persuasion that is produced when discourses are composed with design (271b2–4n.).

Plato, who composed the speech attributed to Lysias in the dialogue (230e6–234c5n.), made its lack of design conspicuous. Not only are the parts of the speech placed in a tedious, interchangeable order (231a7n., d6n.), but as a work of epideictic rhetoric the speech is not meant to have any effect at all on the young male auditor to whom it is ostensibly addressed. The young man is addressed by an older man, who argues that the young man should grant sexual favors to him, the speaker, even though he does not love him, in preference to an older man who does love him.[7] But the deliberative framework is merely formal and functions rather as a platform for Lysias to address his audience of rhetorical enthusiasts and impress them with his cleverness and verbal skill (234e4–235a7, 257e1–258d10n.). By contrast, S. refers to both of his speeches, advising the same young man on his choice of suitor, as examples of true rhetorical art (262c4–266d4n., 262c8–d2n.). Both speeches – one condemning *erōs*, one praising – take their respective deliberative tasks seriously. Both are tightly woven compositions in which every element contributes to the persuasive goal and does so because of its position in the sequence of elements that make up the whole (237a7–241d1n., 243e7–257b6n.). S.'s speeches are epideictic only in the sense that they demonstrate what effective deliberative rhetoric consists in. They are lessons in rhetorical art (264e6–265d2), not attempts at impressing an audience that enjoys verbal games.

The compelling quality of S.'s speeches on *erōs* is apparent in their construction, but we can only guess what effect they would have on the imaginary young man to whom they are addressed. The most striking example of design in the *Phaedrus* occurs in the plot, in which we see Ph. change as a result of the discourse that S. addresses to him over the course of the dialogue. When the two encounter each other at the start, Ph. is utterly taken by the cleverness of Lysias' epideictic art (227c3–228a4, 234c6–d4), and he is on his way with text in hand to practice that art himself (228d6–e4). Ph.'s attraction to Lysias' art reflects his native passion for what is beautiful and fine (228a4n.). Hence the problem faced by S.: how can this individual, whose interest in epideictic rhetoric masks an aptitude for philosophy, be stopped from his current course and moved to adopt philosophical values and to pursue philosophy instead? By the end of the dialogue Ph. has abandoned his intention to practice epideictic rhetoric. All his prior enthusiasm for Lysias,

[7] Lysias' and S.'s speeches on *erōs* are based on Greek pederasty, the set of sexual–social customs in which an adult male (ὁ ἐραστής, "lover") courted, and when successful had sex with, an adolescent male (ὁ ἐρώμενος, "beloved," or τὰ παιδικά, "darling"). Normally the *erastēs* also offered his *erōmenos* an informal education in the ways of society and adulthood. Such relationships were a basic part of upper-class Athenian life, existed for the *erastēs* alongside marriage, were socially approved at least when they observed certain limits, and are widespread in Athenian culture and art. The best comprehensive account remains Dover 1989. See also Cantarella 2002: 17–53 for a brief account, Cohen 1991: 171–202 on social regulation, Lear and Cantarella 2008 on iconographical evidence.

the sophists, their rhetoric, and their texts has vanished. S. has kindled in Ph. a desire for the transcendent goals of philosophy (in the palinode) and introduced him to the dialectical discussion used by philosophers (in the inquiry into rhetoric). S. has shown that oral dialectic is much better at advancing knowledge and understanding than written texts (274b7–278e3). Ph. has declared (278b4n.) and confirmed (279c5n.) his intention to pursue philosophy. The dialogue ends on a positive note of joint philosophical endeavor (279c6n.). To be sure, Ph. has not yet become a philosopher; and Ph.'s aptitude for philosophy lies more in his appreciation of beauty than in his skill at dialectic. Yet S. has turned Ph. towards philosophy and brought him, so to speak, to the threshold. Having come that far, Ph. is immeasurably better off than he was at the outset; and the opportunity to progress towards serious engagement with philosophy now lies before him. Whether Ph. will, like Lysias' brother Polemarchus (257b3–4), become a serious student of philosophy is beyond Plato's concern in the dialogue.

