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INSPIRATION AND MIMESIS IN PLATO'S CRITICISM OF POETRY

BY

VIVIEN C. PELLIS, B. A. (HONS)

SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEAKIN UNIVERSITY (JUNE, 2001)
I certify that the thesis entitled: INSPIRATION AND MIMESIS IN PLATO'S CRITICISM OF POETRY

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**CHAPTER ONE**  
INTRODUCTION .......................................................................................... 1-21

**CHAPTER TWO**  
INSPIRATION IN PLATO’S CRITICISM OF POETRY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>22-31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ion</td>
<td>31-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apology</td>
<td>44-50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meno</td>
<td>50-60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phaedrus</td>
<td>60-75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laws</td>
<td>75-89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CHAPTER THREE**  
MIMESIS IN PLATO’S CRITICISM OF POETRY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>90-102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic</td>
<td>102-139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laws</td>
<td>139-147</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CHAPTER FOUR**  
DISCUSSION/CONCLUSION ...................................................................... 148-163

**ENDNOTES** ......................................................................................... 164-262

**BIBLIOGRAPHY** ................................................................................... 263-274
ABSTRACT

Plato criticizes poetry in several of his dialogues, beginning with Apology, his first work, and ending with Laws, his last. In these dialogues, his criticism of poetry can be divided into two streams: poetry is criticized for either being divinely inspired, or because it is mimetic or imitative of reality. However, of the dialogues which criticize poetry in these ways, it is not until Laws that Plato mentions both inspiration and mimesis together, and then it is only in a few sentences. Furthermore, nowhere in the dialogues does Plato discuss their relationship. This situation has a parallel in the secondary literature. While much work has been done on inspiration or mimesis in Plato's criticism of poetry, very little work exists which discusses the connection between them. This study examines Plato's treatment - in the six relevant dialogues - of these two poetic elements, inspiration and mimesis, and shows that a relationship exists between them. Both can be seen to relate to two important Socratic-Platonic concerns: the care of the soul and the welfare of the state. These concerns represent a synthesis of Socratic moral philosophy with Platonic political beliefs. In the "inspiration" dialogues, Ion, Apology, Meno, Phaedrus and Laws, poetic inspiration can affect the Socratic exhortation which considers the care of the individual soul. Further, as we are told in Apology, Crito and Gorgias, it is the good man, the virtuous man - the one who cares for his soul - who also cares for the welfare of the state. Therefore, in its effect on the individual soul, poetic inspiration can also indirectly affect the state. In the "mimesis" dialogues, Republic and Laws, this same exhortation, on the care of the soul, is posed, but it is has now been rendered into a more Platonic form - as either the principle of specialization - the "one man, one job" creed of Republic, which advances the harmony between the three elements of the soul, or as the concord between reason and emotion in Laws. While in Republic, mimesis can damage the tripartite soul's delicate balance, in Laws, mimesis in poetry is used to promote the concord. Further, in both these dialogues, poetic mimesis can affect the welfare of the state. In Republic, Socrates notes that states are but a product of the individuals of which they are composed. Therefore, by affecting the harmony of the individual soul, mimesis can then undermine the harmony of the state, and an imperfect political system, such as a timarchy, an oligarchy, a democracy, or a tyranny, can result. However, in Laws, when it is harnessed by the philosophical lawgivers, mimesis can assist in the concord between the rulers and the ruled, thus serving the welfare of the state. Inspiration and mimesis can thus be seen to be related in their effect on the education of both the individual, in the care of the soul, and the state, in its welfare. Plato's criticism of poetry, therefore, which is centred on these two features, addresses common Platonic concerns: in education, politics, ethics, epistemology and psychology.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis is at the end of a long and winding road. Although many people have enabled me to reach this point, and I am immensely grateful for all their help, there are four, very special, people, to whom I would like to dedicate this work: my parents, George (1920-1997) and Theodora Cosopodiots, my nana, Maude Cosopodiots (1900-1981), and my husband, Sergio Pollis. These people have all played an important part in enabling this work to come to fruition. Firstly, to my parents. I thank them for imparting to me their love of learning, for bringing me up in a home that was always warm and loving and replete with books, and for their unstinting support for my educational goals. I was lucky enough to have an excellent role model in my mother, who, as a mature-age student, demonstrated to me, and to my siblings, that learning is a life-long pursuit. But this was no less true for my Dad. I missed him greatly while writing this thesis. I would very much have liked him to have seen this work completed. Secondly, to my nana. I will always associate her with my academic pursuits. All through my schooling, until I left my parents' home, she would be sure to wake me, at my request, with a cup of coffee, to study before exams or important tutorials. I miss her care and her unconditional grandmotherly love, which made all those years so much better. Thirdly, to my darling husband, Serge. He has seen me through nearly all of my tertiary schooling, and has never flagged in his enthusiasm and support for my studies. He has read Euripides and Plato aloud with me, has photostated articles and brought me books, has listened to my ideas, read what I wrote each day and has proof-read these thesis chapters and endnotes. He has always, always, been there for me. For all these things, and so much more, I thank him. I will never be able to thank these four people enough, nor explain the magnitude of their importance in my life.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Plato criticizes poetry in several of his dialogues. The dialogues in which this criticism occurs were written over a span of several decades, and range from Apology 1, which is believed to be his first work, to Laws 2, his last dialogue, which was incomplete at the time of his death. In these dialogues, his criticism of poetry can be divided into two streams: poetry is criticized for either being divinely inspired, or because it is mimetic or imitative of reality. However, of the dialogues which criticize poetry in these ways, it is not until Laws that Plato mentions both inspiration and mimesis together, and then it is only in a few sentences. Further, nowhere in the dialogues does Plato discuss their relationship.

This situation has a parallel in the secondary literature. While much work has been done on inspiration or mimesis in Plato’s criticism of poetry, and also on both inspiration and mimesis, albeit as separate issues, very little work exists which discusses the connection between them. In the less than two dozen studies which deal with this topic, the relationship between the two is of secondary importance to the study at hand, and is often dealt with accordingly - sometimes even perfunctorily. Given the massive amount of literature which exists on Plato’s criticism of poetry in general, this is surprising. Therefore, when considering the paucity of material in the secondary literature, it would appear that a full length study in which the Platonic dialogues are examined in order to determine whether a relationship exists between the two poetic elements of inspiration and mimesis would not be untoward. Such a study may reveal novel insights into Plato’s criticism of poetry.

In these studies, while some consider the themes to be compatible, others see inspiration and mimesis as irreconcilable concepts, with some critics citing the dialogue Phaedrus as a laudatory account of inspiration, and Republic as damning of mimesis. As Murray notes, “(o)n the face of it, the notion of the poet as an inspired interpreter of the gods would seem to be incompatible with that of a poet as a feeble imitator of appearances”. But if these two themes are seen to conflict, then Plato’s criticism of poetry cannot be deemed consistent throughout his dialogues.

Whether or not such a relationship is found to exist, the consistency with which Plato criticizes poetry could then be addressed, as could, in turn, its relevance to his overall philosophy. This study, therefore, examines Plato’s treatment of the two poetic elements, inspiration and mimesis, in his criticism of poetry. The respective treatments of inspiration and mimesis are then analyzed to determine if a relationship exists. The thesis of this study is that such a relationship does indeed exist, and that it provides a coherence to Plato’s criticism of poetry. For the purposes of this Introduction, Plato’s criticism of poetry will only be discussed in general terms; specific details of his criticism, which concern inspiration and mimesis and their possible relationship, will be referred to later in the analyses of the dialogues, and in the Discussion.

The role and importance of poets and poetry in Athenian society at the time of Plato greatly differs from their current position in the Western world. Therefore, it is first necessary to examine the Greek poets in their historical and social context in order
to understand properly the reasons for Plato's treatment of inspiration and mimesis in his criticism of poetry. The poets must therefore be seen separately from their portrayal by Plato. As Guthrie notes, although we may criticize poetry, including Plato's treatment of it, from our modern perspective, that is not to understand Plato. We see poetry now as a form of artistic expression, as something pleasurable, and so as entertainment. While poetry was also considered in this fashion by the Greeks, it was mainly regarded in educational terms - as the didactic tool of the polis. In order to understand the poets and their role in society, one must consider two points: the manner in which they were regarded by the polis, and the use to which their works were placed. In doing so, we may also then understand why Plato sees them as a threat to both the individual and society.

The ancient Greeks believed that it was the gods, usually the Muses, but sometimes Apollo, who gave the poets the gift of inspiration. The words issuing from the poet were thus thought to have come from the gods. Being both omnipresent and omniscient, the gods were also able to supply the poet with that which he lacked - the knowledge of all things, through all time. As Heraclitus affirms, "human nature has no power of understanding; but the divine nature has it." The Muses, therefore, gave to the poets not only the ability to create, but also information to aid them in their creations. This belief was reinforced very early in Greek literature by Hesiod and Homer. It is likely that this divine origin of poetry attributed to the estume with which the poets were held in Greek society, and gave credence to their writings. The content of these writings, which had their source in the ancient legends of gods and heroes, were greatly familiar to the Greek audiences, and were the means by which the traditional religious and ethical values of the society were communicated to the people. Moreover, as Burckhardt states, poetry "was no entertainment for a bored and cultured elite, but...a great festive event for the whole citizenry." Poetry, which was written to be sung (and sometimes danced), not read, extended beyond the tragedies and comedies familiar to modern day readers. It could be sung by soloists (monodies), or by choruses. The choral performances, which incorporated such poetic forms as paeans - songs dedicated to Apollo - dithyrambs - songs dedicated to Dionysus - encomia - songs of praise - and epinicia - songs of victory - presented a "public" persona, and represented the voice of the community in civic, religious and political terms.

Although education in Athenian society was the concern of the private individual, as no public education existed, unlike in Sparta, both children and young adults were still expected to undertake gymnastics training, to know their letters, and also to have a working knowledge of poetry and music, which included singing and dancing. In order for one to be thought educated, these latter four subjects, which were collectively termed "music" or mousike (μουσική) - that is, that which is the realm of the Muses - were deemed necessary for study. The Sophist Protagoras, in Plato's dialogue of the same name, explains the reasons for this emphasis on poetry in the curriculum:

"...the children, when they have learnt their letters and are getting to understand the written word as before they did only the spoken, are furnished with works of good poets to read as they sit in class, and are made to learn them off by heart: here they meet with many admonitions, many descriptions and praises and eulogies of good men in times past, that the boy in envy may imitate (μιμητοι) them and yearn to become even as they."
In Xenophon's *Symposium*, a young man, Niceratus, confirms this view, in stating that his father, concerned that he become a "good man", insisted that he learn by heart the entire works of Homer 20. Therefore, the works of the poets were studied, not so much as literature, but primarily for their ethical qualities, in that they provided the young with moral examples that they could admire and so emulate 21.

The hold of poetry on the public imagination in ancient Greece was such, that even when the old teaching methods had begun to be replaced by newer ones, those primarily identified with the Sophists, poetry continued to feature largely in the curriculum 22. Indeed, some consider the Sophists to be the inheritors of the poets' educational mantle 23. However, the manner in which the Sophists utilized poetry in their teachings often appeared to be in order to advertise their skill with words 24. Protagoras sees one's facility with language to be of prime importance: "the greatest part of a man's education is to be skilled in the matter of verse; to be able to apprehend, in the utterances of the poets, what has been rightly and what wrongly composed, and to know how to distinguish them and account for them when questioned". An example of the Sophistic use of literary criticism can also be seen in *Protagoras*, in which Plato, with gentle humour, depicts Socrates and Protagoras in a discussion of the interpretation of a poem by Simonides 25. Wry though this depiction may be, it should be noted that Plato too, often uses poetry to make a point in argument, to draw an analogy, or simply to quote traditional wisdom with which he agrees 26. Plato devotes much space in his dialogues to analyzing specific passages of Homer and the other poets. Furthermore, Socrates and his antagonists all appear to be thoroughly familiar with them 27.

Not only the young, but adults were also taught and thought to be morally edified by the writings of the poets. As Aeschylus remarks to Euripides, in Aristophanes' *Frogs*: "(s)choolboys have a master to teach them, grownups have the poets. We have a duty to see that what we teach them is right and proper" 28. Adults were therefore expected to be well versed in the poets so that they could then teach the children. Participation in choral performances also played a large role in adults' lives, who functioned as performers and teachers. By training the children in song and dance, adults also reinforced the ethical teachings of the poets. These performances, according to Goldhill, in his work on civic ideology and the Great Dionysia, the major Athenian dramatic festival, should not be presumed to be merely entertainment, or only religious ritual, but rather, are best understood as part of a social, political and theatrical phenomenon in which the traditional values of the *polis* are displayed, lauded and so transmitted to the populace 29. Thus, the performance of poetry, in the form of choruses, was also seen as an educative force. Indeed, Plato endorses this notion in *Laws*, where he states that one who is without such training can be regarded as an *apaideutos achorvetos* (*απαίδευτος αχορβετός*), an uneducated man 30.

But poetry is also believed to have taught more than ethics. It has been said that lacking a compendium of sacred writings, such as the Bible, the works of poets such as Hesiod and Homer were as close to a "bible" that the Greeks had. Havelock suggests that the works of the poets originally functioned as oral encyclopaedias, which contained social and cultural norms, as well as commonsense wisdom and factual information, and were handed down, in the form of songs, from one generation to another 31. Niceratus, in Xenophon's *Symposium*, agrees that poems contain "information about practically
every aspect of human affairs”. As he continues, “if any one...wants to become a good estate manager or politician or general...let him give his attention to me, because I have all this knowledge” 32. However, in Republic, Plato criticizes the belief that poets are polymaths who are able to teach the populace such things 33.

Therefore, despite Plato’s objections, the poets were seen by many to be the teachers of society in a variety of ways. But in Athenian society, the identity of the individual was inextricably bound to his role as a citizen. This meant that there was little distinction between public and private morality; the law of the state thus represented all virtue 34. To teach the individual was to teach the citizen; and being a citizen involved an obligation - to care for the welfare of the state. As Pericles declares: “We do not say that the man who takes no interest in politics is a man who minds his own business; we say that he has no business here at all” 35. In Aristophanes’ Frogs, when he is asked by Aeschylus what are the qualities that one looks for in a poet, Euripides replies, “Technical skill - and he should teach a lesson, make people into better citizens” 36. It is the poets, after all, who Dionysus seeks out in Hades in order to save the city of Athens from ruin 37.

Thus the poets, as the teachers of society, were, in their works, expected to imbue the populace with a sense of unity and civic virtue. As Goldhill suggests, the dramatic performance was connected to the projection and promotion of civic duties and civic self-image 38. And, as has been noted, the citizens’ participation in these performances, as choral members, further reinforced these beliefs. Therefore, when Plato criticizes the poets, he is not only criticizing education, he is also criticizing the state. When, in Epistle VII, Plato determines that the state must be changed, in that “there will be no cessation from evils until either the class of those who are right and true philosophers attains political supremacy, or else the class of those who hold power in the States becomes, by some dispensation of heaven, really philosophic” 39, it follows that the educational system must also be changed. Being unwilling to achieve this through political means after the execution of Socrates - from without - Plato, in Republic and Laws, seeks to achieve it from within, through education. However, if one is to rehabilitate the state and so the educational system, one must also rehabilitate the individuals who compose that state. A society must not only be composed of individuals who are physically healthy, but also morally healthy. In both these dialogues, Plato advocates a state-run system of education. However, in order for this to be implemented, it is first necessary to re-evaluate the role that poetry plays in education. The poetry which is used must therefore be suitable for teaching one how to be a virtuous individual and citizen. But Plato deems most existing poetry unsuitable. A change to the role in which the poets and poetry played in society and education was therefore required.

This discussion of the role of the poets in ancient Greece and the uses to which their poetry was placed was undertaken in order to understand better the historical context of Plato’s treatment of poetry. Poetry was seen to feature largely in the education of both children and adults. Its function was therefore didactic, in that it transmitted or reinforced the traditional values of the polis. Further, by teaching one how to be a good man, poetry also instructed one on how to be a good citizen. Thus poetry dealt with ethical issues, not aesthetic ones. Accordingly, as Plato’s criticism of inspiration and mimesis in poetry depends on these contemporary views and practises, it
can be seen to address moral concerns - on whether it is good and right for the well being of both the individual and the society - and not ones which concern it as art. Therefore, although poetry may be art, Plato is not criticizing it on those grounds. Rather, what Plato believes is that poetry is neither good nor right in that it greatly affects the individual and the state in ways which are antithetical to the pursuit of harmony and justice.

But despite an awareness of these features of poetry in Plato’s time, his criticism of the poets may still appear not only harsh, but alien, to modern day readers. This is particularly relevant to his censorship of poetry in Republic, and, to a lesser extent, in Laws. It is true that we do not consider it necessary to censor Homer now, but that is because we no longer see his heroes as appropriate ethical models. But if instead we see the poetry of Plato’s time as comparable in its influence to that of the mass media of television, cinema and video of our own age, as Nehamas contends, then Plato’s criticism becomes more understandable. As Guthrie notes, “if every child were made familiar with stories like the castration of Ouranos by Kronos, it is not too far-fetched to compare the protests made nowadays against the portrayal of violence and sex in the cinema and on television”. Plato’s harsh treatment of poetry may no longer seem as foreign when one considers the widespread conviction in contemporary Western society that products of that society, such as cinema, literature, fine art and sculpture - and even science - should correspond to prevailing moral, political and religious standards.

Finally, in a discussion of the historical and social context of Greek poetry, one should also consider Plato’s personal response. It can be seen from several of the dialogues that despite his criticism, Plato is not, as has been previously noted, unfamiliar with poetry, nor is he unaware of its charms. Indeed, as Nehamas states, one could even say that he is “acutely, even painfully aware of its beauty”. Halliwell believes that although there were probably “biographical factors at work here” - an allusion to Plato’s early career as a poet - it is likely that he was influenced by Socrates’ respect for poetry; this can be seen in his dialogues as a characteristic of his Socratic personae up until Republic. However, as he writes in Republic, poetry can corrupt even “the very best of us”. Therefore, Plato continues, no matter how difficult it is to do so, given the emphasis on poetry and the respect for its tradition that is inbred in one by Greek education, one must endeavour to follow the example of the lover who renounces a passion which is doing him no good - for despite one’s love of poetry, one must not honour a man (the poet Homer) above truth.

Plato criticizes poetry in two ways: as the product of inspiration, and because it is mimetic. But why does he incorporate these two features of poetry into his criticism? This question is not being asked in order to determine the parameters of these terms - for example, inspiration, as traditionally defined, involves elements of ecstasy, prophecy and so on - that will be discussed later in the study, when it will be ascertained how Plato’s usage differs from the historical form. Rather, the question presented is why does he choose these two features as his main criticisms of the poetic process, instead of others which may also define the poetry of his time, such as rhythm, metre or content?

There appear to be two reasons for his choice. In having singled out these two features of poetry to criticize, one assumes that Plato is identifying inspiration and mimesis as being salient to the Greeks of his time; that is, that they are the two most
readily identifiable features of Greek poetry extant. Therefore, the first reason for his choice of inspiration and mimesis would be that they are both highly recognizable features of poetry, which would enable his arguments to be rendered more understandable and so more pertinent to the poetry-loving, theatre-going Athenian public. But were these features considered as such? Murray and Sperdui both confirm that inspiration was a readily identifiable feature of poetry. The notion of the inspired poet was established very early in Greek poetry, having been handed down from mythological sources. It is possible that this notion began as an honouring of a creative individual whose talents, by entertaining and thereby enhancing the life of those in the community, enabled him to stand out from the masses. For the early Greek poet, whose creations were composed orally, talent was necessarily coupled with memory. As has been noted, the gift of inspiration was considered to have been granted to the poets by the Muses. Their prodigious ability to memorize, however, was attributed to Mnemosyne, the goddess of memory, and the mother of the Muses. Sperdui notes that “whenever the corpus of knowledge must be presented in the memory, we discover that it is usually couched in poetic form, and thus knowledge, poetry and memory are inseparable in the oral stages of societies.” This combination of divine gifts enabled the poets to carry out their two traditional functions: “to hymn the immortals and the glorious deeds of heroes.” This accorded them their reputations as “makers of verses” and “givers of fame”. However, with the development of writing, as the oral elements necessary for the composition of poetry were discarded, the role of memory became less important to the poets. It appears that with the advent of writing, Mnemosyne’s gift became assimilated under the more general heading of inspiration, and both were then attributed to the Muses. Thus, inspiration, and its associated feature, memory, were recognized by the Greeks from the earliest times to be synonymous with poets and poetry, for it was by virtue of these divine gifts that the truth of their words were guaranteed, and that their role as the teachers of the polis was delineated - as those who conserved the experiences of the past and transmitted them to others for posterity as poetry - at once seen as entertainment and knowledge. However, that which allows inspiration to be seen as a highly recognizable feature of poetry, is also that which Plato considers renders poetry dangerous to both the individual and society.

As with inspiration, it is being posited in this study that mimesis was also seen as a highly recognizable feature of poetry by Plato’s time, and that this was one of the reasons for his choice of it as an aspect of poetry to criticize. Poetic mimesis, despite the prevalent view that Plato and Aristotle were the originators in its use as a term as that which characterizes art, is known to have existed prior to Plato. Indeed, several scholars believe that the term, as related to art, may have had Pythagorean origins. This is indicated by Aristotle in his Metaphysics. Koller and Else, while not agreeing on the original sense of the word mimesis, both determine that the post-Pythagorean usage of the term in a way relevant to art, was connected to performance, such as in mime, music and dance as well as in poetry. Webster also reports of its employment in relation to art, or even more specifically, to poetry, in the Hippocratic writings, and in Herodotus, Aristophanes and Euripides - all of which pre-date Plato’s use. This suggests that at the time when Plato wrote his dialogues in which he criticizes poetry, the use of the term as it relates to poetic mimesis may have already had common currency. This is what
would be expected given its use in tragedies and comedies, and further, given their
popularity and the sheer number of people who must have attended such performances.
Therefore, one may assume that mimesis, as with inspiration, was also easily identified
by the people of Plato’s time as an element of the poetic process. Thus Plato chooses to
criticize poetry by using these two features, because he finds them to be not only
inextricably linked to art, but also to be clearly identified with poetry in the public’s
imagination.

The second reason for choosing inspiration and mimesis may have been because
of the pleasure that Plato believes these aspects of poetry gave to people. This reason
appears akin to the first in that it also relates to the influence and recognizability of these
features of poetry. As has been mentioned, Plato himself appears not entirely immune to
the charms of poetry, and even more specifically, to the charms of inspired and mimetic
poetry. In the character of Socrates, Plato is, perhaps, not only speaking for the general
populace, but also for himself, in his discussion of the pleasure that these features
impart.

The effect of inspiration on an audience can be seen in Ion, when the rhapsode
explains the impact of his oration of Homer: “(they are) crying and turning awestruck
eyes upon me and yielding to the amazement of my tale” 61. Socrates explains this effect
as being analogous to the influence of the Heraclean lodestone - that is, like a magnetic
effect - in that the inspiration of the poet, which has been granted to him by a god, is
transmitted to the rhapsode and actor, and then finally to the audience. The god, through
the whole series, thus “draws the souls of men whithersoever he pleases, making the
power of one depend on the other” 64. With this analogy, Plato is showing that not only
the poet, but also the rhapsode and the audience are, in turn, effected or “possessed” by
divine inspiration. The expression of emotion on behalf of the audience is thus due to
inspiration. But is the experience of this emotion pleasurable? In Republic, Plato, as
Socrates, argues that it is:

“I think you know that the very best of us, when we hear Homer or some
other of the makers of tragedy imitating (μιμούμενον) one of the heroes
who is in grief, and is delivering a long tirade in his lamentations or
chanting and beating his breast, feel pleasure, and abandon ourselves and
accompany the representation with sympathy and eagerness, and we praise
as an excellent poet the one who most strongly affects us in this way” 65.

Plato well knows that we desire to experience vicariously such powerful emotion;
but then so does his character Ion, who, although a simpleton, is nevertheless astute
enough to realize that he must pay attention to his audience’s emotions, since the
pleasure that results affords him financial reward 66. In the same passage in Republic, it
can also be seen that the mimetic expression of those emotions brings with it its own
pleasure. Indeed, we are conscious of how these “mimetic and dulcet” strains of poetry
can weave a “spell” over us, clouding our judgement of right and wrong 67. Further, the
“mimetic” and “dulcet” poetry of Republic is reminiscent of the inspired “sweets”
which the poets culm from “honey-dropping fountains...like the bees” in Ion 68. According
to Harriott, honey was often employed to symbolize the sweetness of the poets’ works,
and its use is common in Pindar, Hesiod, Homer and the other Greek poets. But such
symbolism also expresses the pleasure and delight to be gained in these works, in both their inspired and mimetic aspects. Thus Plato, in these and other dialogues, establishes that the pleasure that one experiences with the inspirational or mimetic elements of poetry is due to the emotions that they engender.

As has been discussed, poetry, as the main teaching tool of society, reinforces its traditional values and mores. It was thus considered by the Greeks to be good for both the individual and society. Poetry also gives pleasure, via the emotion engendered by its elements of inspiration and mimesis. Therefore, by giving pleasure, inspiration and mimesis reinforce the hedonistic belief that poetry is good. But Plato believes that the pleasure thus gained can be harmful, in that one is then apt to make judgements of right and wrong based on this standard of pleasure, rather than by the standard of the useful, which is based on reason. Since Plato wishes to change the manner in which poetry is taught and viewed in society in order to change the educational system and so the very structure of society, he chooses to criticize those elements in poetry which generate pleasure and so allow it to be thought good.

It has been ascertained then, that both inspiration and mimesis, the basis for his criticism of poetry, were not only readily recognized by the public as elements of poetry, but were also the features which made poetry pleasurable. Both reasons, therefore, could allow for a more powerful impact with the poetry-loving Greeks than would otherwise have been possible if Plato had chosen more technical aspects of the poetic process, such as rhythm or metre, to criticize. Similarly, even though Plato also criticizes the specific content of poetry, as he does in Republic, content is not, unlike inspiration and mimesis, an enduring or universal feature of poetry, which would enable the criticism to transcend current beliefs and practices. As such, a criticism of poetry based on content alone would not have had such a resonance with the public, and, because of its transient nature, would not have been able to provide Plato with a foundation for his educational reforms.

As has been noted, the literature in which the Platonic dialogues are examined in order to determine whether a relationship between the two poetic elements of inspiration and mimesis exists, is not extensive. Those studies which do examine the possibility of a relationship between them, fall into one of two broad categories: studies which do not believe inspiration and mimesis to be related or compatible, and studies which do believe them to be related.

Some authors in the first group believe that because the treatment of poetic inspiration and mimesis in Plato’s dialogues is uneven, that his criticism of poetry is also inconsistent. Hackforth and Tigerstedt see the manner in which inspiration and mimesis are portrayed as conflicting. Both believe that when Plato discusses poetry as inspiration, as in Phaedrus, the account is one of praise, whereas in Republic, when poetry is discussed as being mimetic, the account is severely critical. Thus these authors judge the two themes to be irreconcilable. Similarly, Schaper, although not seeing Plato’s rendition of inspiration and mimesis in the same manner as in the Hackforth and Tigerstedt dichotomy, does still refer to them as “two totally distinct conceptions of art”. Further, she states that the difficulties in maintaining two such conflicting notions of poetry cause Plato, in Republic, to treat all art as mimesis and so ignore the inspirational aspects.

Pöhlmann, while acknowledging inspiration and mimesis to be opposing notions
which are in themselves incompatible, also states that there is no contradiction between the doctrines of mimesis and enthusiasm with respect to the assessment of poetry. Thus while he considers inspiration and mimesis to be related, he portrays it as an unnatural pairing, and hence the reason for his inclusion in this first group. His study is less an inquiry into the relationship between inspiration and mimesis in the Platonic dialogues on poetry, and more one on the nature of poetic inspiration in Plato, with specific reference to Ion. Although it is never made clear by Pöhlmann why this is so, he believes inspiration and mimesis to be poetic concepts which are, from the outset, incompatible, and so queries their unlikely philosophical alliance in Plato. He notes that Plato’s many comments concerning poetry revolve around these two opposing ideas, which are maintained, for the most part, separately in the dialogues. Indeed, it is not until Laws that they are associated, where it is then done in a capricious manner. Should one, he asks, conclude from this that Plato’s relationship to poetry is in itself contradictory? Or is the poet in Plato at conflict with the philosopher? Pöhlmann attempts to answer these questions by tracing through the dialogues in which poetic inspiration is discussed, arguing that from Ion, through Apology, Meno and Phaedrus, a gradual transformation in Plato’s use of inspiration occurs, until eventually, in Laws, it resembles the manner in which mimesis is employed; thus he believes that Plato now renders the two concepts compatible, in that both are used to denigrate poetry.

Tatarkiewicz, while noting the contrast in Plato’s use of inspiration and mimesis, argues that this is only a mistaken impression. Although it may seem that Plato is not in agreement with himself when, in Republic, he criticizes the baseness of mimetic art and compares poetry to painting, and then, in Phaedrus, he praises poetry in his description of it as a “noble frenzy”, this is not so. Rather, Tatarkiewicz argues, there is a cultural reason for this apparent discrepancy in Plato. Poetry, Tatarkiewicz believes, was not considered to be one of the arts by the Greeks, in that it was not a product of “general rules, but of individual ideas, not of routine, but of creativeness, not of skill, but of inspiration”. Thus while the sculptor could be considered to be an artisan, a technician, the inspired poet was not. The activities of one are merely human, the other’s, in contrast, are directed by the gods. However, Tatarkiewicz believes that there are two kinds of poetry to which Plato refers: one which is inspired, and can thus not be deemed an art, and one which is like the plastic arts - artisanal or technical, and which employs mimesis. Therefore, Plato is actually criticizing the lower, mimetic poet, who is akin to the painter, while simultaneously praising the inspired poet. Although Tatarkiewicz’s explanation may account for the seeming difference in Plato’s treatment of inspiration and mimesis in his criticism of poetry, by allowing for two types of poetry, one of which is inspired, and one of which employs mimesis, his explanation is also denying that a relationship exists between the two poetic features - instead, Tatarkiewicz sees them as separate qualities of different types of poetry. Partee also sees inspiration and mimesis as separate and so unrelated: “(a) an agent of the Muse, the poet pours out beautiful words. Yet when relying on his own ability, the poet produces imitations of one sort or another” 82. Therefore, in Partee’s determination, inspiration and mimesis cannot occur simultaneously - one is either inspired or not inspired: and in the latter case, one must resort to mimesis.

Else believes that even though in Laws Plato proposes to regulate all literature
through censorship 84, the conflict between poetry and philosophy, to which he refers in
Republic 85, is not so much resolved as accommodated, in that the emotional power of
poetry is harnessed by philosophy as a tool which aids in the transmission of the ethos
of the city and its rulers. However, Else states that when one considers the famous
passage from Laws where the two elements, inspiration and mimesis are brought
together in the Platonic dialogues for the first and last time, the "contradictions loom
larger than ever". Further, according to Else, there appears to be no systematic attempt
on Plato's part to resolve them 86. This quotation, which is cited many times in this
literature, refers to an old saying that

"...whenever a poet is seated on the Muses' tripod, he is not in his senses,
but resembles a fountain, which gives free course to the upward rush of
water; and, since his art consists in imitation (τες τεχνης ουςες
μιμησεως) he is compelled often to contradict himself, when he creates
characters of contradictory moods; and he knows not which of these
contradictory utterances is true" 87.

Else believes that even though inspiration causes the poet to be but a passive
instrument of the Muses, his art of mimesis causes him to contradict himself, because
"he imitates characters of all sorts without knowing which of their views may be true
and which false" 88. Inspiration, therefore, is not seen here as a guarantee of truth, but
rather, as "no more than a certain persuasiveness or plausibility in imitation". That is,
inspiration is only that which allows the imitation of the poet to be made intelligible or
convincing to his audience. Therefore, when considering Else's interpretation of this
selection, two alternative ways of regarding inspiration present themselves: firstly, the
gods may tell lies, as suggested in the proem to Hesiod's Theogony 89; or secondly, the
gods may tell the truth, as Socrates declares in Book III of Republic 90. However, in
Else's rendering, the gods use man as a conduit, but because man is flawed in his
capacity to understand the gods' meaning, their message is transformed, and so the
poetry that results may not necessarily be the truth 91. Verdenius, agreeing with this
latter alternative, states that "a poem, though its origin lies beyond human control, does
not mechanically produce a divine message, but it is the result of a contact in which
divine as well as human activities are involved. Interpretation, the human aspect of the
process of artistic creation, is easily attended by misunderstanding" 92. As Tigerstedt
notes, according to this view, poetic inspiration is "a sort of collaboration between God
and man, anything objectionable in the poet's work being due to the human inability to
transmit the divine message pure and undiluted" 93. Verdenius argues that these
"misunderstandings" occur because of the poet's unfamiliarity with the subject matter
which is presented to him by the Muse. This notion is suggested in Socrates' assertion
in Timaeus that "the imitative tribe will imitate with most ease and success the things
amidst which it has been reared, whereas it is hard for any man to imitate well in action
what lies outside the range of his rearing, and still harder in speech" 94. Therefore,
according to Else and Verdenius, when the poet attempts to express, by mimesis, what
the Muses have given to him by inspiration, he can only utilize his own limited sensual
experience, and this results in a message which is garbled.

It follows from Else and Verdenius's arguments that inspiration and mimesis are
in a relationship of sorts, in that they function together as a form of communication,
where inspiration, the message, is divine, and mimesis is the human mechanism by which that divine message is (wrongly) transmitted. If this is so, then the argument would be able to support both Socrates' contention in Republic that the gods do not lie, as well as Plato's criticism of the poets as having no knowledge. It is not that the gods lie, it is that the poets, who are their channel of communication, cannot translate them. Therefore, the explanations in both of these studies indicate that inspiration and mimesis are actually working at cross-purposes with each other.

In this first group of studies, inspiration and mimesis, as the features of poetry which Plato criticizes, are found to be unrelated or incompatible. They are either in conflict, as in Hackett and Tigris's studies, or they are regarded as separate accounts of poetry, and, as such, are independent of each other, as in Tatarkiewicz and Partee's studies. Therefore, Plato's criticism of poetry, according to these writers, cannot function as a coherent whole. In Else and Verdenius' assessment of Plato's criticism of poetry, although they believe inspiration and mimesis to be related, they see the relationship between the two features to be dysfunctional. Pohlmann's study presents a variation on this, in that a relationship between the two features is also seen to exist, but it is one which is forced on them by Plato. In these cases then, Plato's criticism of poetry remains coherent, but the process is flawed. However, it could be argued that that is why these two features were chosen by him as criticisms of poetry and the poetic process.

The second group of studies - those which do believe inspiration and mimesis to be related - can be further divided, into three subsets: those authors who believe that inspiration and mimesis are related with regard to epistemology 98, those who see the relationship in terms of role playing or impersonation, and those who see that inspiration and mimesis in some way work together as artistic communication.

Several authors contend that a relationship between inspiration and mimesis in Plato's criticism of poetry exists, and believe that this relationship concerns the poet's lack of real knowledge 96. As Murray states, when Plato uses mimesis in the dialogues in the sense of impersonation 97, it is consistent with his criticism of inspiration, in dialogues such as Ion, in that both indicate the poet's lack of knowledge: "in both cases the poet does not know what he is doing, and is therefore incapable of judging his productions...Even the concept of the poet as imitator of insubstantial appearances, explored in Book 10, is consistent with the idea of inspiration to the extent that it denies the poet knowledge" (my italics) 97. These authors believe that in all the dialogues which concern both of these features, Plato is arguing that the poet has no knowledge of the truth, and that this is what Plato "consistently attacks, whether that attack is veiled in the ambiguous language of praise, as in the Ion and Phaedrus, or is more explicitly hostile as in the Republic" 99. However, as Rosen notes, by declaring the poets to be ignorant, this does not mean that Plato is denying them their great gifts, but rather, is confirming that "his concern with poetry, as in all the dialogues, is epistemological" 100.

In denying the poet's knowledge, Plato's account is at odds with the historical and literary record, which shows the poets as teachers and learned men, sophos aner (σοφὸς ανήρ), whose task in society was to teach people how to live well or virtuously, as individuals and as citizens of the State 101. For Plato, knowledge, that is, true knowledge, is knowledge of the good. Plato argues that a craftsman needs a particular sort of knowledge in order to work at his trade. However, if one is to excel at it,
knowledge is needed of what constitutes the good for that task. As doing something well constitutes happiness or *eudaimonia* (ἐὐδαιμονία), knowledge of the good not only allows one to function well, but also to live well. Similarly, moral knowledge is needed in order to live a life. However, if one is to lead a good life, one needs knowledge of the good. But if one does not have knowledge, then one cannot teach others 102. Therefore, the poet’s lack of knowledge of the good, prevents them from teaching others how to lead a good life. Thus Plato in his criticism of inspiration and *mimesis* in poetry is actually challenging the poets’ fundamental role in society as the teacher of the *polis*.

Yates believes that in his criticism of poetry, Plato uses “clusters of imagery which center around the ideas of inspiration and *mimesis*” 103 in order to describe the difference between the poet and the philosopher. Further, in both his criticism of inspiration and *mimesis*, Plato denies the poets knowledge 104. However, the philosopher, which Plato depicts in various ways as inspired 105, and as an imitator 106, does have knowledge. Thus, in Yates’s schema, Plato, in his criticism of inspiration and *mimesis* in poetry, not only denies the poets knowledge - which demonstrates the relationship between the two features - but also uses them both to accentuate the superiority of the philosopher over the poet. Therefore, one can infer from Yates’ work that if the poet, because he lacks the knowledge, is unable to teach the people, then it must be the task of the philosopher, who has that knowledge.

Menza and Ferrari also see a relationship between inspiration and *mimesis* in Plato’s criticism of poetry to exist, but consider the association between them to be related to role-playing 107. That is, they argue that inspiration and *mimesis* are portrayed by Plato as a form of impersonation, in that both enable one to become someone else 108. Menza argues that in important instances in the dialogues, *mimesis* carries the meaning of “impersonation”, and likens this use to possession by a god. In doing so, Menza is drawing a clear connection between inspiration and *mimesis*, since in *Ion*, the poets, when inspired, are referred to by Plato as being possessed - “*entheos*” (ἐνθέος) or “full of the god” 109. According to Menza, this association of inspiration to impersonation is further emphasized by Socrates when he describes how *Ion*, a rhapsode, “acts” out his poetic readings 110, and then again when he is likened to Proteus, the sea god, who is able to change his shape at will 111. Menza sees this connection to role-playing in *Ion* reaffirmed in *Republic*, Book III, where poetry, by its employment of *mimesis*, allows one, in dramatic performance, to play many characters 112. Thus for Menza, both inspiration and *mimesis*, in their respective dialogues, assume the sense of role-playing or impersonation, and by so doing, demonstrate their relationship to one another.

It could be said that Ferrari also believes that inspiration and *mimesis* in Plato’s criticism of poetry are affiliated via a form of role-playing. He notes that since at the time of Plato poetry could mainly be understood in terms of dramatic performance, his criticism of poetry can only be fully appreciated by taking the nature of this performance into account. Indeed, Ferrari believes, it is the very “theatricality” of poetry - that is, the capacity that poetry has for “imaginative identification which inspired performers and satisfied audiences alike employ”, which dominates Plato’s criticism 113. In *Ion*, Socrates describes, using the Megarian stone analogy, the psychological affect on the poet, performer and the audience, which is induced by this process of identification 114.
This effect is not limited to aesthetic concerns, but also has ethical consequences. Ferrari thus considers that Plato’s wish to control and regulate the poets derives from his concern over these possibly harmful consequences of poetry on the ethical lives of the public. Accordingly, Ferrari believes that Plato makes his criticism of poetry a “through and through ethical affair, not an aesthetic affair” 115. In Ion, Ferrari argues, Plato does not discuss this ethical context, but he does “prepare the space into which his theory can grow” in his description of the “magnetic” effect of divine inspiration on the audience 116. In Plato’s later work, Republic, the “fuller” theory evolves - as mimesis or “imitation” 117. Therefore, the concept of identification, which in Ion can be understood as “theatricality”, uses inspiration to attain its ends. In Republic, the same result is achieved via mimesis. Inspiration and mimesis can thus be seen in Ferrari to be related in that they both aid what Plato believes to be the powerful, and potentially dangerous, poetic process of identification. It is suggested that in the later dialogues, the concept of poetic inspiration is transmuted into the larger concept of mimesis, this then allows Plato to address the ethical effects that role-playing may have - on the individual and society.

From an historical perspective, Guthrie also conjectures on the possibility of a connection between inspiration and mimesis, but outside of the Platonic dialogues, in this poetic process of identification or impersonation 118. Guthrie notes, as have others such as Koller and Else, that in ancient Athens, mimesis often referred to acting as well as to imitation, and mimos always meant an actor 119. It was thought that the manner in which an actor prepared for his role was not that he “gets inside it” - as one would say of “Method” acting - but rather, that “it gets inside him” 120, and so the actor becomes someone else. It was thought that this dramatic rendering could then be observed in the actor’s subsequent words and actions. As drama began as a religious ceremony, it was appropriate that the earliest dramatic works were impersonations of the gods. In Dionysian worship, an ecstatic cult, when the leader of a band impersonated or imitated the god of wine, his actions would then be viewed by the other worshippers, “as if the god had entered into him, took possession of him and acted through him” 121. In Guthrie’s historical cum religious account, as in Menza and Ferrari’s analyses of inspiration and mimesis in Plato’s criticism of poetry, mimesis is a form of role-playing, or impersonation, where one takes on the character and/or characteristics of someone else 122. Further, as in Menza’s rendition, the mimetic portrayal is equated with being possessed or inspired by a god. But despite this superficial similarity, there is a difference between Guthrie’s historical account and Menza and Ferrari’s accounts, which are based on the Platonic dialogues. In Menza and Ferrari’s reckoning, both inspiration and mimesis are, respectively, forms of impersonation, and this is the manner in which these two poetic features are related. However, in Guthrie’s telling, the relationship is a two-step process, where the impersonation is achieved by mimesis, and once achieved, takes on the nature of possession or inspiration.