To move Ph. away from sophistic epideictic rhetoric and towards philosophy is S.'s goal from the moment he accosts him at the outset, as Plato suggests through S.'s irony in the scenes leading up to the palinode, and as S. makes explicit in his prayer to Eros at the end of the palinode (257b4–6). Until Ph. hears S.'s prayer, Ph. is unaware that S. is seeking to have this effect on him. Hence all of S.'s utterances until the end of the palinode have a double sense. The superficial sense, addressed to Ph., is that in which S. responds to Ph.'s utterances and moves the dialogue with him forward. The underlying or ironic sense, addressed to the reader, indicates S.'s intent of moving Ph. towards philosophy and reveals how at each moment S. is leading him towards the goal. S.'s care for Ph. being evident throughout, his irony is gentle, well-intentioned, and amusing.

In the opening scene, while S. and Ph. banter and meander in the countryside, S. is maneuvering Ph. into reading him Lysias' speech in a suitable, isolated spot. S.'s purpose is to provoke a contest between Lysias and himself with Ph. as judge and thereby to gain an opportunity to change Ph.'s allegiance. Following the probing nature of S.'s question that opens the dialogue, "Ph., my friend, where to and where from?" (227a1n.), the process begins with S.'s second utterance, which puts the focus on Lysias and dismisses Ph.'s other concerns (227b2n.). As the scene progresses S. expresses interest in Lysias' speech for its novelty and cleverness, which is how Ph. understands him. But repeated irony makes it impossible for the reader to take S. at his word.[8] S. is actually interested in Lysias' speech just because of Ph.'s interest in it, which S. exploits in order to lure Ph. into reading it aloud. Ph. assents to each stage of this process because S. knows his interlocutor well enough to know just what to say in order to produce his assent (228a5n.). The two small-scale set pieces of the opening scene – S.'s rejection of rationalizing myth (229c5–230a6) and his rhetorical outburst upon arriving at the pleasant spot under the plane tree (230b2–c4) – are ironic in that their import for

[8] 227b6–7n., b9–10n., c8n., d3–5n., 229e4n., 230d7–e1n.

the educational endeavor that lies ahead for Ph. is made apparent to the reader (229c5–230a6n., 230a3–6n., 230b2–e1n.) while Ph. remains unaware (230c5–d2).

Following the reading of Lysias' speech, S. declines to share Ph.'s enthusiasm for it, which brings into the open the underlying difference between their views of what constitutes good rhetoric (234c6–235d2). S. exploits that difference in order to manipulate Ph. into urging him to deliver a speech of his own in reply (235d3–236e8). The very success of S.'s speech – the potency of its argument against *erōs* – provokes the crisis that makes it necessary for S. to deliver a second speech, his palinode, to make amends for his offense against Eros in the first speech (241d2–242b5). The seriousness of the crisis is assured by the appearance of S.'s divine voice (242b7–8n.), which prevents him from leaving the spot under the plane tree before he has delivered the palinode (243a2–b6). Ph.'s assistance as attentive auditor is required as well (243c2–3n., e6n.). S. now has Ph. in the position that he was seeking from the beginning. The palinode is S.'s best effort at presenting the case for philosophy most effectively to a soul such as Ph. (257a2–4). Ph. has been prepared, and it is up to him whether he responds positively or not. By echoing S.'s closing prayer that he give up epideictic rhetoric and devote himself to philosophy (257b7–c1), Ph. indicates that S.'s effort has not failed, which is appropriate given the brilliance of the speech that Plato composed for him.

But S.'s task is not complete. Assenting to S.'s prayer that he take up philosophy, Ph. appends a condition – "if it is better for us" (i.e. for Lysias as well as Ph., 257b7–c1) – which S. answers in the rest of the dialogue. Now openly assuming the role of Ph.'s teacher in philosophy (261a3–5), S. no longer pursues a hidden agenda for Ph. under the guise of irony. But S.'s didactic discourse is no less strategic, no less a matter of eliciting the right response in order to lead Ph. towards the goal. Out of Ph.'s chance reference to a politician who criticized Lysias for being a speechwriter (257c1–6), S. fashions the inquiry that serves as Ph.'s initiation into dialectical philosophy (257c7–258e4): what constitutes good discourse? When complete, the inquiry will enable Ph. to understand why sophistic rhetoric is fundamentally misguided, why true rhetoric requires philosophy, and why philosophy is a better, nobler pursuit than sophistic rhetoric. If Ph. acquires these convictions on the basis of reasoned argument, the attachment to philosophy that was formed in the palinode will be strengthened. Had Ph. made a different remark, S. would have been able to use that remark to fashion the same inquiry, such being the nature of his expertise in discourse (271c9–272b4n.). Before launching the inquiry, S. prepares Ph. for its rigors, to which he is unaccustomed, by the parable of the cicadas, which urges perseverance for the sake of the divine pleasure and honor that dialectical pursuits afford (258e5–259d6n.).