Inspiration and mimesis are also seen by some authors as related in that they work together as a form of communication. Sorbom maintains that inspiration and mimesis can work separately, or together, as artistic communication 123. In Cratylus, mimesis is the manner in which words and ideas are communicated between individuals. This may be achieved by sounds and gestures - behaviour which is similar to that which one is trying to convey 124. However, artistic forms, such as music 125 and painting, may
also use mimesis to communicate. In Ion, however, it is inspiration, not mimesis, which is the medium by which art, as poetry, is communicated by the gods, through the poet and the rhapsode, and hence to the audience. Sorbon does not believe that these two forms of artistic communication discussed by Plato contradict each other. Rather, he suggests that "for Plato, these two ideas could be unified." Whereas the former could be "a mythical description of the experience or state of mind when composing, reciting or listening to literary works of art", the latter could characterize "the means of communication." That is, inspiration and mimesis could thus be linked in what seems to be a two-step process, with inspiration, the first step, generating the emotion involved in the artistic creative process, and mimesis, the second step, being the manner in which the art, and its accompanying emotion, is then communicated by the artist to his patrons. Welton and Schaper also see inspiration and mimesis, working together, as a form of poetic communication. In Welton's proposition, inspiration and mimesis also work step-wise as they do in Sorbon's study. Welton uses Plato's analogy of the Megarian stone in Ion to convey this idea: "(t)his image contains the notion that inspiration involves a kind of participation in something that implies a certain amount of imitation: the iron rings each acquire a power to "imitate" the magnet participating in the force, thus becoming magnets themselves. Poets in the same way, having been inspired, acquire the power to inspire others..." Therefore, for Welton, the poet, in his inspired state, "imitates" the power of the divine inspiration; this then enables him to inspire others. The next link in the chain of poetic communication, Ion, a rhapsode, is now inspired, but must "imitate" the power of inspiration which emanates from the poet, in order to then inspire his audience. Schaper describes a similar progression, where once inspired, the use of mimesis by the poet or the rhapsode allows not only the poetic message, but also the inspired state, to progress to the next link in the chain of communication - a chain which ends with the appreciative audience.

From this review of the literature which deals with the relationship between inspiration and mimesis in Plato's criticism of poetry, it can be seen that the studies fall into two broad categories. The first category includes those studies which do not consider a relationship between the two poetic features to exist, and instead see them as either in conflict, or as separate and unrelated features of Plato's criticism. This category also includes studies which argue that although a relationship may exist between them, it is, in some way, a contrived or dysfunctional one, because the two features are, in themselves, incompatible. Because Plato, in the dialogues in which he criticizes poetry, mainly criticizes it on the grounds that it is either divinely inspired or that it is mimetic or imitative of reality, these studies, in determining that a relationship does not exist between inspiration and mimesis, or that these features are incompatible, cannot consider Plato's criticism of poetry to be consistent throughout his dialogues. Studies in the second category, on the other hand, which credit the possibility of a relationship between inspiration and mimesis, would thus accept that Plato's criticism of poetry may be a consistent one. In this second category, several theories are presented as to the manner in which inspiration and mimesis may be associated. It is proposed in some studies that the relationship is an epistemological one, in that the poet, whether divinely inspired, or as an imitator, does not know of that which he speaks. Other studies consider that the
affiliation has to do with role-playing or impersonation, in that divine inspiration, renders not only the poet, but also the rhapsode and the audience, into a state of empathy, or what Plato terms as "possessed", in which they identify powerfully with the poetic message and the characters portrayed therein. Similarly, it is suggested that mimesis, as it is used in poetry, allows one to impersonate many characters. In doing so, the player, be it the poet, the actor or the audience, is psychologically transported, and identifies with those characters. Thus in the acting out of another's role, one may also appear "possessed". Still other studies advocate a relationship between inspiration and mimesis in which they may work separately or together, as a form of communication. Finally, despite these various propositions on the existence of a relationship between inspiration and mimesis, most of these studies have a commonality between them, in that they appear to agree that in criticizing these features and their role in poetry, Plato is demonstrating ethical, not aesthetic concerns.

In all these studies, except for two, an article and a thesis, the discussion on the relationship between inspiration and mimesis in Plato's criticism of poetry usually consists of only one or two paragraphs. In addition, these two poetic features and the link between them is not their main concern. Given these limitations, these studies cannot adequately deal with this topic. It can be seen then, from this review of the literature, that a major study of the relationship between inspiration and mimesis in Plato's criticism of poetry, has not yet been done.

In the studies reviewed above, each posit a basis for the relationship between inspiration and mimesis in Plato's criticism of poetry, yet it is also possible that there are alternative ways in which these poetic features are related, and, indeed, that these various ways are interconnected. Furthermore, although the dialogues in which Plato criticizes inspiration and mimesis in poetry are representative of all periods in his work - predominantly the early and middle periods, but also the later period - the majority of these studies, because of their brevity and focus, did not entertain such an analysis, and instead mainly confine their discussions to the two works for which he is best known for criticizing poetry, Ion and Republic, and to acknowledging, perhaps, Laws as the only dialogue in which both inspiration and mimesis appear side by side. A broad analysis, which examines all the dialogues in which Plato criticizes inspiration and mimesis, but at the same time, an in-depth one, is necessary in order to judge the consistency of his criticism.

This is not to say that Plato's criticism of poetry is definitely a systematic one, but rather, that the moral role of poetry in education and its effect on society, is clearly a constant concern from his earliest dialogues, such as Ion and Apology, through to his last dialogue, Laws. Criticism of poetry also features largely in what is considered by many to be his greatest dialogue, Republic. Further, Plato's criticism of poetry is not isolated from the remainder of his work and so his philosophical preoccupations, but is included as a vital ingredient in his discussions on education and politics, in both Republic and Laws, and on metaphysics, in Phaedrus. And, in all these dialogues, as it will be shown in their examinations in this study, Plato's criticism of poetry is indissolubly linked to his ethics, epistemology and psychology. Inspiration and mimesis, then, as the main components of that criticism, are thus linked to these aspects of his philosophy.
This study proposes that a relationship between inspiration and mimesis can be established. I am positing the thesis that inspiration and mimesis can both be seen to relate to two important Socratic-Platonic concerns: the care of the soul and the welfare of the state. These concerns represent a synthesis of Socratic moral philosophy with Platonic political theory. In the “inspiration” dialogues, Ion, Apology, Meno, Phaedrus and Laws, poetic inspiration can affect the Socratic exhortation which considers the care of the individual soul. Further, as we are told in Apology 139, Crito 140 and Gorgias 141, it is the good man, the virtuous man - the one who cares for his soul - who also cares for the welfare of the state. Therefore, in its effect on the individual soul, poetic inspiration can also indirectly affect the state.

In the “mimesis” dialogues, Republic and Laws, this same exhortation, on the care of the soul, is posed, but it is has now been rendered into a more Platonic form 142 - as either the principle of specialization - the “one man, one job” creed of Republic 143, which advances the harmony between the three elements of the soul, or as the concord between reason and emotion in Laws 144. While in Republic, mimesis can damage the tripartite soul’s delicate balance, in Laws, mimesis in poetry is used to promote the concord 145. Further, in both these dialogues, poetic mimesis can affect the welfare of the state. In Republic, mimesis can undermine the harmony of the state in its affect on the individual soul. That is, if the individual soul is not cared for, the state can suffer, and an imperfect political system, such as a timarchy, an oligarchy, a democracy, or a tyranny, can result. However, in Laws, when it is harnessed by the philosophical lawgivers, mimesis can assist in the concord between the rulers and the ruled 146, thus serving the welfare of the state. Inspiration and mimesis can thus be seen to be related in their effect on the education of both the individual, in the care of the soul, and the state, in its welfare. Plato’s criticism of poetry, which is centred on these two features, addresses common Platonic concerns: in education, politics, ethics, epistemology and psychology.

As a consequence of positing this thesis, several methodological assumptions are made, each of which concern interpretation of the Platonic dialogues. These will be briefly reviewed. Firstly, since the dialogues which concern inspiration and mimesis in Plato’s criticism of poetry and which are to be analysed in pursuit of this thesis, span Plato’s entire corpus - a period of perhaps fifty years, from his earliest dialogues to his last - the question of the chronology of the Platonic dialogues should be addressed. The chronology of the dialogues can be examined by either the actual dates at which the dialogues were written or by the chronological relationships between them 147. Ordering the dialogues by their actual dates has its difficulties, as some of the historical record concerning Plato is uncertain. However, given what is known, and with the application of the various stylometric methods and other techniques 148, a relative chronology can be established. It has been generally accepted by scholars that the Platonic dialogues were written at different times in his life, and can be divided into three approximate periods - early, middle and late - although there is some disagreement concerning the order of the dialogues within these groups 149. However, for the purposes of this study, it will suffice to know to which group each dialogue belongs; this will be an approximate guide to their order. It is largely agreed that Ion and Apology belong to the early period, that Republic and Phaedrus belong to the middle period, and that Laws belongs to the late period. Meno is considered by many to be a “transitional” dialogue, belonging to the end of the
early period, or the beginning of the middle period, and so later than \textit{Ion} and \textit{Apology}, but earlier than \textit{Republic} and \textit{Phaedrus}. Of the dialogues in the early period, while it is in dispute as to which of the two dialogues to be examined in this group is the earlier one, there are some who consider \textit{Apology} to be Plato's first work, written shortly after the death of Socrates in 399 B.C.E. In the middle period, the \textit{Republic} is conventionally placed before \textit{Phaedrus}. \textit{Laws} is seen as indisputably Plato's last work. Therefore, the order in which the dialogues will be examined is as follows: with regard to inspiration, although \textit{Apology} may predate \textit{Ion}, \textit{Ion} will be discussed first, since it appears to provide the basis for Plato's further discussions on inspiration, and then \textit{Apology}, \textit{Meno}, \textit{Phaedrus} and \textit{Laws}. This is also the order employed by Tigerstedt, in his major monograph on poetic inspiration in Plato. With regard to \textit{mimeis}, \textit{Republic} will be discussed before \textit{Laws}.

Since this thesis examines not only what is said to be a Socratic concept, which can be summarized by Socrates' insistent exhortation to his fellow Athenians, as to "care for the soul", but also a Platonic version, which also deals with the care of the individual's soul, a second methodological assumption is made - that the ideas of these two philosophers can be differentiated. The Socratic "question" concerns the historical origins of these ideas: that is, what, in Plato's dialogues, that he has his mentor say, is actually representative of Socratic thought? Where does the thought of Socrates' end and that of Plato begin? Unfortunately, because Socrates died without leaving any written work, there is nothing with which to compare to Plato's rendering of his doctrines. Plato's portrayal of Socrates does not fully correspond with the other extant accounts from people who knew him personally - that of Xenophon and Aristophanes, who in \textit{Clouds}, comically depicts Socrates as a Sophist. Further, it does not correspond with Aristotle's discussion of Socrates and Plato in his \textit{Metaphysics}. It seems then, that this division of what is and what is not Socratic thought can only be one based on evaluation and interpretation.

Both Burnet and Taylor propose the thesis that the views of Plato's Socrates are an accurate reflection of those of the historical figure. This thesis is now considered unlikely, particularly with regard to the theory of Ideas. However, some scholars believe that this doctrine can be seen as an expansion of a concept that has its genesis in Socratic thought. But what of other aspects of Plato's philosophy, such as the metaphysical views expressed in \textit{Phaedo}, of reincarnation and recollection - can they also be said to have their origins in Socratic thought? According to Guthrie, Socrates was no metaphysician, but rather, one who "went no further than his practical and ethical aims required." Hamilton agrees that the consensus view is that Socrates limits himself to "a search for general definitions of moral concepts, and that in positive doctrine he...(does) not go beyond the enunciation of such paradoxes as "virtue is knowledge" and "no one willingly does wrong"". Therefore, in the early dialogues, where Socrates' concerns are predominantly ethical and psychological ones, Plato's depiction appears to be a realistic one in that it attributes the thought of the historical Socrates to the dramatic character, Socrates, of the dialogues. At the same time, in these early dialogues, Plato introduces aspects of his own thought. Plato also alludes to the limitations of the Socratic approach. As Klosko notes, this enables him to justify the philosophical positions he takes in the middle dialogues. In these dialogues,
particularly with the introduction of the metaphysical doctrines, which were largely influenced by Pythagorean ideas, Plato diverges more from his master's thought. Indeed, some scholars consider that this transition can be seen to take place in *Meno*. Thus by the middle dialogues, the Platonic Socrates no longer accurately represents the historical Socrates.

It has been suggested that in having Socrates, in his dialogues, express ideas other than these ethical ones, Plato is paying homage to his much loved teacher - “the most just of men then living” as the source of his inspiration. As Tredennick notes, in the ancient world, “the work of pupils or followers was often freely attributed to the great men themselves; not necessarily from dishonesty or lack of discrimination, but as a pious acknowledgement of ultimate authorship.” Thus Plato, in his character of Socrates, is acknowledging not only his respect for his teacher, but also his own dedication to the continuance and expansion of the philosophical mission that Socrates began. For the purposes of this thesis, unless indicated otherwise, when the name Socrates is used, it is referring to the Platonic Socrates, and not to the historical character.

This study's objective is to discover whether a relationship between inspiration and *mimesis* in Plato's criticism of poetry exists. This will be attempted by analyzing the Platonic dialogues which discuss these features. If a relationship is discovered, it must then be determined if that relationship is maintained throughout these dialogues. This would enable one to decide if a consistency to Plato's criticism of poetry exists. But does that relationship reflect development in Platonic thought, or does it demonstrate a unity to his thought? Such a decision reflects the third methodological assumption. While the proponents of the first approach believe that Plato's thought in his dialogues alters and so develops from the early period through to the middle and late periods, those of the "unity" approach do not. Although Shorey, the major proponent of the "unity" approach, recognizes that Plato, like any great thinker, may suffer from "minor changes of opinion", he does not believe that his works undergo "a succession of shifting and dissolving views" over time. However, how great a change in one's views is defined as "minor", and what qualifies as "a succession...", is not stated.

Difficulties exist in utilizing either approach to understanding Plato's thought. Two problems illustrate the difficulty in the pursuance of the developmental approach. Firstly, Plato's thought is not laid out in a systematic way, as treatises, which display a logical order in their development. Rather, it is presented as a series of dialogues, which as Guthrie notes, is a "unique form of literature", unlike others in the philosophical world, such as those of Berkeley or Hume, "in which participants are lay figures and the dramatic element plays no part". Indeed, the dramatic elements of the dialogues, such as the vivid characterization, and the use of locale, myth, rhetoric and poetry, often induce in the reader an emotionality or subjectivity that can cause problems in discerning the development of Plato's thought. Further, because in these dialogues, Plato, as a character, does not appear, it cannot be known with any certainty whether the main antagonist - usually Socrates - represents, or only approximates, his thought. Secondly, in order to trace developments in Plato's thought, the relative chronology of the dialogues must be known. Therefore, there are difficulties not only in the logical order, but also in the chronological one, in tracing Platonic ideas. However, that there are
difficulties in discerning the development of Plato’s thought does not necessarily mean
that no such development occurs.

There are also difficulties with adopting the “unity” approach to Plato’s
thought. It appears that this approach is used to explain away any inconsistencies or
uncertainties in Plato’s work, in that it opposes the notion that there is any evolution in his
thinking 172. That is, it denies that there is a progression in Plato’s thought from the
dialogues of the early period to those of the middle and late periods. This does, of
course, also neglect the change that occurs in his writing from the Socratic thinking of
the early dialogues, to the middle dialogues, where Socratic thinking gives way to
Platonic thought. This transition has been previously discussed. This approach assumes
that Plato, on the whole, belongs to “the type of thinkers whose philosophy is fixed in
early maturity”, rather than to “the class of those who receive a new revelation every
decade” 173. Therefore, according to this view, from an early age, until he died, thinkers
that Plato encountered such as the PreSocratics, Socrates, the Pythagoreans and even the
Sophists, did not have a profound affect on him, and this was not translated into his
dialogues. It seems from Shorey’s arguments, that Plato may use, but not be affected by,
the thinking of others. But that Plato was affected by others, and that over time, he
incorporated these ideas into his thinking, does not deny that his work expresses a
steady and constant viewpoint.

That both the developmental and the “unity” approaches to Plato’s thought are
limited does not mean that they should be discarded as methodological constructs.
Rather, as Klosko suggests, these two approaches are not mutually exclusive, and can be,
to some extent, reconciled 174. The developmental approach suggests that change occurs
in Plato’s thought. The “unity” approach, on the other hand, suggests an architectonic
aspect to his thought. That is, that there is an overall plan to the dialogues, beginning
from the earliest one and extending to the last. Adherents of this approach suggest that
this is most strongly demonstrated in the manner in which the dialogues of the early
period all contribute to the philosophical construction of Republic 175. However, it would
appear possible that both can occur, at the same time. One’s thought can mature, and so
be modulated, by the wisdom borne of age and experience, as well as by contact with
other philosophical or religious modes of thought, and yet still maintain the same
conviction and sense of purpose, which would then be carried forward with a greater
depth of understanding and feeling. As Jaeger states:

“Since his (Plato’s) very earliest works, starting from different points, all
lead with mathematical certainty to the same centre...He well knew the end
towards which he was moving...But this way of writing is a new and
unique thing...Under the guidance of a powerful intelligence which seems in
matter of detail to create with all the freedom of unhampered play, and yet
works steadily towards a supreme and ever-present end, Plato’s philosophy
appears to grow with the liberty and the certainty of a magnificent tree. It
would be a serious mistake to believe that, when he wrote these little
intellectual dramas, Plato’s spiritual range was no broader than their
foreground ” (Klosko’s italics) 176.

I believe that the thesis of this study can accommodate a synthesis of these two
approaches, in that it states that a relationship between the two features of poetry which
are criticized by Plato, inspiration and *mimesis*, exists. The manner in which he criticizes both is the same. Moreover, this criticism is maintained throughout his entire work, and is always directed towards the same ends. That is, it is used to demonstrate the harm that is done by the poets to the individual soul, and to the state, and to suggest an alternative to the teachings of the poets. This stance acknowledges the “unity” view of Plato’s thought – that an overall plan to his work can be seen, which is maintained over time. However, at the same time, Plato’s attitude towards poetry, and so inspiration and *mimesis*, subtly changes, from the Socratic approach which concentrates on the well-being of the individual, such as in *Apology*, to a Platonic one, which, while maintaining the interest in the individual soul, concentrates more on the well-being of the polity. This can be seen in *Republic* and *Laws*. This then, reflects the developmental view of Plato’s thought. However, this transition does not affect Plato’s overall conception of the poets and their works and their effects on man and the state.

Another methodological problem faced when studying Plato, is whether one should take Plato’s dialogues and letters to be representative of his philosophy, or whether one should accept the arguments of the “esoterists” 177 who believe that there also existed an “unwritten” Platonic philosophy, which he only divulged to members of the Academy 178. Proponents of this alternative view attempt to reconstruct Plato’s philosophy “not on the Dialogues alone but, to a lesser or greater degree, also on the account of this philosophy in Aristotle and other ancient writers which, so those scholars believed, reflected Plato’s oral teaching” 179. To support this doctrine, these scholars refer to Aristotle’s (and others’) 180 account of Plato’s lecture “On the Good”, which, they believe, suggests that he was in the habit of presenting his philosophical ideas to a select audience - the Academy - rather than making them accessible to the public, as were his dialogues. However, Aristotle, “who is the main authority of the Esoterists, mentions once - but once only - Plato’s “unwritten doctrines”. But for the rest... (he) refers to and quotes the Dialogues, without in any way suggesting that they may not contain Plato’s real thoughts” 181. Tigerstedt suggests that the reason that these philosophers wrote of this lecture may have simply been because it was a rare, not a common occurrence 182.

Another argument put forth by the esoterists in support of their approach is Plato’s discussions, in *Phaedrus* 183 and in *Epistle VII* 184, in which he lauds the spoken word over the written word. The esoterists argue that if one considers this criticism, Plato would not have presented his true philosophy in written form, such as in a dialogue, but would have presented it as lectures, such as in the one to which I refer, above. Tigerstedt argues that Plato’s real concern in these works is not strictly with the written word, but rather, that in them he is opposing “passive reception (as opposed to active collaboration” 185. That is, that in these writings, Plato is not criticizing the written word *per se*, but the manner in which knowledge is obtained. And, just as with the written word, which can lay on the page, unable to answer the question that the reader poses 186, the spoken word, if passively received, is no different. What is necessary, in both the written and spoken word, is a dialogue - an exchange of ideas which enables truth to be found. As Tigerstedt states, “(e)ven the spoken word can be dead and mute. The *Logos* is only alive as *Dialogos*” 187. This view can be supported in both *Phaedrus* and *Epistle VII*.

This thesis concerns Plato’s criticism of poetry, and its consistency, in his
dialogues. These dialogues range the entire span of his long career - from his first to his last dialogue, as well as ones in between. The questions posed in this thesis are thus independent of sources outside of the dialogues. While it may be true that not all of Plato's thoughts are represented in his dialogues, it appears that a good many are. If there has to be a choice made between a primary source - Plato's dialogues - and secondary sources - what other writers, who were not necessarily contemporaries of Plato, have said that his philosophy might be - the choice must be made in favour of the primary source. Thus, in this thesis, the dialogues will be taken as representative of Plato's philosophy, perhaps until a time when archeological evidence, such as the discovery of new manuscripts, can prove otherwise.