In a short space the inquiry covers much ground (259e2–274b6n.): S. introduces a new theory of rhetoric that includes dialectic as the means of generating arguments and psychology as the basis for style, while also demonstrating the failure of sophistic rhetoric as a whole. There is no lack of dense argument and abstruse detail. To help Ph. through this thicket, S. not only seeks and obtains

Ph.'s assent at each step, but he relieves abstract argument with examples from the speeches in the dialogue (262c4–7), digresses to answer Ph.'s particular concern (261b4–e4), chooses as exemplary experts figures whom Ph. knows and will accept (268a7–8n., 268c5n., 269a5n.), and simplifies a difficult argument on *physis* by proceeding from general to specific (269d2–272b6n.). In his interactions with Ph., S. shows himself to be a μουσικός, not a cultured gentleman (268d7n.) but an expert in face-to-face dialectical instruction (268e1–2n.) and a follower of Plato's philosophical Muses (248d3, 259d2–5).

Ph.'s success in following the arduous account of rhetoric is evident from the ease with which, no longer an utter neophyte, he follows the final stage of the inquiry devoted to writing (274b7–278e3). Formerly S. addressed Ph. in mythical discourse because it suited him (230a3–6n., 257a3–4n.); now S. rebukes Ph. for his impatience with the Egyptian myth (274c4, 275b3–c2). Ph. not only follows S.'s argument but contributes to it (276a7–8n., e1–3n.). Ph. provokes S.'s comment on Isocrates, which goes beyond what S. had intended to discuss (278e4–8). At the end, following Ph.'s confirmation of his intent to pursue philosophy (279c5), now without condition, S. and Ph. acknowledge each other as friends and partners in the pursuit of wisdom (279c5n., c6n.). Evidently S. has changed Ph. since he left the Morychian house, where he spent the morning enthralled by Lysias. To appreciate the magnitude of the event, compare the *Euthyphro* and *Ion*, dialogues in which S. also addresses a single interlocutor whose fortuitous encounter with S. is, like that of Ph., full of potential. Yet unlike S.'s discourse in the *Phaedrus*, the Socratic *elenchos* ("examination," as S.'s discourse in these dialogues is known) leads them to *aporia*, or "impasse."[9] The reader may be instructed, but the interlocutor departs utterly unchanged. Euthyphro and Ion may seem to have little aptitude for philosophy, yet S. does not adapt his discourse to their needs and aptitudes. Ph.'s initial enthusiasm for Lysias' speech hardly seems to be a good omen for philosophical endeavors, and his aptitude for philosophy becomes apparent only under S.'s tutelage.

All of S.'s utterances in their unpredictable variety of form and content belong to the artfully contrived sequence that moves Ph. forward step by step towards the goal. The design of the dialogue as a whole consists in the coherence of the sequence such that the effect – the change that S. produces in Ph. – is convincing. This does not mean that S.'s conversation with Ph. could not (conceivably) have turned out otherwise. It means that the way it does turn out makes good sense. If that is the case, then the complexity of the dialogue itself contributes to its coherence. S. suggests the reason for this convergence of complexity and meaning when he recalls the part of his rhetorical doctrine according to which the expert determines the style of his discourse in regard to the nature of the soul being addressed (271b2–4n.). The rhetorical expert "offers a variegated soul variegated and all-inclusive discourses" (ποικίλῃ μὲν ποικίλους ψυχῇ καὶ παναρμονίους

[9] Vlastos 1983 on the Socratic *elenchos*.

διδοὺς λόγους, 277c2–3). The liveliness of S.'s metaphors for complexity, and the artificiality of his word order and sound play, suggest a boldness in this *rhētōr*'s art (277c2–3n.), in which form strictly follows function. Discourse should be as complex as it needs to be to persuade the soul being addressed. In Ph. S. faces a complex, "variegated soul" (e.g. 228b5–c3, 234d2–6, 242a6–b5). The "variegated, all-inclusive discourses" that S. addresses to Ph. are no more or less complex than is needed for the task at hand.

3. PHAEDRUS, LYSIAS, AND THE DRAMATIC DATE

One aspect of the plot that requires scrutiny is Ph.'s age and his status as either potential *erastēs* or potential *erōmenos*. The question matters for our understanding of what and how he learns at S.'s hands. It has been claimed that Ph. is a young man and potential *erōmenos* like the young man addressed in the speeches on *erōs*, and that, like the young Alcibiades, Charmides, and other handsome young men (παρὰ τοῖς καλοῖς, 257b1), Ph. is lured towards philosophy by erotic tension with S. as his (philosophical) *erastēs*.[10] One passage in particular might seem to support this reading. Before he begins his palinode, S. seeks the imagined young man he addressed in his first speech to make sure he hears the palinode before he acts, to his detriment, on the advice in that speech (243e4–5). Ph. responds, "here he is ever right next to you whenever you wish" (243e6), which has been taken to mean that Ph. reveals himself to be the young man and potential *erōmenos* addressed in the speeches on *erōs*.[11] It is also claimed that S. prepares Ph. for his seduction in the palinode by sexual innuendo in the opening scene and by the beauty of the isolated bower in which their conversation unfolds (230b2–c4).[12] In fact, though Ph. is younger than S. (236d1), he is not an adolescent but an adult, and far from being a potential *erōmenos* to S., Lysias, or anyone else, Ph. is a potential *erastēs*.

Ph. son of Pythocles of the deme Myrrhinus (244a1), a well-attested historical personage, was born no later than 444 and possibly as early as 450.[13] Though Plato gives no precise indication of when the dialogue may be supposed to take place (beyond the *terminus ante quem* of S.'s death in 399), he conveys a general,

[10] Asmis 1986, Nussbaum 1986: 200–33 are the most thorough formulations. The view is common but not universal (Parmentier 1926, Görgemanns 1993: 141–2). The idea of Ph. as an *erōmenos* was considered in antiquity: Maximus of Tyre, *Dialexis* 38.4, Hermias 1.10, 11.20–32.

[11] Three other passages are adduced in support of the view of Ph. as potential *erōmenos*, mistakenly. The vocatives ὦ νεανία (257c7), ὦ παῖ (267c5) with which S. addresses Ph. do not mean that he is a youth, but tease him for his inability to understand the point at issue. When S. calls Ph. καλλίπαιδα (261a3), he means not "beautiful boy" but "who has beautiful children," which refers to Ph.'s ability to elicit discourses, his "children" (261a3n.).

[12] The beauty of the isolated bower turns out to be less an incentive to seduction than a stimulus for philosophical discussion (258e5–259d6n.). The sexual innuendo is discussed below, note 20.

[13] Biographical information in Nails 2002: 232–4. Ph. died in 393.

imprecise sense of the last ten or fifteen years of the fifth century, at which time Ph. would be in his thirties or forties. There are four historical indications in the dialogue.[14] First, Lysias' brother Polemarchus is still alive (257b3–4); his death at the hands of the Thirty Tyrants in 403 was well known in the fourth century through Lysias' account of it (Lys. 12). Second, Isocrates, born in 436, is old enough to have begun his rhetorical studies (279a4–7) but "still young" (νέος ἔτι, 279a1). The reference is sufficiently vague to suit any time after roughly 418, when Isocrates would be eighteen, until perhaps 403 when he began his career as a professional prose-writer (279a1–2n., a6–7n.). Yet, thirdly, Lysias' status as the leading rhetorical writer of the day (228a2, 278c1–2) suggests a time not much, if at all, before 403. Lysias' (genuine) surviving speeches all stem from 403 and after, when Athenian democracy was restored and his career flourished.[15] Finally, a politician's supposed attack on Lysias for being a speechwriter also makes sense at the time of the democratic restoration or shortly thereafter (257c5n.).