A final methodological issue regards the use of translations for ascertaining the philosophy of Plato. It could be argued that a real understanding of the dialogues requires reading them in the original Greek. As my ancient Greek is limited, such a view would see my work also as limited. While it would be advantageous to read the original versions, this, in itself would not guarantee a clarity of understanding, as the reader would still bring to bear their idiosyncratic and cultural biases. For example, both a 13th century Scholastic and a modern day academic may be fluent in ancient Greek, but it is unlikely that the meaning that they would extract from the text would match one another word for word. There are several other reasons for not considering my lack of Greek as a major impediment to the analyses presented in this thesis. Firstly, many, if not most, of the authors cited from the secondary literature have also relied upon translations. Secondly, I have used multiple translations for each of the dialogues examined. In this way, versions from translators from different times and places have been used to make sure that particular passages indeed made certain claims or statements. Thirdly, I have used the Loeb Classic editions (Harvard University Press) to identify the context in the original Greek in which versions of the terms, inspiration and mimesis, appear in the text. This helped verify, or not, my interpretation of Plato's meaning in particular passages. Therefore, while reading the original would be of advantage, I do not think that not doing so renders my work invalid.

The study will now progress to an analysis of the dialogues in which poetry is discussed, and in which inspiration and mimesis, as elements of poetry, are criticized. The dialogues in which inspiration is featured will be examined first, and will involve Ion, Apology, Meno, Phaedrus and Laws. Plato's use of mimesis will be next be considered in Republic and Laws. The manner in which both of these themes in poetry were considered historically, prior to Plato, will first be established, before analyzing each set of dialogues, so as to determine the changes made by him to their traditional form. Such changes may provide insights into aspects of the use that Plato made of these two elements in his criticism of poetry.
CHAPTER TWO

INSPIRATION IN PLATO'S CRITICISM OF POETRY

Introduction

Plato discusses poetic inspiration in several dialogues: Ion, Apology, Meno, Phaedrus and Laws. It does not appear, from these dialogues, that Plato describes poetic inspiration as having a singular form, but rather, the description incorporates several characteristics. Moreover, within this description, some of these characteristics appear to be interrelated, such as possession and passivity, or the lack of knowledge or skill and the comparison to seers and prophets and so on. In both Apology 1 and Meno 2, Socrates finds that it is not wisdom or skill that enables the poets to write as they do, but rather, it is inspiration, such as one finds in seers or prophets. The poets, therefore, acting under divine influence, know nothing of what they do. He also intimates, in Meno, that the poets, in being inspired, are possessed by the divinity. In Ion, Socrates similarly portrays the poets as inspired and so possessed, and, as in the other two dialogues, as lacking in skill, and thus knowledge of their own works. However, in this dialogue, Socrates elaborates on his previous descriptions of the poets as inspired. In Ion, not only are the poets shown as being without skill or knowledge, but they are also possessed, and, further, when they compose their poems, they are said to be without reason. Indeed, he describes them as not in their own senses, but as mad and frenzied, not unlike the Corybantic and Bacchic worshippers. As in Apology and Meno, poets in Ion are also compared to seers and prophets 3. In Phaedrus, poetic inspiration is again referred to as a kind of possession and madness, which takes hold of the poet, inspiring him to songs and other poetry 4. Finally, in Laws, the Athenian Stranger refers to an “ancient saying” (πολέμιος μυθος) which suggests that whenever the poets are inspired - “seated on the Muses’ tripod” - they are not in their senses. Indeed, that their words ceaselessly pour forth from them, seemingly not under their own control, not unlike a fountain “which gives free course to the upward rush of water”, indicates that they are but the passive mouthpieces of the gods 5.

Thus Plato, in portraying the poets as inspired, variously represents them as being without knowledge or skill, and also as possessed and so passive in the creation of their works. In both these regards, he compares the poets to seers and prophets. He further deems the poets mad or frenzied in being possessed of the divine, like the participants of certain ecstatic cults. That the poets were considered to be inspired by the gods was an accepted fact of ancient Greek society 6. But how much of what Plato describes as poetic inspiration existed as cultural commonplaces of the time? That is, what characteristics within Plato’s descriptions of inspiration can be seen to share the traditional view of inspiration?

However, this section is not intended to be an exhaustive survey of ideas in the history of Greek poetry - that would carry it beyond the intentions of this study - but rather, it will be sufficient to examine each of the characteristics which comprise Plato’s portrayal of poetic inspiration to determine if they approach the view that was commonly held in Plato’s time. As has been noted, if the changes that Plato makes to the traditional notion of poetic inspiration can be determined, then insights into the manner in which he
uses inspiration, and perhaps, *mimesis*, in his criticism of poetry may become clearer.

The first characteristic to be discussed which plays a part in Plato’s definition of poetic inspiration is the poet’s lack of knowledge or skill. Plato specifically refers to the poet’s lack of wisdom (*Sophos, proponleiv*) in *Apology* and *Meno*, and to his lack of skill (*tecvet*) in *Ion*. In both *Phaedrus* and *Laws*, the manner in which Plato describes the poets as possessed implies a related passivity. However, this passivity as a result of divine possession could also be said to indicate the poets’ lack of knowledge: for if the poets are but a conduit for the Muses’ words, then it cannot be either by knowledge or skill that they do what they do. Further, in all circumstances, be they without knowledge or skill, or be they possessed, they cannot then have knowledge of what they say. Plato’s portrayal of the poets as being without knowledge or skill is at odds with the manner in which the poets were regarded by the Greeks as the wise men and so educators of the *polis*. Indeed, even Plato, in *Republic*, remarks that there are those “encomiasts” (*epanrnetoi*) who believe Homer to be the educator of Hellas. Hesiod and Pindar, among others, are also thought to have stressed the didactic function of poetry. However, in order to be considered by the public as teachers, the poets had to have had knowledge – that is, knowledge that their public would deem suitable for teaching purposes. But Plato does not consider that the poets, when inspired, meet this condition.

When his own knowledge or wisdom was insufficient for his purposes, the poet appealed to the Muses, as a higher authority; this was appropriate, since poetry was believed to have originated with the gods, for their own amusement and delight. Invocations of the Muses in Homer and Hesiod, that is, calls or appeals to the gods, can be seen as requests by the poets for such knowledge or information. Pindar and other poets also believed that they were given, or could be given, knowledge by the Muses which was denied to other, lesser mortals. It should also be noted that since the Muses represented knowledge and wisdom, not only poets, but also philosophers such as Empedocles and statesmen such as Solon, appealed to them for aid. In their invocations, the poets did not request aid in the construction or creation of their works; that is, the invocations did not solicit what we would now term “inspiration”, but only information. According to Minton, they are “essentially *questions*, appeals to the Muse for specific information to which the poet clearly expects an *answer*” (author’s italics). The “*answer*” is then usually given in the form of “an ordered enumeration or catalogue”. Thus the poets, in invoking the gods, gained information, but at the same time, maintained control over their own creative process.

While Plato considers that the poets, because they are inspired, did not have knowledge, it could be argued that the poets, through these invocations, were granted knowledge. As the Muses, as goddesses, were party to all knowledge, the poets, by virtue of their divine relationship, were thus able to have that knowledge revealed to them. As Snell notes, “the wider the experience, the greater the knowledge. The eye-witness commands a better knowledge than the recipient of hearsay.” Therefore, while an ordinary man was restricted in what he knew by his circumstances, the gods knew all. However, since the Muses shared their experience with the poet, the inspired poet could also know all manner of things, which he then wove into his poetry. The task of the Muses, then, as the daughters of Mnemosyne or memory, was to extend the recollection
of the poet 20, thus expanding not only his knowledge, but also his poetic repertoire. Therefore, that “the frequent and recurrent association of the Muses with knowledge in early Greek poetry suggests a close connection between poetic inspiration and knowledge” 21, seems to belie Plato’s accusation that the poets lack knowledge of both the poetic process and of the information they transmit.

However, the information gained by the poets from the Muses must also be truthful for it to be deemed knowledge. As this was an age which possessed no written documents, where could first-hand evidence be found 22, which would support this information? But since the Muses, as divinities, could be everywhere at once, the information they imparted as their gift to the poets, was first-hand, and so had to be truthful 23. Indeed, in Republic, Socrates uses, albeit ironically, the commonly held belief in the veracity of the Muses to support his own “noble lie” of the origins and maintenance of the class system 24. But the Muses were also capable of generating convincing untruths - as in their address to Hesiod at Helicon - but as they stated capriciously, when they wished, the truth could be known 25. This enigmatic statement may mean that although the gods endow mortals with gifts, they are also able, if displeased, to withdraw their favours 26. However, despite this warning, the poets, as did Hesiod, continued to seek the truth from the Muses 27, and believed that the truth of their poetry was guaranteed by its divine origin 28. Thus it appears that the prevailing view of the poets was counter to that presented by Plato: since the poets were deemed wise, and were seen to be the teachers of society, they necessarily would have been thought knowledgeable. Further, it appears that it was because of the poet’s inspired state, that this was considered to be so.

As well as criticizing the poets for their lack of knowledge, Plato makes an associated criticism: in Ion, Socrates states to the rhapsode that it is not by virtue of a skill (τεχνη) that the poet can compose, but rather, it is because of divine dispensation (θεια μορφα) 29. That is, according to Socrates, skill and inspiration are not compatible. But does this portrayal of poetry by Plato accurately reflect the contemporary views, or was poetry thought to be a skill, despite its divine origins? The word technē in ancient Greek society connoted an art, that is, “a system or method of making or doing”, a skill or craft in work. It also refers to being “cunning of hand”, as in metal working, ship building, or even in soothsaying. It is “to learn a thing in a professional manner”, “to make a trade of it” 30. To Plato, it also refers to a particular sort of knowledge, in that craftsmen need knowledge to work at their trade. In carpentry, this would be a practical knowledge, or “know-how”, which deals with wood and tools and measurement. The craftsman is able to impart this knowledge to others who are ignorant of such things, in order for them to learn to replicate the procedure and so become expert. This ability to give a rational and ordered account of the method of their productive process delineates a skill. However, to Plato, a skill can also be constructed of moral knowledge - of how to function well as a human being 31. According to Menza, for Plato, “it is on the basis of technē that knowledge (επιστημη) becomes possible; where there is no technē, there is no episteme” 32. This is what in Ion Socrates states the poets do not possess.

In Homer’s Odyssey, Phemius’ justification to Odysseus as to why he should not be slain along with Penelope’s suitors is based on his declaration that he is self-taught, and yet a god had given him all manner of songs 33. This statement seems to
defy the notion of a contradiction between skill and inspiration, for Phemius is both an autodidact (αὐτόδιδακτος) - a word which indicates an element of skill 34. And, as he is a bard, he is also inspired. However, aside from this example, it is not clear as to whether poetry, which although inspired, is also considered a skill or craft 35. According to Harriott, while the word techne does not occur in the early period, in relation to the composing of poetry, other descriptive words are used which do indicate an element of knowledge, of a practical, rather than a theoretical, nature 36. At this time, the word poieties (ποιητες) or “maker”, which indicates skill, was not yet used to describe the poet, nor was poiesis (ποιησις) used in reference to his work. Instead, other terms were employed, which were borrowed from the various crafts, and then applied to poetry, such as “mould”, “stitch” and “weave” 37.

By Pindar’s time, however, craft metaphors were more frequent 38. As Murray notes, Pindar’s use of craft terms indicate that he believed skill or technique to be an important element in the creation of poetry 39. In Phaedrus, Socrates, while acknowledging skill to be a component in poetry, denies that it is as important as inspiration: “But he who is without the divine madness (μαντες Μονοσων) comes to the doors of the Muses, confident that he will be a good poet by art (τεχνης), meets with no success, and the poetry of the same man vanishes into nothingness before that of the inspired madmen” 40. That is, art alone is insufficient, and it is inspiration that is necessary. This Platonic extract admits that both are involved in the construction of poetry 41. Although the tragic poets do not appear to have referred to poetry in words which relate to skill or craft, such terms were frequently employed by the poets of Old Comedy, such as Aristophanes 42. Since throughout this period of Greek poetry, from Homer and Hesiod, through to Aristophanes, poetry was considered to have been derived from inspiration, the emphasis on craft metaphors over the same period indicates that there was no contradiction between inspiration and skill as Plato portrays it in Ion.

In Plato’s Timaeus, in reference to inspiration other than poetic, it is said that only a man who is not rational, such as by reason of disease or lack of sleep, can achieve true and inspired divination. Those who are so inspired cannot understand their own utterances. Furthermore, these utterances can only be judged by one who is sane 43. In Ion, Apology, Meno and Laws, Plato likens poets to such men - the seers (μαντες, θεομαντες) and prophets (χρησιμοδους) of his time 44. In all four dialogues, this comparison is made with nearly identical language and meaning. In Ion, the affinity between the two groups is because in both, a god takes away their minds, and so it is not they who utter the words that they do, but the god 45. In both Apology 46 and Meno 47, influence of the gods can only be inferred, since individuals from both groups are said to be inspired. As in Ion, this implies that they are bereft of reason, and so while they both may say many fine things, they know nothing of what they say. Finally, in Laws, the poet is likened to the oracle of Delphi, the Pythia, in that whenever the poet is “seated on the Muses’ tripod”, he is not in his senses. That he may say many things, and that these things are unknowable to him, is not stated, but instead, is understood, by Plato’s analogy of the fountain. As the inspired poet’s words are not under his control, but gush from him, uncontrollably, he is no different to a fountain “which gives free course to the upward rush of water” 48. Thus the poets, in being inspired, are also possessed, without
reason and so have no knowledge of what they say. Furthermore, even though in these extracts in which he likens the poet to the seer and prophet, Plato does not add that they are also mad, elsewhere in his work, as in the Timaeus extract discussed above, he portrays diviners in this fashion. Indeed, the comparison in itself may also intimate this, in that the Greek word for seer, *manis*, is derived from *mania* (*μανία*), madness 49. Moreover, in Phaedrus, this etymological connection is jokingly made by Socrates 50. Thus the entire suite of characteristics that comprise Plato’s description of inspiration is incorporated into his comparison of poets to seers and prophets 51. But was poetic inspiration seen to be similar to the inspiration of the seers and prophets? Was such a comparison a cultural commonplace of Plato’s time?

According to Tiberstein, the ancient Greeks believed that seers, who could be either men or women, were able to “put themselves, or rather, be put into a state in which they freely communicated with the divinity...a deity took up its abode in them; they became literally “full of God” (ἐν θεοίς)...they were “beside themselves” (ἐκστασις), in “ecstasy”. In this state, they did and said things impossible to them in a normal state. Especially, they had a gift for knowing things, whether past, present or future - which is the privilege of the gods. And, indeed, a god was speaking through them, though they knew it not, being “out of their mind” (εκφρονεῖς) 52. While it was the seer who spoke from this god-induced state, it was the prophet (προφήτης) who interpreted the meaning of their words 53. Thus the Pythia of Delphi, the most well-known oracle or prophet of ancient Greece, was the interpreter of Apollo, and Teiresias, the seersayer, who is mentioned in Plato’s works, can be seen as the prophet of Zeus. Similarly, the poets are called “the interpreters of the Muses” (οι τῶν Μουσῶν προφήται) 54.

What Plato does not mention about seers when comparing them to poets is that they also interpreted certain “signs” which occurred in the natural environment. As Burkert notes, any incident which was “not entirely a matter of course and which...could not) be manipulated...could become a sign” 55. Signs were believed to appear in dreams, in celestial happenings, in the flight of birds, and in the entrails of animals - even in mundane events such as sneezes and twitches. In interpreting these signs, predictions could then be made for the future 56. That these phenomena defined the seer and the prophet and their art was widely accepted in ancient Greece 57, and such divination was regarded to be at the heart of the Greek religion 58. As Burkert notes, signs were thought to emanate from the gods, and were believed to give direction and guidance to man. In ancient cultures, like Greece, which lacked a revealed scripture, signs thus became “the pre-eminent form of contact with the higher world and a mainstay of piety” 59.

Therefore, like the poet, the seer is linked with the divine, in that he too has been “given” a gift by the gods - in this case, divination - in order to teach man 60. Because of these divine gifts, both the poet and the seer were also thought to have access to knowledge denied to other men, not only of the present, but also of the past, in the case of the poet, and of the future, in the case of the seer and the prophet 61. Although in Homer, the poet and the seer were seen as separate occupations, there is evidence which indicates that they may once have been united 62. Indeed, that the god Apollo was at once
the god of poetry and prophecy may be an indication of just such an association. Therefore, it appears that in ancient Greece, certain affinities between the poet and the seer were believed to exist. Both were seen to have associations with the divine, from whom they received esoteric knowledge, which both poets and seers and prophets then interpreted for others for didactic purposes. Thus, the comparison which Plato draws between the two groups is not without foundation.

However, Plato extends this comparison of the poet to the seer and prophet beyond the notion that they are all divinely inspired. As in the Tiggerstedt definition of a seer noted previously, in Ion 63, Apology 66, Meno 67 and Laws 68, Plato indicates that like the seers and prophets, the poets, in being inspired, are also possessed by the gods. In these four dialogues, it is because they are possessed, that the poets have no knowledge of what they say, since their function is merely that of a mouthpiece, which allows the god to speak through them, to man. Furthermore, they are passive, making no contribution of their own to the poetry which passes their lips. Although in Phaedrus 69, Socrates also states that the poets are possessed (κατ' αυτούς), they are not compared to seers and prophets. In this dialogue, in being possessed, the poets are also said to suffer from a divinely induced madness (μοντικ Μούσων), not unlike the Corybantic and Bacchic cultists to whom they are likened in Ion, who, in their frenzy, lose control of their senses 70. Therefore, Plato’s comparison of the inspiration of poets with that of seers and prophets is composed of several features. However, that the poets were as Plato variously portrays them in these dialogues, possessed, passive in their receipt of the divinity and of their gift, and so absent of reason when inspired, is disputed by several critics, as is also his contention that the poets, in being possessed, were also mad, which allowed him to compare their behaviour to those who suffer from a form of religious hysteria. But were possession, passivity and madness features of poetic inspiration as Plato indicates, and so considered cultural commonplaces of his time? As Tiggerstedt notes, “(t)he Greeks from time immemorial, believed in mantic inspiration as a state of divine madness or possession. But did they also conceive poetic inspiration to be a similar state of mental passivity?" 71.

The three features which Plato adds to his comparison of poetic and mantic inspiration - possession, passivity and madness - are also interrelated. Possession by the gods also implies that one is out of one’s mind, and so mad. It also indicates passivity in that another entity becomes the controlling force, and is then able to regulate the thoughts, words and actions of the individual who is possessed. This interrelationship corresponds with Smith's definition of possessed as being that which describes “one who is mad, or even under unusual compulsion from an idea or passion, but in the strict sense it refers to a person who has been entered by an alien being who assumes control of him, as we know from phenomenon from late antiquity and the Middle Ages” 72. However, according to Tiggerstedt, there is no evidence in Homer that poets, when inspired, were also thought to be possessed. Although in Homer, the Muses, like the mantic gods, may “teach the poet the truth about the past and the present”, they appeared to do so without possessing him or “putting him into a state of ecstasy” 73. Sikes also states that although Homer and Hesiod acknowledged inspiration, “neither poet would have cared to be thought ecstatic or “possessed” in the Pythian and Sibyline way” 74.
But if the poet is not possessed when inspired, then neither can he be passive and so unaware of that which he sings. This is confirmed by Phemius' statement in the Odyssey: "Self-taught I am, and the god has planted in my heart all manner of lays". That is, divine inspiration does not preclude human creativity: "(α)υτοδιδακτος (autodidaktos) here means the same as θεοδιδακτος (theodidaktos)" 75. Indeed, it does not appear that the inspired poet, from Homer on, was regarded as passive, as in the manner portrayed by Plato in his dialogues. This non-passive role of the inspired poet is supported by the views of several of the Greek poets 76. For example, Pindar, while accepting his divine inspiration, stresses his active contribution in the creation of his poetry 77. As Maurizio states, "(t)his aspect of Plato's discussion of the poets, then, appears to be idiosyncratic" 78.

Given the interrelationship between these three features, if the poets were not seen as either possessed by the gods when inspired, or passive in that they were believed to make no contribution to their artistry, then neither would they have been seen as mad. It is believed that the notion of a mad and frenzied poet composing his works did not exist as a cultural commonplace before the fifth century 79, even though Plato deems it to be an "ancient saying". However, as Tigerstedt trenchantly notes, just because "it suited Plato to invest his idea of poetic madness with the venerable authority of old wisdom", that does not make it an historical truth 80. Therefore, as with possession and passivity, it is unlikely that madness was commonly regarded as a feature of poetic inspiration in Plato's time and so regarded as a cultural commonplace. Dodds suggests that this feature of Plato's poetic inspiration was due to the influence of the Dionysian movement, "with its emphasis on the value of abnormal mental states, not merely as avenues to knowledge, but for their own sake" 81.