Plato chose Lysias to represent the rhetorical culture that Ph. admires and S. opposes because Lysias was the preeminent rhetorical artist and most prolific speechwriter before Isocrates, Plato's own rival (278e4–279b3n.).[16] Lysias solidified his reputation by circulating his speeches in written form, which also anticipated Isocrates and made Lysias an appropriate target for Plato's critique of written texts. Further, Lysias was connected to S.'s circle through his brother Polemarchus and father Cephalus, both of whom have memorable roles in the *Republic* (1.327b–336a; Lysias is also present but says nothing, 1.328b). Plato was interested less in historical precision than in a scenario that from the perspective of forty or fifty years later was plausible, while allowing him to create the fictional encounter that served his philosophical purposes.[17] Plato evidently expected his readers to have no trouble imagining a conversation between S. and Ph., undisturbed by politics and war, at a time when Polemarchus had turned to philosophy, Isocrates had begun his rhetorical studies but was still young, and Lysias was at the height of his artistry and fame.[18]

Beyond the imprecise dramatic date, Ph.'s status as an adult and potential *erastēs* is evident from Plato's portrayal of him. S. regards Ph. as the most prolific

[14] In addition, the way in which S. refers to Sophocles (d. 406/405) and Euripides (d. 407/406) might suggest that they are alive at the time of the dialogue (268c5, 269a1).

[15] Todd 2007: 12–17. Ancient tradition puts Lysias' birth in 459/458, modern scholarship puts it in the mid 440s (Todd 2007: 10).

[16] Usher 1999: 54–118 on Lysias' artistry and corpus.

[17] Nails 2002: 308–29, Graham 2007 demonstrate Plato's lack of concern for historical precision even in dialogues that have specific dramatic dates.

[18] Two further issues, regarding the presence of Ph. and Lysias in Athens yet external to the dialogue, have been debated: Ph. was exiled in 415 for his role in the profanation of the Eleusinian mysteries (Andoc. 1.15, *IG* I^3 422.229, 426.102) and the date of his return to Athens, possibly not until the amnesty of 403, is unknown; Lysias spent years in Thurii, but the date of his return to Athens is disputed (412/411 according to Dion. Hal. *Lys.* 1). Cf. Dover 1968a: 32–3, 41–3, Nails 2002: 314, Todd 2007: 6–12. Plato ignored these issues; forty or fifty years later they were too vague to matter for the scenario in the dialogue.

facilitator of discourses of his day apart from Simmias of Thebes (242a6–b5), which would only be possible for an adult and which is consistent with Ph.'s easy familiarity with affairs and culture in the dialogue (e.g. 235d6–e2, 243d5–e2, 261b2–6, 273a3–b3). Ph. has a similar status in the *Symposium* (177d, 178a–180b), where, since the *Symposium* is clearly set in 416, the year of Agathon's first victory as a tragic poet (173a), he would be roughly thirty. On the other hand, in the *Protagoras* Ph. is one of the numerous young men who have gathered at Callias' house to attend the sophists (315c). The status of these young men as potential *erōmenoi* is emphasized by remarks on the beauty of Alcibiades and Agathon (309a–b, 315e). The *Protagoras* is set distinctly earlier in the Athenian past than the *Symposium* and the *Phaedrus*,[19] which accords with the adolescent age of all the noteworthy young men who are named, Ph. included.

Ph.'s status in the *Phaedrus* as a potential *erastēs* is emphasized by the three passages where S. speaks of Ph. as Lysias' *erastēs* (236b5, 257b4–5, 279b3). S. is speaking metaphorically, referring to the intensity of Ph.'s enthusiasm for Lysias' rhetorical skill (236b5n.).[20] Yet by means of the *erastēs* metaphor S. encourages Ph. to consider his actions and obligations as a potential *erastēs*. Before the palinode S. casts mutual shame on himself and Ph. for endorsing the crude and selfish *erastai* of the first two speeches (243c1–d1). The restrained and caring *erastēs* of the palinode is the proper model. At the end of the dialogue, having informed themselves about what good discourse consists in and how it can be learned, S. and Ph. agree that they must now convey these insights to their respective (figurative) *erōmenoi*, Isocrates and Lysias, so that they too might progress towards philosophy (278e3–8, 279b2–4). Hence, when S. competes with Lysias for Ph.'s allegiance at the beginning of the dialogue, S. is competing not for a young man and potential *erōmenos*, but for an adult disciple of his art of discourse-composition. S.'s lessons in rhetorical art – with regard to the method of effective persuasion, the concern for the auditor's interests, and the orientation towards philosophy – will allow Ph. to take on the role of *erastēs* properly.[21]