These three features - possession, passivity and madness - which Plato claims to be part of poetic inspiration, are insinuated by him to be some of the reasons as to why the poet is unable to understand the meaning of his own poetry. In the dialogues where these features are mentioned with regard to poetic inspiration, the poet is thus portrayed as merely a vessel by which the message of the gods is transmitted. Poetry is therefore not borne of their wisdom, but by their interaction with the divine. However, as Tate argues, "the poets did not regard themselves, nor did the public regard them, as raving Sibyls or Cassandras. Rather, the poets were admired for their skill and learning, as "the fathers and authors of wisdom" and of useful knowledge. This often prosaic didacticism was the traditional Greek view and incompatible with the notion that the poet must abandon reason and self-hood in order to compose successfully" (author's italics) 82. Tate's argument thus resists Plato's portrayal of the inspired poet as one who was traditionally seen as possessed, passive and mad.

But in painting the poet as "the unwitting channel of a divine message" 83, Plato simultaneously disposes of this cultural view that "the poet transmitted knowledge...that he was in control of his material, (and) that he was concerned to communicate with an audience" 84. Indeed, it appears that Plato is using the known connection between the poets and the seers and prophets 85, as a base from which to launch new criticisms of the poets. That is, within the view which was accepted in his time, that certain affinities existed between the two groups, Plato adds new features, which were not considered to be cultural commonplaces - that poetic inspiration can also be equated with poets who
are possessed, passive and mad - perhaps so that these new features can be assimilated into that established view. As Maurizio notes, "He (Plato) consistently uses prophets as a comparandum in explaining the kind of knowledge poets have about their own compositions. While Plato's comments about poets seem to be distinctly his own, his comparison will only work if his comparandum is a cultural given. Therefore, Plato's remarks on prophets and seers provide examples of the types of behaviour typically associated with spirit possession" 86. Harriott concurs: "Plato's message is almost entirely new and...it is made acceptable by being dressed in language and imagery familiar from tradition" 87.

Plato's definition of poetic inspiration contains several characteristics. Although not all of these characteristics are incorporated into every dialogue in which he refers to poetic inspiration, usually more than one features. As has been discussed, under the constellation of poetic inspiration, Plato variously refers to inspired poets as being without knowledge or skill, as being not unlike the seers and prophets, and, like these diviners, as being possessed, passive in their reception of the god's gift, and mad or out of their minds, not unlike the worshippers of ecstatic cults. That the poets were considered inspired was a commonplace. But was this also true for all the features which comprise Plato's portrayal of poetic inspiration? When it was considered as to what degree Plato's definition of poetic inspiration could be seen as representing the manner in which it was portrayed at the time, it was determined that only his association of poets with seers and prophets bore any relation to the historical situation. That is, very little of what Plato describes as poetic inspiration seems actually to approach the traditional view, and further, it appears that it has been specifically modified in order to suit his own philosophical ends. Tiggerstedt affirms that there are doubts concerning the reality of his representation: "(t)here seems to be no other proof of its existence save Plato's words" 88. Indeed, in contrast to Plato's characterization of poetic inspiration, the traditional view was "particularly associated with knowledge, with memory and performance, it did not involve ecstasy or possession, and it was balanced by a belief in the importance of craft" 89.

In considering these differences, Tiggerstedt concludes that Plato's version of poetic inspiration is "no more historical and authentic than Diotima's discourse in the Symposium or Er's vision in the Republic" 90. However, although Plato's version may be inaccurate or misleading, that is not to lessen its importance to his criticism of poetry. His portrayal of poetic inspiration may be similar to the way in which he employs myths in his dialogues to explain philosophical truths in a manner in which words cannot 91. That is, Plato is utilizing a definition of poetic inspiration to explain matters which are outside the bounds of dialectical reasoning. Or it could be that in according his definition of poetic inspiration an history, in that it is a palaios mythos, Plato is not only attempting to grant it a veracity, but also a venerability that will be acknowledged, respected and above all, heeded. Therefore, if Plato is attempting to contrast his own philosophical message with that of the poets, then he must juxtapose the seeming wisdom of divinely inspired words with that of a (so-called) age-old belief. But is he simply trying to replace the myths of the poets with that of his own? As with his myths in such dialogues as Phaedo, Gorgias, Symposium and Republic, Plato expends much energy painting his portrait of the poets as inspired. The message that Plato is trying to
convoy extends over several dialogues, and the effort is then replicated in two other dialogues in which he discusses the poets as mimetic. Indeed, Edelstein’s words concerning Plato’s myths are no less relevant to Plato’s definition of poetic inspiration: “he has bestowed no less exertion, no less diligence than on the elaboration of definitions and divisions. The unfathomable profundity of the dialectician is equalled by the captivating grace of the story teller” 92. Moreover, the “myth” that Plato creates in his discussion of poetic inspiration is not designed for the young to read at school, but rather, is one “fit for the accomplished philosopher” 93. But if we consider that Plato’s definition of inspiration functions in his dialogues not unlike the myths he creates, then we must also determine the philosophical truths he is intending it to reveal.

However, at this point in the study, it is sufficient to note that each feature of which Plato’s definition of poetic inspiration is composed appears to portray the poets as lacking in knowledge. The first feature to be examined stated this baldly. According to Plato, the inspired poet is either lacking in wisdom (sophia) or skill (techne). While wisdom implies a theoretical knowledge, skill implies an understanding akin to a craft, of a practical, rather than a theoretical, nature. Lacking in both theoretical and practical knowledge, the poet is unable to control the production of his art. Therefore, unlike an artisan such as a carpenter, who is a master of his craft, a poet cannot use his talent or withhold it at will 94, but rather, is dependent on inspiration - the whims of his Muse. Indeed, in Phaedrus, we are told that it is inspiration that is needed to make a fine poet, as art (techne) alone will not aid the production of fine poetry 95. This then explains how a bad poet like Tymnichus, who after having never written anything that deserves mentioning, can then write a fine paean 96, or how occasionally, with the help of Graces and Muses, the poets can manage to “grasp the truth of history” 97. However, this does not mean that the inspired poet has any understanding of that which he writes or sings. In Apology 98 and Meno 99, the poet has no knowledge of what he says, and in Timaeus, the one who is inspired is also unable to comprehend or judge the words which are created if still under the influence of that inspiration. Indeed, it is customary to appoint interpreters of inspiration 100.

Similarly, in comparing the poet, when inspired, to the actions of seers and prophets, Plato is also denying the poet knowledge and ability. Like these diviners, the inspired poet, according to Plato, is possessed, passive when in receipt of the god’s gift, as well as mad, just like the Corybantes and Bacchic worshippers. As has been discussed, these three characteristics which Socrates claims the inspired poet shares with the seers and prophets, all indicate a lack of awareness on the part of the poet. In these states, the poet is out of his mind, and so is without reason. Unable to reason, the poet must lack knowledge. Further, if the poet has no control over his actions, then he is also without skill. While poets may sing or write of certain things, such as the art of war, it is not through knowledge or skill that this is done, but rather through divine dispensation. That they know nothing when questioned about the meaning of their work indicates this 101. For as Plato writes in Ion 102, their writing or singing about such matters does not then ensure them the ability to command an army, nor does it mean they have any knowledge of military affairs.

Thus it seems clear that in the several dialogues where he describes the poet as inspired, and incorporates all these various features, that Plato is stating, repeatedly, in
many different ways, that the poet lacks knowledge. But to what end? If the poet lacks knowledge and skill, it could then be argued by Plato that he is not equipped to carry out his traditional role, that of an educator, since he cannot then teach others. Plato’s portrait of the inspired poet, with all its concomitant features, may therefore be his attempt to undermine the position of the poet in Greek society, and question the worth of his products as educational tools. The poet, instead of being an aid to the individual and society, could thus be shown to be potentially harmful. However, to understand whether this is indeed Plato’s intention, we must now analyze the respective dialogues which deal with inspiration and *mimesis*. These analyses will also summarize the arguments in the dialogues that are relevant to understanding the nature of poetic inspiration as Plato depicts it, with interpretation being interspersed throughout. As Tigerstedt notes, “the first step in interpreting a Platonic dialogue is, as far as possible, to follow the ἀνάγωγος (*logos*) closely in all its meanderings, to listen patiently to the argumentation and to reproduce it faithfully, even if this should complicate rather than simplify the interpreter’s task” 103.

*Ion*

The first dialogue to be discussed concerning poetic inspiration records a conversation between Socrates, and a rhapsode, Ion. According to Guthrie, rhapsode (*ραψωδος*) was a name originally given to bards, such as Homer and Hesiod, who “rendered their own poetry and accompanied it on the lyre” 1. The term literally means a “stitcher of songs”, which indicates the formulaic manner in which songs were composed 2. The term later became solely applicable to professional reciters, who were not poets, but rather, travelled throughout Greece, performing to crowds and competing in contests at festivals, such as the Panathenea in Athens 3. Some rhapsodes were also said to expound on the poems themselves, “on their practical and moral relevance” 4. Although Ion is a successful rhapsode, in that he has won major contests 5, he is also portrayed by Plato as a simpleton, which corresponds with Xenophon’s contemporary account of rhapsodes as stupid or “silly” individuals, who are unable to understand the ideas underlying the poetry they recite 6. The dialogue seemingly concerns Socrates’ effort to determine how it is that Ion functions in his profession as he does - is it by skill (*τεχνη*) and knowledge that he is able to expound on Homer, or is it by divine inspiration? However, early in his conversation with Ion, Socrates finds a way to transfer his examination from the rhapsode to the poet. In doing so, “(t)he conclusion offered to Ion as a solution to his particular problem becomes a conclusion about the nature of poetry in its sharp demarcation from rational discourse” 7. This discussion concerning the nature of poetry - that is, on poetic inspiration - is placed at the centre of the dialogue, a placement, which is, as Tigerstedt notes, perhaps more than chance 8. In order to understand better the context in which the nature of poetic inspiration is delineated in *Ion*, it is also necessary to examine the arguments between Socrates and Ion in the first and third sections of the dialogue which encompass those on inspiration in the second section.

On meeting Ion, and hearing of his recent achievements, Socrates evinces what appears to be admiration for, and envy of, the rhapsode’s style and talent:

“the necessity of being conversant with a number of good poets, and
especially with Homer, the best and divinest poet of all, and of apprehending his thought and not merely learning off his words, is a matter for envy; since a man can never be a good rhapsode without understanding what the poet says. For the rhapsode ought to make himself an interpreter of the poet’s thought to his audience; and to do this properly without knowing what the poet means is impossible” 9.

These comments, while designed to flatter Ion so that he will stay and talk 10, also prefigure the direction in which Socrates will question Ion. Furthermore, they depict an activity with the rigour and skill of philosophical analysis 11. Ion accepts this description of his professional talents without qualms, and even embellishes on it by stating that he considers himself better than anyone else at speaking about Homer. This statement implies a familiarity with the subject matter about which Homer speaks. Ion thus presents himself as one who is able not only to recite Homer, but also expound on him.

To determine if this is so, Socrates asks Ion if he is also as capable when discussing other authors. Ion replies that he is not, since he believes that being skilled in Homer alone is sufficient. However, probing the extent of Ion’s limitations, Socrates then asks if this is always so. For example, when Homer and Hesiod speak of the same things, and, conversely, when these authors speak of different things, such as divining, what then? In the first case, Ion admits that he would be able to speak on both equally well, but in the second case, he confesses that a seer would be better able to speak than he. This latter answer will prove to have repercussions for Ion in the third section of the dialogue. Socrates suggests that since the topics of Homer’s poetry, such as war and the ways of the gods, are also common to other poets, Ion should also be able to speak as well on the other poets as he does on Homer - just as the seer whom Ion agreed would best be able to speak on divining if discussed by one poet, would then be able to speak on all other poets who similarly discuss divining 12. But Ion, unlike the imaginary seer, cannot. Socrates now puts forward an argument as to the reason why this is so; it will conclude by his declaring that Ion’s ability to speak on Homer is not done with skill and knowledge (ἐπιστήμη) 13.

As has been discussed, techne 14, that is, a skill or craft, is associated with knowledge or understanding 15, and, according to Plato, to be skilled means that one must be able to give an objective account of that knowledge, the subject matter of one’s skill, in a rational and systematic way, which allows it to be understandable by others. However, to render an account, one must be able to order one’s experiences and knowledge. That is, one must be able to recognize, within those experiences and knowledge, relationships between things and their characteristics - particular instances which are similar, as well as those which are dissimilar, when they are compatible, and when they are not, and so on 16. It is the general judgements which are formulated from the understanding and collation of the relationships between these individual cases which enable one to give an account 17. In ordering the subject matter in this fashion, one is able to draw universal principles which can then be applied to novel situations. As Nussbaum notes, “the person who lives by techne does not come to each new experience without foresight or resource. He possesses some sort of systematic grasp, some way of ordering the subject matter, that will take him to the new situation well prepared, removed from blind dependence on what happens” 18. The features which are
thus stressed in a skill are precision, concern with explanation, teachability and universality.

In positing that all poets speak of the same things, Socrates is also asserting that all poetry deals with the same subject matter, in that they form a unity or whole. While Ion agrees that they do, unwittingly accepting Socrates’ condition, he also insists that none speak of these things as well as Homer. Socrates then argues that in fields such as mathematics and medicine, where several people may speak on the same subject, it is the same man who can distinguish between those who speak well and those who speak badly, and it is this man who is found to be skilled in discussing both. Similarly, Socrates continues, since all poetry deals with the same subject matter, one who is able to distinguish between those who speak well, such as Homer, and those who speak badly—all poets other than Homer—should be equally skilled in discussing both. However, as Ion has already admitted his limitation, in that he is only able to discuss Homer. Socrates can only conclude that it cannot be by skill that Ion performs as a rhapsode.

Since Ion has boasted of his knowledge of the subject matter of Homer, and has also declared that Homer is better than all other poets when speaking of the things that all poets do, he has therefore shown himself able to make judgements not only on Homer, but also on poets other than Homer. He thus appears to be exercising a skill in making these determinations: he is ordering his experiences and knowledge by recognizing, within the same subject matter, particular instances which are similar; that is, poets speaking on the same topics. Further, he has observed a rule which exists between these instances; that one poet, Homer, speaks better than all the others. Therefore, following Socrates’ logic, he is skilled in that he is able to extend his knowledge from the particular to the general, and so he should then be able to discuss all the poets concerned equally well, and render an account of his knowledge. However, if Ion cannot—and as he says, in a discussion of any poet other than Homer, not only is he “unable to offer any remark at all of any value” but he also just falls asleep—then the only conclusion Socrates can draw is that Ion is not discussing Homer by skill and knowledge, but by some other means, in that his judgements of Homer are not made on the basis of generalizable principles. If that is so, then Ion’s ability to speak on Homer cannot be akin to a philosopher’s skill. As Schaper states, the philosopher’s skill is “one which involves ‘analysis, comment, explanation – (which is) demanded of anybody who tries to elucidate or understand something’...and is not the philosopher’s discourse interpretation in this sense?” Ion’s professed knowledge of Homer is thus suspect.

To impress this point upon Ion, Socrates continues this argument, and lists other disciplines from the arts, such as painting, sculpture, music and even rhapsody, which can, like poetry, be considered to have their own subject matter. As in poetry, mastery of the subject matter would require a skill. It follows then, that the method of inquiry within those disciplines would operate in the same manner as it does in poetry. Therefore, if one is said to be skilled in the subject matter of these arts, then not only should he be able to determine the successes and failures of one artist, but also of other artists as well. Ion, in a quandary in that he is unable to speak on any other poet than Homer, appeals to Socrates for help in explaining this situation, and this concludes the first section of the dialogue. But after having declared that there is an art of poetry, that is, that it has its own
subject matter, Socrates will now, in the second section of the dialogue, employ an argument designed to prove that no such art exists 23.

In Ion, at the conclusion of this first section of the dialogue, we are shown a contrast between Ion, the public man, and Socrates, the philosopher, who is but a "simple layman" 24. A similar dichotomy is posed in Apology, between Socrates, the self-confessed private individual 25, and the "public men" 26 - not only the politicians but also the poets who, like the rhapsodes, are performers. In both dialogues, it is the public men who are shown to be lacking in knowledge, whereas it is Socrates, the private individual, who is portrayed as wise 27. In Ion, "in order to satisfy their public, the public men must pretend to wisdom" 28, the private man, however, is able to state what he thinks 29. In Gorgias, it is not only the rhetor and the poet, but also the politicians, as public men, who are shown to be panderers, in that they say and do what is necessary to gratify the whims of their audience - be they citizens or theatre-goers. Thus they do not aim at doing what is best for the people of Athens 30. The philosopher, on the hand, is the only individual able to tell the truth, in that his words and deeds are not "aimed at gratification, but at what is best instead of what is most pleasant" for the people 31. But as in Apology 32, such a man is likely to be in danger of being put to death 33. As Bloom states, "(in Ion)...only the private man is free to doubt and free of the burden of public opinion. The private life seems to be essential to the philosophical state of mind" 34. It is the private man, therefore, who is able to speak the truth. Further, as Socrates states, in order to care for one's soul, one must not be hesitant to face the truth 35.

In order to explain the rhapsode's predicament, Socrates now presents him with an alternative to skill and knowledge with which to explain his prowess - that is, that it is by virtue of divine inspiration that he is able to speak on Homer. It is, as Bloom states, a "respectable and flattering answer" 36. Using the metaphor of a magnet to put forward his case, the discussion gives way to a monologue by Socrates 37:

"This is not an art (τεχνη) in you, whereby you speak well on Homer, but a divine power (θεσα δε σωμας), which moves you like that in the stone which Euripides named a magnet, but most people call "Heraclian stone". For this stone not only attracts iron rings, but also imparts to them a power whereby they in turn are able to do the very same thing as the stone, and attract other rings...they all depend for this power on that one stone. In the same manner also the Muse inspires (Μουσα ενθεους) men herself, and then by means of these inspired persons the inspiration (ενθουσιαζοντων) spreads to others, and holds them in a connected chain" 38.

In the same fashion as the magnet, the Muse "attracts" or inspires the poet, who then inspires the rhapsode or actor. The rhapsode, in turn, inspires the audience. They are thus all connected to the Muse, in a chain, like the rings to the magnet, with the poet as the first ring, the rhapsode as the middle ring, and the spectators as the last of the rings. Socrates also extends this imagery, to explain how it is that Ion is able to speak on Homer alone, and not on the other poets:

"One poet is suspended from one Muse, another from another...And from these first ring - the poets - are suspended various others, which are thus inspired (ενθουσιαζοντως), some by Orpheus and some by Musaeus; but
the majority are possessed and held by Homer (Ομηρου κατέχονται τε καὶ εχονται). Of whom you, Ion, are one, and are possessed by Homer (κατεχη εξ Ομηρου) " 39.

In this explanation, however, Socrates now transfers the emphasis in the discussion from the rhapsode and his abilities, to the poet and the nature of poetic inspiration. This transition is effected by his assertion that both the rhapsode and the poet (as well as the audience) are inspired in that they are all commonly linked to the Muse. Therefore, Socrates’ criticism of the rhapsode as inspired applies equally to the poet. However, while the poet is directly inspired by the Muse, the rhapsode only derives his inspiration from the poet. The rhapsode thus receives his inspiration at second-hand, and then transmits, by his interpretations or recitations, what the poet receives from the Muse 40. Therefore, as Socrates states, rhapsodes merely act, “as interpreters of interpreters” 41.

For all the antagonists concerned, in both dialogues, what Socrates is suggesting is that their experience of god - of the Muse, in the case of the inspired poet and rhapsode in Ion, and of the divine Form, in the case of the mimetic poet and painter in Republic - and thus of knowledge, is both limited and remote. Thus in Ion, both the rhapsode and the poet are related in that both are inspired or can be said to use mimesis, and both, therefore, are without knowledge. Indeed, they only differ by their extent of their distance from the divine, or the extent of their use of mimesis, or by the extent of their knowledge. Therefore, because of their relatedness, the transition made by Socrates from his criticism of the rhapsode to his criticism of the poet is a seemingly natural one 42. The interconnectivity between the rhapsode and poet, via the metaphor of the magnet, can also be seen in the emotional response that is passed down from (the Muse to) the poet to the rhapsode, and thence to the audience 43, and this will be discussed shortly.

In this first monologue, Socrates uses the traditional and accepted belief in poetic inspiration to argue against another similarly held one - that the rhapsode, and by extension of the metaphor of the Heraclean lodestone, the poet - is an expert in his craft, and so possesses skill and knowledge 44. However, in doing so, he also accuses them of behaviours which were not commonly identified by the Greeks to be associated with inspiration. That is, in order to support his argument, Socrates asserts that when the poets are inspired, they are also possessed and mad 45. For it follows that if the poets are possessed, then they must be out of their senses, and so mad. If they are mad, they cannot have reason. Without reason, the poets must also lack skill and knowledge, as skill implies the ability to give an objective account of one’s knowledge, in a rational and systematic way. Indeed, in saying that poets can only compose their poetry when inspired, Socrates likens them to Corybantes 46, who only dance when they are not in their senses. It appears that it is when the poets incorporate melody and rhythm into their works, that they become possessed and lose their minds. Similarly, it is the melody and rhythm of the Corybantes’ dancing that appears to induce their frenzy. In likening poets to these worshippers, the point of comparison is not only their “temporary lack of control”, but also that they are “stock examples of the ecstatic state” 47. It appears that in order to present a new argument against the poets, in this case, that they are without skill and knowledge - one which was not commonly accepted in his time - Plato is attempting to give it greater credence by associating it with known customs 48.
Similarly, Socrates employs much of the traditional imagery found in Greek poetry to reinforce his arguments, and declares them with a decidedly poetic air. As Janaway states, "(a)bandoning the clipped dialogue style, he (Socrates) emulates the flow of poetry's language and its profusion of images, but always on the border of cliché and with a hovering sense of irony and ambiguity" 49. According to Socrates, the poets are like "bees", in that they wing the air, and are "light and winged and sacred" 50. He compares the "honey and milk" 51 that the ecstatic worshippers draw from the rivers, to the "sweets", that the poets "cull from honey-dropping founts in certain gardens and glades of the Muses" 52. As has been previously mentioned, the symbolism of bees and honey was often incorporated into Greek poetry to reflect the sweetness of the poet's works, and the pleasure and delight to be gained from them 53. Plato also employs such imagery in Republic - poetry is "dulcet" 54, the Muse is "honeyed" 55, and the poet is honoured by having "myrrh", a sweet and expensive unguent, poured over his head 56. Bee symbolism in Greek poetry may also indicate "the idea of busy activity", such as when Pindar states, "(i)t is the glory of hymns to dart from one theme to another, like a bee" 57. It is conceivable that Plato was also using it in this manner - but perhaps to indicate the dilettantism of poets, as those who write of many things, but know of little. This appears to be the attitude that Plato extends towards the poets in the third section of the dialogue. This description of the poet as a bee leads to another association of words, which depicts the poet as "winged" and "light". This imagery can be traced back to Homer and his "winged words" 58. In epic poetry, winged words were designed to "penetrate the indifference of men and make it impossible to be inattentive (as to) the meaning. Wings take dead words and make them live, by transporting them to the responsive soul of the hearer, the part of man closest to the divine" 59. As Plato writes in Phaedrus: "(t)he natural function of the wing is to soar upwards and carry that which is heavy up to the place where dwell the race of the gods" 60. In Ion, the "winged" aspect of the poets may suggest the divine nature of the poet 61, as well as indicating the influence of their words on man, as can be seen in the effect that Ion's performance has on his audience. By his use of such commonly accepted ideas and poetic imagery, to depict the poet as inspired, Plato only adds to the persuasiveness of his arguments against the poets.

After having delivered this seemingly laudatory oration on the divine nature of the poets, Socrates then returns to his explanation as to why they are able to compose in one genre only; this also serves as an explanation to Ion as to why he is able to speak on Homer alone. Socrates states that since it is not by skill that the poet composes and speaks their fine words, but by divine dispensation, the poet is only able to "compose that to which the Muse has stirred him, this man dithyrambs, another laudatory odes, another dance-songs, another epic or else iambic verse; but each is at fault in any other kind" 62. That is, poets are not only inspired, but also each poet is inspired by a specific Muse; this then dictates the genre in which the poet is able to write and speak. Just as Ion's inability to speak on no-one else but Homer had earlier demonstrated that it was not with skill that he spoke and so it had to be inspiration which allowed him to do so, now, that the poet can only compose in one genre is, according to Socrates, equal proof that the poet is also not skilled, but inspired. As Socrates contends, if the poet were truly skilled, then he would be able to compose in all genres. This is, of course, the same
argument that he put forth for the rhapsode; that is, if Ion were skilled, he would be able to speak on all poets. However, in making this claim against the poets, Socrates conveniently overlooks the talents of a poet such as Pindar, who was successful in composing works from several genres - dithyrambs, encomia and dance-songs 65. The example of Tynnichus, a bad poet, is given by Socrates to complete his argument that poets are inspired, not skilled. As Socrates explains, that this poet had no skill was apparent by the fact that he had never written "a single poem in his life that deserved of any mention" 66. However, this bad poet then wrote a poem which now everyone admires. Socrates concludes from this that since it could not have been done with skill, it must have been the intention of the gods to show that this one fine work could only have been of their making.

Tigerstedt notes that this monologue takes the poetic form of "a paean in honour of poets and rhapsodes, whose exalted tone contrasts curiously with his ironical tone in the discussion" 65. Here, both the content and form of Socrates' argument combine, to illustrate the persuasive effect of poetry 66. Indeed, when Ion is asked if he thinks Socrates' statements concerning poetic inspiration are true, he states that he is convinced by the argument: "Yes, upon my word I do: for you somehow touch my soul (ψυχής) with your words, Socrates, and I believe it is by divine dispensation (θεία μορφή) that good poets interpret to us these utterances of the gods" (my italics) 67. The speech thus achieves that for which it was designed: to convince and flatter Ion 68. However, in its description of poetic inspiration, this speech is, at the same time, the means by which Socrates attempts to convince the reader of the poet’s lack of knowledge. Socrates is now in a position from which he can discuss the applications of this: the harm that the poets present to the people by their works 69.

In discussing the powerful emotional effect of poetry which is transmitted by the rhapsode to the audience, Socrates is again utilizing the metaphor of the Heraclean lodestone and the accompanying notion of the chain by which the Muse, poet, rhapsode and audience are all connected. As Socrates has explained, since the poet's abilities cannot have come from knowledge, they must have instead been received by inspiration from divine sources. Associated with this gift are possession, madness and frenzy; all of which indicate this lack of knowledge. Since it is by means of inspired persons that the inspiration spreads to others 70, these features, which are linked to inspiration, must also be transferred by the poet to the rhapsode and thence to the audience. This suggests that poetry carries within it an element of irrationality, which can also be transferred to the audience. As the poet has no understanding of that which he composes, in that he is without skill and knowledge, and so reason, his poetry is communicated in the form of emotions. Poetry, therefore, is the communication of emotions 71.

When Socrates asks Ion whether, when he gives a good recitation, and "thrill(s)" his audience, "are you then in your senses, or are you carried out of yourself, and does your soul in an ecstasy (ενθοσιακώς) suppose herself to be among the scenes you are describing, whether they be in Ithaca, or in Troy, or as the poems may chance to place them?" 72, he is trying to show that the rhapsode is divinely transported in a manner such as he had earlier described for the poet. That is, Socrates is attempting to establish that Ion shares the poet's situation, in that as he is similarly affected by divine inspiration, he is also affected by its concomitant features of
possession, frenzy and madness. Ion’s reply indicates that he does experience certain intense feelings: “how vivid for me is this part of your proof!...when I relate a tale of woe, my eyes are filled with tears; and when it is of fear or awe, my hair stands on end in terror, and my heart leaps” 73. But if, as Socrates queries, one were to experience such feelings when nothing has occurred that should evoke them, could it then be said that that person was in his senses? Ion is safe from harm, and yet is responding to his own recital of the poetry as if this were not so. Further, Ion is aware that he is then able to impart these feelings via the poetry, to his audience: “for I look down upon them from the platform and see them at such moments crying and turning awestruck eyes upon me and yielding to the amazement of my tale” 74. Thus the audience, in similarly responding to illusory threats and dangers, is behaving in an equally irrational manner. Therefore, the emotions that are transferred from the poet to the rhapsode and thence to the audience, carry with them the same aspects of irrationality that were initially ceded to the poet by the Muse’s gift of inspiration. Socrates’ metaphor of the magnet appears to have been borne out - the rhapsode, in experiencing the emotional turmoil that is the poet’s inspiration, is aware that he is then able to infect his audience with these same emotions. However, even though Ion vividly experiences these inappropriate and irrational emotions when reciting poetry, he is, at the same time, very aware of the audience’s reaction to his performance. Indeed, it would appear that Ion’s awareness of the emotional state of his audience is borne of self-interest, in that he appears to be rationally evaluating the financial consequences of his performance. As he states, “I have to pay the closest attention to them; since, if I set them crying, I shall laugh myself because of the money I take, but if they laugh, I myself shall cry, because of the money I lose” 75. Tigerstedt suggests that since being possessed implies being out of one’s mind, Ion’s awareness of the emotional impact of his performance on the audience is incompatible with “a real state of possession” 76. Janaway notes that although Ion may not be possessed in a literal sense, neither is he “fully in rational control of what he is doing in performance, and his being genuinely moved to emotions disjointed from the reality he believes to obtain, need not conflict with his calculating attitude towards the audience” 77. But if Ion is not possessed as Tigerstedt argues, then is he inspired? And what of the magnetic chain between the Muse, the poet, the rhapsode and the audience?

In the first section of the dialogue, Socrates argued that it was not by skill and knowledge that Ion is able to do what he does, but by inspiration. However, Ion does possess a certain technical ability, which relates to the presentation of his work. In order to have achieved the success that we are told he has, Ion must have followed certain rules and guidelines of the rhapsodic art. In order to recite effectively, the rhapsode must obviously be fully conversant with the works he presents, and with the standards relating to diction and metre. However, to be a successful rhapsode, one must do more than just recite lines, and follow rules in a mechanical fashion - one must be able to choose the extracts to be presented wisely, so that they are suitably matched to the audience, as well as be able to adopt a range of gestures, tones of voice and postures, which are appropriate to the story and characters. These enable the members of the audience to identify with the characters and their situations, and so emotionally respond to them in a manner which they seem to find enjoyable. It is evident from Ion’s success that the audience finds what Ion does and the emotions he thus induces in them, enjoyable. But
is this technical ability a skill, in the manner argued by Socrates? Indeed, on several occasions, in the third section of the dialogue, Socrates even refers to a rhapsodic skill.

In *Phaedrus*, Socrates and Phaedrus discuss the current Athenian attitude towards speechwriters (λογογραφοι), who have of late been abused for their connection to the Sophists. Socrates states that although there is nothing shameful in the writing of speeches, what is shameful is in “speaking and writing badly, instead of as one should” Socrates appears to be saying that one should speak and write with the correct end in sight, that of the truth, or the good. Therefore, one should speak and write with knowledge, so that one can consider the betterment of the audience whom one is addressing. With regard to this statement, Socrates later proposes that it is incumbent on them to examine the nature of good and bad writing, and there follows an examination of rhetoric, “in its most general sense...namely any form of address, spoken or written, on any subject, in which a man seeks to commend his proposals or opinions to his audience” That is, all forms of expression, written or spoken, prose or poetry, are relevant to this examination, if they have persuasion as their aim. Indeed, Socrates defines “rhetoric in its entire nature” as *psychagogia*, “an art (τεχνη) which leads the soul by means of words (ψυχεταγωγες τεχνη λογον)”

In *Phaedrus*, Socrates distinguishes between two forms of *psychagogia*. A sophistic form exists in rhetoric, which is purely concerned with the “winning of men’s souls” In order to practise this form, an orator need not be concerned with “what is really just, but what would seem just to the multitude who are to pass judgement, and not what is really good or noble, but what will seem to be so, for they say that persuasion comes from what seems to be true, not from the truth” However, Socrates believes there can also exist a “true” or philosophical rhetoric, in which a second form of *psychagogia* can operate. Since the aim of rhetoric is to persuade, Socrates states that one can only convince others if the speaker “knows the truth about the matters about which he is to speak” Therefore, although both forms aim to produce conviction in the soul only the practitioner of the first form attempts to achieve this without knowledge. In order to practise the second form, on the other hand, knowledge is required, and that knowledge is of the soul. That is, in order to persuade men, one must win their souls; but since men’s souls differ greatly, one cannot persuade all men unless one has an understanding of the nature of the soul - for just as in medicine, one studies the body so as to understand the appropriate medicine and diet to apply to induce health, similarly, in rhetoric, one must study the soul so as to understand the appropriate words and rules of conduct that are necessary to use so as to implant conviction. As Socrates states, by studying the soul, one will then be able to “classify the speeches and the souls and will adapt each to the other, showing the causes of the effects produced and why one kind of soul is necessarily persuaded by certain kinds of speeches, and another is not” Thus a specific discourse can be aligned to a matching soul. Unlike the sophistic form of *psychagogia*, which has as its aim simply in pleasing its audience by pandering to its taste, in its “true” form, *psychagogia* can be used not only to please and thus persuade, but also to teach. In *Gorgias*, Socrates also accuses tragic poetry - for as he states, poetry is simply speech stripped of its melody, rhythm and metre - of similarly pandering to men’s souls. This ability to pander to men’s souls, argues Socrates in
Gorgias, is not a science or a skill (τεχνη), but a "knack" (επιστημονικα), in that it "cannot give a rational account of itself, nor can the procedure by which the pleasure is produced be replicated, like a skill, using objective methods and standards. Instead, the performer has to rely on the changing values of the customer or audience in order to produce the gratification" 91.

Ion's technical ability to induce an emotional response in his audience appears akin to this description of the use of psychagogia in rhetoric in Phaedrus. Rhapsody, as the performance of poetic works, is not unlike rhetoric in that it has as its aim persuasion, the persuasion of the minds and emotions of its audience. In a rhapsodic performance, an audience is persuaded when they are able to suspend their disbelief, and so be transported, away from their daily lives and cares, by the tales that the rhapsode weaves. When Ion performs Homeric scenes such as when "Odysseus leaps forth on to the threshold, revealing himself to the suitors and pouring out the arrows before his feet", the audience must then feel a thrill of excitement, or saddened when told the story of Andromache, or of Hecuba, or of Priam, in order to feel transported from the mundane 92. Therefore, to persuade his audience, a rhapsode must induce his audience to identify empathically with the situations and the characters that he describes. But to do this, Ion must also be able to identify empathically with the characters and their situations that are described in the poetry that he recites, and then be able to project their emotions into his performance, so that the audience can also respond emotionally. As Ion tells us, a favourable response to his performance is in his best interest financially; and since he is a successful rhapsode, it must be because the audience does respond to his performance in the desired manner. The link which binds the rhapsode and audience to the poet and the Muse is therefore in the ability to be persuaded. However, while persuasion may account for Ion's ability and for the audience's susceptibility, it is achieved by a poet whose work is inspired by a Muse. As Janaway notes, it is "a good poem is one written by someone possessed from outside by a force which they cannot understand, but which enables them to animate the emotions of the performer and audience alike" 93.

In order to win this conviction in men's souls, Ion must use the device of psychagogia, so as to match his tales and the manner in which he tells them, to his audience - or as Socrates states in Phaedrus, by classifying the speeches and the souls and adapting each to the other 94. However, since we know from the first section of the dialogue that Ion does not have knowledge of the subject in which he performs, his use of psychagogia cannot be done with skill or knowledge. Thus it must be achieved by pandering to the tastes of the audience. Ion's technical ability may therefore be what Plato has elsewhere termed a "knack". As Socrates declares of tragedy in Gorgias, the object of Ion's rhapsodic endeavour is not to make his audience "as good as possible", nor does he make a "persistent effort to say what is best, whether it prove more or less pleasant to one's hearers" 95. Rather, Ion's performance is designed to mirror the audience's tastes - to flatter them by giving them pleasure and gratifying their desires - and so "sacrificing the common weal to...his own personal interest" 96.

At the end of the second section of Ion, Socrates again asserts that what the rhapsode says about Homer is not by skill or knowledge, but can only be by divine dispensation and possession. Ion, however, now reneges on his earlier acceptance of this
statement, and declares that he is neither possessed nor mad when he praises Homer. However, if Ion declares that he is neither possessed nor mad, then it cannot be by inspiration that he does what he does, and it can therefore be assumed that Ion still believes that his speaking of Homer is done with skill and knowledge. The third and final section of the dialogue opens with Socrates questioning the rhapsode anew, on what thing in Homer does he speak well. Ion believes that he is able to speak well on all things in Homer. When Socrates queries if this is also true for those things of which Ion has no knowledge, Ion, in return, testily challenges him to list what sort of things they could be, in which he has no knowledge, but of which Homer tells. When the art of a charioteer is suggested by Socrates, Ion obligingly recites some lines from Homer in which the driving of a chariot is featured. However, the mere reciting of lines is different from being able to judge the content of those lines. As Janaway notes, speaking well for Ion means that he is able to perform Homer in a manner which is convincing to his audience, whereas to Socrates, it means the ability to discern whether the skill being described is depicted accurately. To illustrate this distinction, Socrates questions Ion as to who would be better judge of the charioteer's skill, a doctor or a charioteer? Ion admits that it has to be the charioteer, conceding, at the same time, to the correctness of Socrates' statement that to "every art has been apportioned by God a power of knowing a particular business." That is, that each skill is distinct, and carries with it a particular knowledge. Therefore, a charioteer's knowledge is different from a doctor's knowledge, or, for that matter, a rhapsode's knowledge. However, in making this concession, Ion is also forced to agree that similarly, other skills which are portrayed in Homer, such as medicine, or fishing, or divination, are also distinct, and so can best be understood by the individual who possesses that specific skill and knowledge. Since Ion does not possess these skills, it follows that the individuals who do possess them would be more able to understand those passages in Homer than a rhapsode who recites the lines which only describe them. But given that the world is made up of many such skills, and Homer's works describe that world, if Ion does not possess these skills, then as Socrates asks, what is it in Homer which concerns the rhapsode's skill, which would give Ion expertise over all others in being able to judge?

Despite the humbling concessions that he has had to make to Socrates thus far, Ion initially states that a rhapsode is able to judge all passages in Homer. However, Socrates, revisiting his earlier point that each skill is distinct, and so carries with it a particular knowledge, ascertains that that which concerns the rhapsode cannot be everything. Ion then accedes to a more limited claim to knowledge; what he, as a rhapsode would therefore know is "what befits a man to say, and the sort of thing a woman should say; the sort for a slave and the sort for a freeman, and the sort for a subject or for a ruler." But as Socrates points out, when a person with a particular skill, such as a pilot of a ship, or a doctor, or a slave, is in a position in which they must exercise that skill; for example, when the pilot is in a ship which is being tossed in a stormy sea, or when the doctor is faced with an ill man, or when the slave who is a cowherd has to pacify his cows, a rhapsode cannot know better than they what sort of things are appropriate to say.

At the beginning of this dialogue, in his opening remarks to Ion, Socrates states how wonderful it must be to be a rhapsode, and how he envies them their skill for several
reasons. Ion, flushed from his recent success, accepts these compliments grandly and immodestly. Indeed, he later boasts, "I excel all men in speaking on Homer and have plenty to say, and everyone else says I do it well" 101. However, Socrates' statement appears to act as a guide to his forthcoming arguments against the rhapsode's skill. Throughout the dialogue, the various accomplishments which Socrates lists as necessary aspects of the rhapsode's skill, are gradually whittled away in argument. Socrates shows that not only is Ion not conversant with several poets, but that he can only speak on Homer. Furthermore, because of this, even Ion's ability to speak on Homer is declared to be without skill or knowledge, but instead, because he is divinely inspired and so possessed and mad. When Ion reacts to being cast as such, Socrates then shows him that he is cannot be an interpreter of Homer's thought to his audience, because he is not qualified to understand its content. As Socrates had earlier stated, "one must apprehend, not merely recite the words... a man can never be a good rhapsode without understanding what the poet says" 102.

Ion, vain in his achievements and position, is now left with very little with which to call himself a good rhapsode, or even a rhapsode, by Socrates' standards. Perhaps in order to maintain the last vestiges of his pride, when Socrates now asks him if he knows what a man such as a general would know, in a situation such as when he exhorts his men, Ion, despite what has just been determined, impulsively declares that that is just the sort of thing that a rhapsode would know. However, following the earlier assumption, that each skill is distinct, and so carries with it a particular knowledge, Ion can only make such an assertion if the skill of a rhapsode is the same as that of a general. But Ion is not a general, nor does he possess a general's skill, as Socrates' extra probing clearly demonstrates, and so the respective skills of a rhapsode and a general cannot be considered alike. Therefore, what Socrates has again demonstrated is that it is only another individual who possesses the particular skill in question such as generalship, not a rhapsode like Ion, who is able to understand what it is that a general would say and do. Every suggestion that Ion has made as to what he is capable of speaking on in Homer, Socrates has demolished. Ion is now left with no more alternatives, as Socrates has shown him that he is unable to speak on any aspect of Homer in which he does not possess that skill. He accuses Ion of either not being honest in stating what it is in which he is skilled, or, that his ability to speak well about Homer is "without any knowledge but by a divine dispensation which causes you to be possessed by the poet" 103. If the latter is the case, then Ion is being fair. So the choice given to Ion by Socrates is to be either unfair or divine. Characteristically, Ion "chooses the latter alternative as more splendid" 104.

In Ion, Plato has Socrates demonstrate that the rhapsode is without skill and knowledge because of his inability to speak on more than one poet. Similarly, because the poet is unable to speak and write in more than one genre, he is also considered to be without skill and knowledge. Socrates explains their inability by declaring that Ion can do what he does because he is inspired, possessed by the poet, who, in turn, is inspired and possessed by the Muse. In being possessed, both the poet and the rhapsode are also said by Socrates to be frenzied and out of their minds and so without reason. Socrates likens them firstly to the Corybantes and Bacchants, the frenzied religious worshippers, and then secondly, to seers and prophets, all of whom are possessed by the divine and so
are similarly "out of their wits". In that they are without reason, neither the poet nor the rhapsode can give a systematic and objective account of the subject matter of their expertise, and are thus unable to instruct others. As in the account of inspiration in Timaeus, they cannot be, at the same time, both inspired and capable of reason. Therefore, the poet and the rhapsode only act as the vehicles of the Muse's inspiration, in their transmission of its emotional, not intellectual, content to others. Poetic inspiration in Ion is thus an irrational state in which the poet composes, and the rhapsode performs, and it is this, therefore, which allows these activities to be found pleasurable by others.