It remains to consider 243e6, Ph.'s response to S.'s request for the imagined young man who is to listen to the palinode (243e4–5). S.'s task in the palinode is not merely to advance Ph.'s rhetorical education. He also wants to move Ph. towards philosophy by engaging him personally in the compelling vision of philosophy's transcendent quest (Introd. 2). To that end, whereas Ph. was a detached spectator of epideictic when listening to Lysias' speech (227c6n., 234c6–235b4) and S.'s first speech (235e3–236b4, 242c7–d1n.), S. seeks to provoke Ph. into listening to the

[19] Before or towards the beginning of the Peloponnesian War; cf. Nails 2002: 310.

[20] The sexual innuendo in the opening scene has a similar import: Ph.'s enthusiasm for Lysias' art is so intense that it seems like sexual infatuation (228b6n., c2n., c2–3n., 229b4–5n.; also 234d3–4). Hence these passages too suggest Ph.'s status as potential *erastēs*.

[21] In the *Lysis* S. gives Hippothales a demonstration in how an *erastēs* should address an *erōmenos* (204b–210e). Hippothales, having recently attained the age of adulthood and taking his first, uncertain steps as an *erastēs*, is much younger than Ph. in the *Phaedrus*.

palinode as an engaged participant (243c2–3n.). Immediately prior to requesting the boy, S. recalls Ph.'s aptitude for facilitating speeches (243e2n.), which is the prominent feature of Ph.'s character (242a6–b5, 261a3n.) and which S. also exploited in regard to his first speech (236b8–237a1). When Ph. responds, "here he is ever right next to you whenever you wish" (243e6), he obliges S. and facilitates the palinode by taking on the role of the imagined young man. Yet the role is no mere role, as S. surely intends, because, like the imagined young man, Ph. faces a choice regarding the direction and thus the welfare of his soul, and the speech addresses that choice for both of them. S. does not lose sight of the young male auditor as he delivers the palinode (249e2n., 252b1n.), but he focuses more on the *erastēs*' experience of *erōs* and the value of philosophical *erōs* to him (249d4–254e9) than on the benefit to the young man (255a1–257a1). He thereby ensures that Ph., the potential *erastēs* right there before him, reaps the full benefit of his eloquence.

4. THE ART OF PSYCHAGOGIC RHETORIC

Plato is commonly regarded as the inveterate opponent of rhetoric in the foundational dispute between philosophy and rhetoric. The common view is crude because it omits Plato's own distinction between sophistic rhetoric, which he disparages in the *Gorgias* and *Phaedrus*, and the true art of rhetoric, which he broaches in the *Gorgias* (260d1n.) and elucidates in the *Phaedrus*.[22] The common view is misleading because it obscures the nature of Plato's interest in rhetoric as a bridge between philosophy and the rest of the world. Philosophy, understood as the pursuit of wisdom and the realization of that pursuit to the maximum extent possible, is the natural and proper source of guidance for human thought and action in both individuals and communities (*Rep.* 5.473c–d). For philosophy to influence non-philosophers and thereby to benefit them, philosophers must persuade non-philosophers to accept philosophical guidance and must instill in them philosophical values and understanding to the maximum extent possible. That task falls to rhetoric, as evidenced in S.'s encounter with Ph. and elsewhere in Plato's work.[23]

In the inquiry into good discourse conducted by S. and Ph. (259e2–274b6) Plato sets forth how rhetoric can be constituted as a *technē* and how sophistic rhetoric fails as a *technē*. He also indicates how the argument on rhetoric in the *Phaedrus* differs from and complements that in the *Gorgias*.[24]

[22] On the consistency of Plato's view of rhetoric in the *Gorgias* and *Phaedrus*, see Black 1958.

[23] "It is a characteristic Platonic mode of thought to locate the true purpose of some item not in its most basic daily use, but in the highest good that it can help realise" (Sedley 2003: 62 in regard to Platonic etymologizing). Thus Plato intends rhetorical art not for mundane uses such as the lawcourt and assembly, but for the aid it can render philosophy. On Plato's use of rhetoric for educational purposes in the *Republic* and *Laws*, see Yunis 2007a, 2007b.

[24] For a full account of the argument summarized in this section, see Yunis 2009.