The antithesis between the intellect and the senses, which is later seen in Plato's work, is only suggested in Ion in his description of the poet's nature. Indeed, there is no psychological theory of the soul in Ion, either in the form as seen in Phaedo, where man's nature is a composite of two parts, a body and a soul, respectively, the physical - the senses or emotional aspect of man; and the psychical - the intellectual or reasoning aspect of man; or as in Republic, where a contrast is maintained between reason and emotion, even though man's soul is now presented as a tripartite structure of reason, spirit and desire. Both Phaedrus and Timaeus also portray the soul as tripartite. However, although the manner in which Plato represents man's soul in his dialogues are various, his emphasis remains the same throughout his work. That is, Plato considers that because the intellect, that is, the ability to reason, is that which separates us from the beasts, then "the activities of the soul culminate in the intellect as its highest function." In Phaedo, the intellect is depicted as that which is divine in man, whereas that concerned with the body is man's mortal aspect. Nature directs "one to serve and be ruled, and the other to be master...the divine is fitted to rule and lead, and the mortal to obey and serve." To Plato, therefore, the intellect is that which "directs, or should direct, men's lives by ruling over and controlling the body and its passions. This is the meaning of the famous tendance of the soul, which he makes the aim of every individual and every state (my italics)". Furthermore, to know that the intellect should rule the body and its emotions is also to know oneself, for it is to know what is intended by nature or god to be man's ruling element. Plato therefore regards the maintenance of this harmonious relationship between reason and the emotions to be for the benefit of the whole man, both physically and morally.

In Ion, as the manner in which the poet's work is transmitted to others cannot be through reason, it must be transmitted through the senses, as emotion. That it is emotion can be seen in the reception that both Ion, the rhapsode, and the audience, give the poet's work. Therefore, it is the senses, or emotion, which is primarily in control in the poet, and the intellect, or reason, which is subjugated. This is also true for the rhapsode and the audience, since the inspired state is transferred, from the poet to the rhapsode to the audience. These feelings are irrational, in that they are an inappropriate response to imagined, not real, circumstances. This is because the rhapsode projects these feelings into his performance of the poet's work, and they are then communicated to his audience. The audience, in response, also react emotionally and, like the rhapsode, inappropriately, as the characters and events which cause them to respond are similarly imagined, and not real. This irrationality and emotional excess which is generated by the poet and his work directs man away from his natural function of reason, and in doing so,
prevents reason from ruling and controlling the body and its passions. Further, in blocking this natural rule of reason in man, poetry also prevents him from caring for his soul; this then affects his overall well-being and ability to lead a good life, a just life. As Schaper remarks,

"(i)t is not even necessary to refer to Plato's low grading of the emotions and passions in comparison with the intellectual functions of the soul, in order to see why the condemnatory note creeps into the Ion: emotions in the raw, not filtered or sifted by dispassionate understanding, foster onesidedness and disbalance, injustice in the deepest Platonic sense. Excess of one human faculty over all others is the result of short-circuiting the intellect in the artistic inspirational experience as well as in the frenzy of direct emotional response. Thus the "battle between poetry and philosophy" is already being waged underneath the amiable exchange between Socrates and Ion" (my italics).

Finally, it could be argued that since the poet's ability is not derived from skill and knowledge, then it may operate in the same fashion as what Plato elsewhere terms a "knack". That is, since his ability is not gained by skill and knowledge, then it must be that which comes from experience, and for which the agent, in this case, the poet, has no explanation. While a skill aims at what is good, a "knack", not knowing what is good and bad, aims only at what is pleasant. Unable to instruct, a "knack" aims at this by persuasion, flattery and gratification. The poet is thus only able to achieve the results that he does by guesswork - by catering to the constantly changing tastes of his audiences. Therefore, if one considers that the poet's ability is akin to a "knack", then Plato's account of the poet in Ion demonstrates that he is disruptive to the rule of reason by the manner in which he induces emotional upheaval in his audience; in indulging their desires in his works. Plato's account also challenges the poet's role in society as a teacher, and in particular, as a teacher of morality - one who should know what is both good and bad for his audience, and be concerned with their betterment, and so, as Socrates would say, the care of their souls.

Apology

Apology purportedly recreates the actual speech which Plato's mentor, Socrates, gave at his trial in Athens in 399 B.C.E, before his three accusers and a jury. As such, it is not truly a dialogue, except for a brief interlude in which Socrates cross-examines Meletus, one of his accusers. Socrates' cross examinations of statesmen, poets and others, which are only briefly mentioned in Apology, appear to foreshadow the other Socratic dialogues in which they are treated in greater detail. In order to understand the context in which Socrates' pronouncements on poetic inspiration in Apology take place, it is first necessary to explain how his "divine mission" comes about, as this leads directly to his reason for questioning the poets, and his claim that they are inspired.

Before he can defend himself against the present charges, Socrates states that he must first defend himself against the many accusations which have been made against him over the years, by numerous, mostly nameless, accusers. Socrates believes that the reason as to why these slanderous attacks against him have occurred is because he has acquired a reputation for wisdom. He offers the god Apollo as a witness to his
testimony, since this reputation had come about after his friend, Chaerophon, had impulsively gone to Delphi to ask the oracle to determine whether there was anyone else as wise as Socrates. When questioned, the priestess of the oracle had replied that no-one was wiser. Socrates states that although he puzzled for some time over this answer, unsure of what the god could mean, he eventually determined a manner in which he could prove the truth of the oracles’ words for himself. He explains that in seeking out men who have reputations as being wise, and questioning them, he believed that he would then be able to determine the meaning of the oracles’ words, and so discover who it was who was really wise.

However, as Socrates relates, on questioning the first man, a politician, he discovered that although this supposedly wise man appeared wise, to both himself and to others, in reality, he was not. Furthermore, his efforts to demonstrate to the man this fact only served to aggravate him and others present. However, in this altercation, he not only discovered that reality is not always what it appears to be, but also determined that he must be wiser than the man he questioned, because even though neither he nor the man knew anything, while the man thought he knew things he did not know, Socrates knew what he did not know. That is, Socrates is aware of his own ignorance, “because he is free of other people’s false concept of knowledge.” On interviewing other, similar men, renowned for their wisdom, this pattern was repeated. Socrates states that he finally concluded that those with reputations for wisdom, such as these politicians, were almost totally lacking in wisdom.

Despite incurring the wrath of both those being questioned and some of the onlookers because of this questioning, Socrates states that he persisted in his investigation, and next began to question the poets, who are also known for their wisdom. But as with the politicians, he similarly found that the poets were not wise. Indeed, when asked about their works and their meaning, the poets were unable to explain them. Socrates decided that it could not be wisdom (sophia) which enables the poets to write as they do, but “by nature (phusia) and because they are inspired (enbouchaxontes)” just like seers and prophets, who “also say many fine things, but know none of the things they say.” Since the poets are considered to be the teachers of Athenian society, that they do not understand the things they say has potentially serious moral consequences. For as Anastaplo notes, the moral rectitude of the Athenian society largely rests on opinions about certain things, such as the gods, and these are “opinions for which the poets are principally responsible.” Socrates believes that the poets not only do not understand their own works, but also, as was the case with the first man that he questioned, because of the very fact that they are poets, they think that they then have an understanding of all other matters, of which, in reality, they are ignorant. Again, as with the politicians, Socrates explains that he concluded that the poets were not wise because, unlike himself, they did not know the extent of their ignorance. Socrates states that he finally approached the craftsmen, a group, who, because of their skill, is supposed to have knowledge, though not esteemed for wisdom as are the politicians and poets. Unlike the other two groups, he found that the craftsmen did indeed have knowledge, albeit of a banalistic nature; but as with the poets, they too, because of this technical knowledge, believe themselves to be masters of all other knowledge, no matter what -
none of which they actually possess. This flaw “obscured that wisdom” 12. Socrates then realized that it was far better to be as he was, and aware of his limitations, than to be like the politicians, poets and craftsmen, who are mindless of their ignorance.

Socrates states that from these encounters he determined that behind the enigmatic statement of his oracle, the god’s true message was that the wisest of men were those who realized that what they believed to be wisdom was not really so; his name had been merely used by the god as an example or “paradigm” (παράδειγμα) 13 of one who understood this fact. Therefore, true wisdom is divine, and human wisdom is next to worthless. With this realization, Socrates commenced his “divine mission”; no longer was he seeking to interpret the god’s true meaning behind the oracle’s words—this had been achieved—but instead, obedient to the god, was endeavouring to spread that message by proving to those who are thought wise by themselves and others that they are not.

Tigerstedt remarks that “it is easy to see that this part of the Apology at the same time resembles and differs from the Ion. The differences are, indeed, great. We are assisting not at a comedy, but at a tragedy; Socrates is not playing but fighting for his life. To expose the folly of a rhapsode was a good joke, to expose the follies of the Athenians is fatal. The playful εὐρωτ of the Ion has changed into a man with a divine mission” 15. Furthermore, in Apology, unlike Ion, it is the poet, not the rhapsode, who is directly under attack 16. Although it is true that these differences exist between the two dialogues as Tigerstedt states, the differences are in the contexts in which poetic inspiration is discussed. However, the manner in which Plato portrays the poets and poetic inspiration remains largely the same in both. Indeed, there are several aspects in his criticism of the poets as inspired, which are common to both dialogues. Vlastos notes that Plato even uses the same words to describe inspiration in both dialogues, in the pairing of the inspired poets with the seers and prophets 17.

In Ion and Apology, Socrates employs inspiration as the explanation for deficits which he discovers in the poets. In Ion, because the poets are unable to write in more than one genre, Socrates determines that they lack skill (τεχνή) and knowledge (ἐπιστήμη), and so only inspiration could account for their ability to compose. In Apology, because of their reputation in society for wisdom, Socrates seeks the poets out so as to question them, to aid him in discerning the meaning of the oracle’s words. Yet when questioned, he discovers that the poets lack the ability to discuss the meaning of their own works. According to Socrates, this demonstrates their lack of wisdom (σοφία), and earns them his epithet inspired. Both of these criticisms relate to the poet’s ability to compose or speak on his work 18—essential aspects of his profession. Therefore, in having demonstrated these deficits of the poet, Socrates is suggesting, in these two dialogues, that it is questionable as to whether the poet is capable of doing the job that he does, and is worthy of holding his exalted position in society, as the teacher of Hellas—a position from which one influences the souls of men. This appears to be the message that can be read between the lines of both Ion and Apology, and the one which becomes overt by Republic 19.

Another similarity between the two dialogues is that in both, Plato compares the poets to seers and prophets. Unlike the poets, they were traditionally seen as divinely
possessed. In making this association, Socrates thus cleverly tars the poets with the same brush as the possessed diviners. This strategy has already been discussed in this study. The comparison between the two groups is therefore made by Socrates in order to reinforce his arguments against the poets as inspired. Finally, in both dialogues, the poet is portrayed as one who is not only lacking in some form of knowledge, but also as one who thinks he is wise in areas which in actuality he is not. As Asmis aptly states, “in both the Apology and the Ion, ignorance is accompanied by delusion.” In Ion, the rhapsode lays claim to all that is contained in Homer. As he states, he speaks well “on all without a single exception.” This means that Ion is claiming that besides the memorization of the Homeric verses, that he also has expertise in the skills that the poet describes, such as chariot-driving and medicine. This is, of course, absurd, and Socrates, in the course of the dialogue, proves the rhapsode’s claim to be false. As Janaway notes, that the poet may write of certain professions, does not necessitate that he possess skill and knowledge of the subject matter of those areas himself. Still less then, “on the strength of his abilities, should a mere eulogist of poetry claim knowledge of any basic tecnine.” Yet the poet, in writing of such things, does persuade us by his inspired poetry that he, like Ion, is also skilled and has knowledge in areas in which he has none.

In Apology, Socrates discovers, when questioning the poets, that like Ion, they, “on account of their poetry, thought they were the wisest of men in other areas as well, in which they were not.” When Socrates questions the craftsmen, he finds that like the poets, because they possess some technical expertise, they then believe that they can generalize from this to claim a greater knowledge, of all things. These preposterous claims by the poets and craftsmen, Socrates believes, undermine any ability or expertise they actually do possess. He then determines that it is far better to be as he is, and aware of one’s ignorance, than to be like the politicians, poets and craftsmen, who are “neither wise in their wisdom nor foolish in their folly.” Indeed, the technical expertise of the craftsmen and the inspiration of the poets does not make them “wise in the other most important matters.” To Socrates, these important matters refer to the necessity of caring for one’s soul. This can only be achieved with a certain wisdom - self-knowledge. Thus, Socrates is claiming that the poets do not have this self-knowledge to care for their souls.

As has been discussed, after he had discovered the god’s true intent behind the oracle’s statement, Socrates states that he began his “divine mission” to spread the god’s message by exposing the ignorance of others. However, although this was not the sole business of his mission, it was a necessary component. Brickhouse and Smith state that Socrates’ service to the god can be seen as not only having this destructive aspect, but also as having a constructive one. While the former is in ridding one’s fellow man from his illusory wisdom, the latter is in the developing of a correct understanding of how one ought to live. That this is of great importance to Socrates can also be seen in Republic, when he states to Thrasy machus, “...it is no ordinary matter that we are discussing, but the right conduct of life.” Similarly, in Gorgias, Socrates declares to Callicles that “...on no themes could one make more honourable inquiry, Callicles, than on those which you have reproached me with - what character one should have, and what should be one’s pursuits and up to what point, in later as in earlier years.” As
Brickhouse and Smith note, these remarks suggest that a part of Socrates' mission is devoted to the pursuit of an understanding of how man ought to live. Further, Socrates believes this mission to be of such importance, that he must continue it, even at the cost of his own life.

The life which Socrates believes that one ought to live is discussed in *Alcibiades I*, when Socrates asserts to Alcibiades, who is portrayed here as a young man, that in order to have success in life, that is, to be happy and so lead a good life, one must "take pains" over oneself - care for oneself - in the sense of making oneself better. Socrates argues that to care for something, one must first understand its nature. Therefore, to understand how we can care for ourselves, we must first understand what that self is. To clarify this point, Socrates differentiates between caring for a thing itself, and caring for something which belongs to it. For example, in order to care for our feet, and make them better, a skill is required; this is the skill of the gymnastic trainer or the chiropodist. In order to care for that which belongs to our feet - our shoes - a different skill is required - that of the shoemaker. However, we cannot make this determination unless we first know a shoe. Similarly, as possessions are only that which belong to us, to look after them must require a different skill from the one that is needed to care for ourselves. Therefore, we cannot know what skill is needed to care for ourselves, unless we first know our own nature; this is what is inscribed on the temple at Delphi: to "know thyself." As Socrates states, "if we have that knowledge, we are like to know what pains to take over ourselves; but if we have it not, we never can." However, to obtain this knowledge, Socrates continues, we must be able to differentiate between the user of something and the thing which he uses. Socrates employs other craft examples, which demonstrate that these are two different things. A man, such as a shoemaker, who uses tools, or his hands or eyes to work, is different from the tools and his hands or eyes that he uses to work. Since a man can also use his whole body to work, it follows that he, as the user, would then be different from his own body, which is that which he uses to work. Man, therefore, uses his body. Socrates terms this aspect of man, that which is the user of the body, as the soul (ψυχή) or ruler (αρχοντος). Man must thus be one of three things: "soul, body, or both together as a whole." But since man is the user or ruler of his body, and the body cannot rule itself, man cannot be body, or body and soul together. Socrates concludes that "either man is nothing at all, or if something, he turns out to be nothing else than soul." Thus soul, to Socrates, is man's true self.

Thus, to lead a good life, one must take pains over oneself. However, as the body is not man, but is only that which belongs to man, or that which he uses, not unlike a tool or the hands and eyes which he uses to work, to look after one's body is not to look after oneself. Rather, to care for oneself, is to care for one's soul, and so to do this we must have knowledge of that soul or self-knowledge. Since knowledge is necessary in order to care for the soul, its tendance may be considered a skill (πείρη). Socrates believes that the life one ought to lead, is one which follows the good. In *Alcibiades I*, he states that this is based on caring for one's soul. In *Apology*, Socrates' exhortations demonstrate that this is how he believes true happiness is engendered, rather than through the external and materialistic trappings which accompany life. As he states:
“Men of Athens, I respect you and love you, but I shall obey the god rather than you, and while I live and am able to continue, I shall never give up philosophy or stop exhorting you and pointing out the truth to any one of you whom I meet, saying in my accustomed way: ‘Most excellent man, are you who are a citizen of Athens...not ashamed to care for the acquisition of wealth and for reputation and honour, when you neither care nor take thought for wisdom and truth and the perfection of your soul?” 48.

And similarly,

“I believe that no greater good ever came to pass in this city than my service to the god. For I go about doing nothing else than urging you, young and old, not to care for your persons or your property more than for the perfection of your souls” 49.

Indeed, these statements correspond with Socrates’ arguments in Alcibiades I, in that these trappings to which he is referring in this dialogue, are merely that which belong to one, and are not oneself 50. Therefore, to care for such things is not to care for one’s soul.

From Alcibiades I we learn that since self-knowledge is needed so as to care for the soul, and one must care for the soul in order to live a good life, then self-knowledge is needed to lead a good life. In Apology, Socrates states that because they are inspired, the poets do not have knowledge of their own works. But even if they did, this is not self-knowledge. However, Socrates also states that it is on account of their poetry, that which is “composed not by wisdom, but by nature and because they were inspired” 51, that the poets believe they possess knowledge of things which they do not. These “most important matters” 52 of which the poets are ignorant, refer to the self-knowledge necessary to care for one’s soul. However, as Brickhouse and Smith note, “(u)ntil one knows that oneself is deeply confused, one will have no motive for resolving one’s confusion” 53. That is, unlike Socrates, who is aware of the limits to his own knowledge, and is thus willing to seek out new knowledge, the poets will neither learn, nor will they be willing to seek knowledge, until they realize their own ignorance. Without this knowledge, or the motivation to obtain it, the poets cannot then teach others by the example of their works. For if it is so, as Socrates believes, that virtue is knowledge, then the ignorance of the poets prevents them from knowing the good. And, because of this ignorance, the poets cannot teach others this lesson. Grube concurs with this assessment:

“(Socrates demonstrates that) those professed teachers, the sophists, statesmen, poets or ordinary citizens are no teachers in any real sense, for they have no certain knowledge. They promise virtue and excellence, but cannot even tell us what virtue is...The most important thing that man can learn is surely to seek happiness not in mere trappings and externals, but with his own mind and soul. The first duty of a citizen is to be a good citizen, of a man to be a good man. And what is goodness? It is surely to be sought within and the first duty of a man is to look after himself, and his real self (as he said in Alcibiades) is his soul. It is his duty, therefore, to know himself, as Apollo commands” 54.

Further, without self-knowledge, the poets in Apology cannot be aware of the function of
the soul, which is, as Socrates argues in *Alcibiades I*, to rule the body. In *Apology*, as the soul’s “association with wisdom and truth would suggest, the psyche is above all the mind, the faculty of reason” 55. Thus to care for one’s soul, as Socrates exhorts in this dialogue, implies that one must support the rule of reason over the body. Gulley appears to agree with this assessment: “Reason and intelligence, says Socrates, belong essentially and exclusively to the soul. So to “care for one’s soul” is to care above all else for the full exercise and development of one’s reason and intelligence” 56. Therefore, the poets’ ignorance of their own souls would prevent them, in their works, from disseminating, as teachers, the role of reason. The manner in which Plato criticizes the poets as inspired in *Apology* is thus in accord with what he says in *Ion*: because poetry cannot support the natural role of reason in man, it prevents him from caring for his soul; this, in turn, will affect man’s ability to lead a good and just life 57.

**Meno**

“Can you tell me, Socrates, whether virtue can be taught, or is acquired by practice, not teaching? Or if neither by practice nor by learning, whether it comes to mankind by nature or in some other way?” 1. Thus at the beginning of their discussion, Meno indicates, by these questions, that virtue will be the primary concern of this dialogue. In order to understand how Plato portrays poetic inspiration in *Meno*, it must first be placed in context with regard to the arguments that follow from these questions concerning the nature of virtue. For the Greeks, the virtue or *arete* (ἀρετή) 2 of an object, that is, its excellence, was defined by how well it fulfilled the function or purpose (ἐφόδιον) for which it was designed. For example, if one considers that the function of a knife is to cut, and the knife cuts well, then it fulfills the function for which it was designed, and so has virtue. Similarly, Socrates suggests that a man has excellence or virtue when he fulfills his own characteristic function, and so lives well 3. Therefore, a man is not unlike the knife, in that to have virtue is to be good at something. Just as a good knife is one which is good at cutting, a good man is one who is good at living. However, in order to be good at something, one must first have knowledge; in the case of man, it would be of that which is necessary to live well 4. Therefore, following this logic, Socrates’ determination that virtue consists of knowledge would “not seem so paradoxical to a Greek as it does to us” 5. Such questions had been much discussed prior to their inclusion in the Platonic dialogues 6. As Bluck notes, in the second half of the fifth century B.C.E., the growth of democracy in Athens led to an increase in the number of citizens with political aspirations. This created a demand for some form of instruction that would enable such success. The Sophists, itinerant teachers of rhetoric who charged for their instruction, claimed also to be able to teach political virtue. Thus virtue, according to the Sophists, could be achieved by anyone who could afford the cost of their fees 7. In *Meno*, Socrates seeks to test the truth of these claims: firstly, by attempting to define virtue, and then secondly, in determining whether or not it can be taught 8. However, in his impatience to learn first if virtue is teachable, Meno continually disrupts the order of the inquiry, causing Socrates to employ various subtle means to try to reinstate it.

When asked by Socrates to give an account of virtue, Meno presents him with various examples of virtue, such as that of a man 9 and a woman. He also notes that
many other virtues exist if one further considers a child, an old man, someone who is freeborn compared with one who is not, and so on. However, as Socrates states, what he had sought from Meno in requesting this account was one virtue - that is, the essential nature of virtue - and not the "whole swarm of virtues" with which Meno has replied 10. That is, to continue this analogy, there is a difference between the real nature of a bee, and the fact that there are many kinds of bee. Similarly, there is a difference "between virtue itself, and the various forms which it takes" 11. Therefore, what it is that Socrates is asking Meno for is that which is common to all virtues.

At this point in the inquiry, in being unable to answer Socrates in the manner requested of him, Meno is stymied - in a state of perplexity or aporia (ἀπορία) 12. Possibly in an effort to stave off further questions from Socrates, Meno employs a ruse by making an eristic statement concerning the impossibility of attaining knowledge. Socrates counters this trick by solemnly explaining to Meno the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. As Tigges notes, the change in Socrates' speech, from the "half serious, half mocking tone" he has used thus far in the discussion with Meno, to "the solemn tone of one inspired" that he employs to utter Pindar's words and explain the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, is reminiscent of the one that similarly occurs to Socrates when he begins his monologue on the inspiration of the poets in Ion 13. Although Socrates is later critical of the poets in Meno, in that he states that they are inspired and possessed, and so know nothing of what they say 14, he now uses their words and the traditional belief in their divine nature to his own advantage, to support his contention that the soul is immortal - a necessary step in the doctrine of recollection 15.

Indeed, as Guthrie notes, "(i)t is an appeal to a doctrine of certain religious authorities and poets that the soul is immortal" 16. He believes that the manner in which Plato views poetic inspiration is consistent with the manner in which he utilizes myth in his dialogues 17, in that "so long as he is treating of matters where philosophical knowledge is possible, he does not bring them (the poets) in, but where the subject transcends that knowledge, then we can have no better witnesses than these men. They have no "knowledge" of what they say; but neither can we, and the general truth of their revelations, in spite of the necessary absence of "rigorous demonstrations", is vouched for by the fact of their divine inspiration" 18. Similarly, Murray reports that Empedocles appears to believe that the divine origin of his poetry guarantees its truth 19.

For the purposes of this study, it is suffice to note that Socrates' theory of knowledge is based on the doctrines of the immortality of the soul and of recollection. That is, because the soul is immortal, it has learnt all there is to know, prior to this life, in earlier lives. Thus all knowledge is but the recollection of things we once knew. Therefore, there is no such thing as teaching, only recollection. However, in order to obtain that knowledge, one requires the aid of a companion who can induce recollection, such as Socrates 20. On completion of his explanation, Socrates then proceeds to give a demonstration of the doctrine of recollection (αναμνηστικής) by questioning one of Meno's slaves about geometry, a discipline in which the slave is ignorant. However, despite this ignorance, and, as Socrates claims, without any support from him, the slave is able to answer Socrates' questions correctly. According to Socrates, this demonstrates that without it having been taught to him, this knowledge was latent in the slave's mind, and that it could be elicited, or recollected, by appropriate questioning. As Guthrie notes,
the main purposes of the doctrines of immortality and recollection, and of their demonstration on Meno's slave, is firstly,

"to overcome Meno's difficulty about the acquisition of new knowledge",

and secondly, "by choosing a question to which Meno knows the answer but the slave does not, to show him that his reduction to helpless perplexity (σπορία) in not a matter for complaint but the necessary preliminary to constructive thought. The episode with the slave is a working model, and a vindicator, of the Socratic method" 21.

This appears to be so, since borne out of this demonstration comes the resumption of Socrates and Meno's inquiry on the nature of virtue. Despite Meno's wish to begin with the question of whether virtue can be taught, Socrates suggests that they commence by positing what he terms an "hypothesis" (ὑπόθεσις). That is, what kind of thing must virtue be, in order for it to be teachable? They decide that virtue must be knowledge, since knowledge is that which is transmitted by teaching. Socrates and Meno first determine that virtue is something which makes one good. It is therefore that which is good for one, or advantageous. Yet, as Socrates argues, for something to be advantageous, it ought to be rightly used, for it could otherwise prove harmful. For example, courage, if not rightly used, could be considered to be simply a sort of boldness, and if one is bold without reason (φρονησία), one can potentially harm oneself. Similarly, temperance and intelligence, if used with reason, can be profitable, yet if they are used without reason, they can be harmful to one. Therefore, for something to be advantageous to one and not harmful, it must be rightly used, and so done with reason. Virtue, as a property of the soul (ψυχή), is something which has already been determined as advantageous to one. If this is so, then virtue must be knowledge, since the properties of the soul in themselves are neither profitable nor harmful, yet can become so with the presence or absence of reason. Therefore, since virtue is advantageous to one, it must be a form of knowledge (επιστήμη) 22. This knowledge, therefore, is of that which can differentiate between what is advantageous and what is harmful to one 23. However, Socrates notes that this finding suggests that good men cannot be good by nature 24. But if men are not good by nature, then it must be that virtue is acquired - that is, attained by education. If virtue is knowledge, and so is attained by education, then it must be teachable. But when anything, not just virtue, is teachable, there should exist teachers and students of that subject. Therefore, if virtue is teachable, then there should exist both students and teachers of virtue.

Socrates observes that if one wishes to be instructed in flute-playing, one would seek out an individual who professes to teach the art and charges a fee for his instruction. Similarly, if one wishes to be instructed in virtue, as does Meno, there also exist certain individuals - the Sophists - who not only profess to teach virtue, but are also willing to instruct anyone in exchange for a fee. However, as Bluck notes, the Sophists' claim to teach virtue is dismissed, not by reasoned argument, but by a series of ad hominem statements 25 put forth by Socrates and Anytus - the latter an acquaintance, who has, in a most sudden but opportune way, entered into Socrates and Meno's discussion 26. Aided by Socrates' discreet prompting, Anytus vehemently casts the Sophists as a "manifest plague and corruption to those who frequent them" 27, and
states that "(a)ny Athenian gentleman (καλόν κακοθοῖν) 28 will do him (Meno) more
good, if he will do as he is bid, than the Sophists" 29. The Sophists are thus
discounted as possible teachers of virtue. Socrates now queries if good men, such as mentioned by
Anytus, really do know "how to transmit to another man the virtue in respect of which
they were good, or is it something not to be transmitted or taken over from one human
being to another?" 30. To determine this, Socrates suggests that Athenian gentlemen -
the "good men here amongst us" 31 - be the next ones to be examined as potential
teachers of virtue. However, as he then demonstrates, the statesmen that are discussed -
Themistocles, Aristides, Pericles and Thucydides - all appear to have failed to teach
virtue to their own offspring 32, and so cannot, therefore, be regarded as teachers of
virtue. Further, even the professed teachers of virtue are undecided as to whether virtue
can be taught, since according to Meno, the Sophist Gorgias does not believe it possible,
and finds the very notion ridiculous. Indeed, Gorgias’ ridicule of this appears to induce
in Meno a certain indecisiveness as to whether virtue can be taught. Also, not unlike the
Sophists, the poets, who are considered by society to be wise, are similarly shown by
Socrates to waiver on this issue. Therefore, neither teachers nor students of virtue exist.
And if neither exist, then virtue cannot be taught, and so it cannot be knowledge after all.

Socrates determines that since virtue is not acquired, then it cannot be knowledge.
Therefore, knowledge cannot be that which guides right action; rather, something else
must govern the actions of men. He suggests an alternative means to knowledge - true
opinion (αληθὸς δοξά; ὀρθὴ δοξά) 33. Socrates uses an example which illustrates
their differences. One may know the way to Larissa, and so be able to direct others there.
However, one who has never been there, but has only been told the way by others, may
also be able to direct others there. Therefore, true opinion can have the same functional
outcome as knowledge. However, true opinion does have a flaw; for as Meno notes, "the
man with knowledge will always be successful, and the man with right opinion only
sometimes" 34. That is, while action based on knowledge will always be correct, action
based on true opinion may not always be so. As Bluck remarks, "the distinguishing
mark of knowledge is personal acquaintance with the truth" (author’s italics) 35.
While knowledge, which is based on first-hand experience, necessarily carries with it
the conviction of knowing the truth, true opinion, in being second-hand or hearsay, is not
certain. This is because one may or may not be told the truth, and moreover, even if one
were told the truth, one may not recognize it as such. As it is not certain, true opinion is
unstable and so easily supplanted by persuasion. Furthermore, unlike true opinion,
knowledge can be dissected - it can not only be determined that something is so, but why
it is. This is because knowledge is made "fast with causal reasoning" (κατὰ τοὺς
λόγους) 36, rather than being something that is just handed over to one, like a "vessel"
37. One is thus able to give an account of what one knows. On the other hand, true
opinion is a set of conventional beliefs 38, "on matters both moral and physical...which
are a fair practical guide to life, but have not been fully thought out" 39. As it has not
been reasoned, it cannot be defended 40. However, with regard to right action, true
opinion can have the same effect as knowledge.

Socrates now recapitulates the arguments that he has made thus far on the nature
of virtue. He states that while both knowledge and true opinion may lead to right action
and so make man virtuous, neither are natural to man - both are acquired. Socrates concludes that if this is so, then good men cannot be good by nature. This is the second time that Socrates has made, but not proven, this statement 44. The proof would have to show why, if virtue is knowledge, it can only be acquired. Similarly, it would also be necessary to show this for true opinion. However, it is uncontentious that virtue, as true opinion, can only be acquired, since by its very definition, true opinion is secondhand, and is not based on a personal acquaintance with the truth. But if we grant Socrates’ statement that good men are not good by nature to be so, then it follows that virtue is acquired - that is, attained by education. If virtue is knowledge, then it must be teachable. Moreover, when anything, not just virtue, is teachable, there should exist teachers and students of that subject. However, since there were no teachers or students of virtue to be found, it was concluded by Socrates and Meno that as virtue cannot be taught, it cannot be knowledge.

Therefore, if knowledge cannot be a guide to right action, it cannot be that which is used by statesmen to govern. That they have no knowledge is also why they are unable to make their sons like themselves. But if it is not knowledge which governs right action, and is that which is employed by statesmen in directing their states, then it must be true opinion. However, as Socrates states, by employing true opinion, statesmen have “nothing more to do with wisdom (φρονει) than soothsayers and diviners, for these people utter many a true thing when inspired (ἐνθουσισμένης) 45, but have no knowledge of what they say” 46. That is, the virtue, and consequently, the actions, of the statesmen must be based on true opinion, and not on knowledge. As has been discussed 44, unlike knowledge, true opinion may change. It is unstable, and easily supplanted by persuasion. Furthermore, one cannot be certain as to its correctness. Because one cannot give a reasoned account as to why actions based on true opinion should or should not be taken, they may prove to be inappropriate or incorrect. However, they may also turn out to be successful. Hence statesmen operating in this fashion may “utter many a true thing”.

However, in his statement concerning the true opinion of the statesmen, Socrates links them to soothsayers and diviners, who are traditionally regarded as both divinely inspired and possessed 45. Indeed, he asks Meno if one can rightly call such men “divine” (θεός), who have no understanding, and “yet succeed in deed and word” 46. After Meno assents to this, Socrates then continues:

“Then we shall be right in calling those divine (θεός) of whom we spoke just now as soothsayers and prophets and all of the poetic turn (οἱ ποιητικοί); and especially we can say of the statesmen that they are divine and enraptured, as being inspired (ἐνθουσίως) and possessed (κατὰ θεομονωθείς) of God while they succeed in speaking many great things, while knowing nought of what they say” 47.

But Socrates is now saying something different with regard to the statesmen from what he had said previously. Initially, statesmen, because they do not have knowledge, and instead employ true opinion to govern, were not unlike soothsayers and diviners, in that individuals of both groups lack knowledge. However, the difference between the two groups was that while the statesmen lack knowledge because they operate with true opinion, the soothsayers and diviners lack knowledge because they operate by divine inspiration. But in his subsequent comment, Socrates subtly blurs this initial distinction,
by then equating the statesmen with the soothsayers and prophets and poets - all of whom he considers to be inspired and possessed. No longer are the statesmen similar to these inspired persons, in that they all lack knowledge - albeit on different bases - they are now said by Socrates to be the same as these inspired persons. Thus the statesmen are also "inspired and possessed of God" 48. From this new position, Socrates can now conclude:

"...if our queries and statements have been correct, virtue is found to be neither natural nor taught, but is imparted to us by a divine dispensation (θεία μοίρα) without understanding in those who receive it, unless there should be somebody among the statesmen capable of making a statesmen of another" 49.

Socrates had earlier declared that true opinion, which leads to right action and so is that which makes man virtuous, is acquired, and it is that which the statesmen employ in the direction of states. However, Socrates is now stating something quite different - that true opinion, is not acquired, but rather, is imparted by divine dispensation (theia moira) 50. Socrates is hesitant to declare this discussion a final judgement on the nature of virtue, stating that in order to determine the truth of the matter, it must first be asked what virtue is and of itself before discussing how it can be acquired. Because of Meno's insistence in first wishing to determine if virtue could be taught, this objective could not be achieved.

Socrates' final statement indicates that the conclusion of their discussion, that all virtue is imparted by divine dispensation, to be only a provisional one 51. As Bluck states, "(n)ob doubt it is meant to be obvious that if the theory of recollection is sound, knowing what virtue itself is can only result from recollection. Either, then, the nature of virtue can never be known, or, if discoverable, it will be found to be knowledge and to be recollectable" 52. Since no-one (as yet) has been found that can teach virtue, it cannot (as yet) be determined that because virtue is teachable it is knowledge - "unless there be somebody among the statesmen capable of making a statesman out of another" 53. That is, unless statesmen, who are considered virtuous in that they are the "good men" (αγαθοὶ οἰκόμενες) 54, can teach others to be like themselves. If this could be done, it would prove Socrates' "hypothesis": that if virtue is teachable, it must be knowledge. But because of what is said of statesmen in both this dialogue and in Gorgias 55, it does not seem likely that Socrates believes they can achieve this end. However, Bluck suggests that Plato did believe that virtue could be taught - although not by the statesmen:

"he may have seen himself in that rôle, as Head of the Academy; and we are no doubt meant to realize that Socrates himself had played that part, since his worldly ignorance was accompanied by wisdom of the soul, and his maieutic (now to be interpreted as the prompting of recollection) was the only kind of teaching that could teach true ὀρθῆ (arête)" 56.

As has been discussed for both Ion and Apology, the inspired poets in Meno lack knowledge, in that although they are able to utter many fine things, they have no knowledge of what they say. Indeed, Socrates declares this to be so in Meno in very much the same words as he uses in Ion, and in exactly the same words as he uses in Apology 57. In all three dialogues, the poets are compared to seers and prophets in that
they are similarly possessed by the divine. As has been discussed, that the poets were considered divinely inspired was a commonplace in Plato's time. However, that the poets, in being inspired, were also possessed, is "an exaggeration of the commonly held belief in poetical inspiration" 59, which Plato uses to indicate that the poet is but the passive "mouthpiece of the god, and by himself is helpless" 60. Therefore, in *Meno*, as in *Ion* and *Apology*, Plato once again manipulates the traditional belief in poetical inspiration in order to introduce and support a new notion - that the poets, like the seers and prophets, are possessed, and so operate without knowledge - neither of which were regarded in Plato's time as being characteristic of the poets 61. Although there are commonalities between these dialogues in the manner in which Plato portrays the poets and poetic inspiration, Tigerstedt notes that in *Meno*, "the poets appear only occasionally". Further, "poetical inspiration is mentioned only incidentally" 62. Therefore, neither the poets nor poetic inspiration are the centre of attention as they were in *Ion*, nor are they one of the players, as in *Apology* - instead, in *Meno*, the statesmen have the central role. Despite this, *Meno* is an important dialogue with regard to poetical inspiration, since in stating that because virtue is neither natural nor acquired, and so is imparted to the statesmen by divine dispensation, Plato "clearly indicates his negative - or at least sceptical - opinion of inspiration" in general 63. In *Meno*, the poets and the statesmen are shown to be alike in several ways with regard to knowledge and true opinion. Further, both are said to operate under inspiration - and thus without knowledge - in statesmen, it is the manner by which they direct their states to right action, and in poets, it is the manner by which they compose and speak their poetry. Their poetry, in turn, directs the citizens to right action. Detailing the similarities between the poets and the statesmen in *Meno* may therefore cast light on the manner in which Plato sees poetic inspiration.

Socrates puts forth the "hypothesis" that if virtue is knowledge, then it must be teachable. Because statesmen, such as Themistocles, Aristides, Pericles and Thucydides, who are thought to possess virtue naturally 64, are considered to be "good" men 65, Socrates and Meno, in the presence of Anytus, test his hypothesis, by considering whether these statesmen are able to transmit their virtue to others. But the statesmen are found to be wanting in this regard - their sons are not as good or wise as they 66. Socrates describes how the statesmen support their sons' education, in that they are willing to pay to have their children instructed in wrestling, horsemanship, music, gymnastics and the like. In doing so, he demonstrates that these prominent men do not neglect the education of their sons, and so would have taught their sons to be virtuous themselves, if it were possible 67. Indeed, as Socrates notes, if it were possible, Thucydides would have endeavoured to do so: "he would have found out the man who was likely to make his sons good, whether one of our own or a foreigner, were he himself too busy owing to the cares of state" 68. Therefore, Socrates demonstrates that despite their efforts to educate them, the statesmen are unable to pass on their natural virtue even to their sons.

In quoting the poet Theognis and in discussing what seems to be his vacillation on whether virtue can be taught, Socrates cunningly connects the poets to his discussion on the unsuitability of the Sophists and the politicians as teachers of virtue. As he states to *Meno*: "And are you aware that not only you and other political folk are in two minds
as to whether virtue is to be taught, but Theognis the poet also says, you remember, the very same thing?" 69. In making this association, Socrates avoids directly challenging the role of the poets in society as teachers of virtue 70, but at the same time, implies that the poets, like "the political folk", are also unable to teach virtue. Socrates then concludes that because

"the professing teachers are not only refused recognition as teachers of others, but regarded as not even understanding of it themselves, and indeed as inferior in the very quality of which they claim to be teachers; while those who are themselves recognized as men of worth and honour say at one time that it is teachable, and at another not? When people are so confused about this or that matter, can you say they are teachers in any proper sense of the word?" 71.

The implication behind Socrates' reference to Theognis is thus made explicit when he states that "when people are so confused about this or that matter, can you say that they are teachers in any sense of the word?" 72 - a reference also to Theognis' supposedly contradictory lines 73. Therefore, Socrates has demonstrated, albeit indirectly 74, that neither the statesmen nor the poets are able to teach virtue. Since virtue cannot be taught, Socrates then decides that it cannot be knowledge. He then suggests that virtue could also operate by true opinion.

If true opinion can also lead to right action, and it is that which allows statesmen to govern their states, the statesmen can therefore be said to be without knowledge. And, although without knowledge, as Socrates states, the statesmen may still "succeed in many a great deed and word" 75. That is, while a statesman who acts on the basis of knowledge will always be correct in his judgements and actions, one who acts on the basis of true opinion may occasionally also be successful. In many of his dialogues 76, Plato declares that the poets are similarly operating without knowledge. And, just like the statesmen in *Meno*, the poets may also occasionally utter something that is true. Indeed, in *Laws*, the Athenian stranger observes that poets "often grasp(s) the truth of history" 77, and, in *Ion*, they are said to sometimes utter "words of great price", despite their lack of knowledge or skill 78. Therefore, in *Meno*, it is not only the statesmen who act with true opinion, but also "all (those) of the poetic turn" 79.

However, true opinion, because it can sometimes produce results that are correct, and at other times, ones that are not, is unreliable. Therefore, those who operate with true opinion, such as the statesmen in *Meno*, can only "rely on a certain knack of hitting on the right solution to practical problems without full understanding, and therefore without the means of explaining their actions, and so training others to do the same" 80. In this, they are no different to seers, prophets and poets, who similarly speak and act without full understanding. These people, Socrates determines, can rightly be called "divine" and so inspired 81. That is, what results from such people who operate with true opinion is ever correct, is not unlike a "miracle" 82 - as if it were imparted by divine dispensation. As Guthrie observes, true opinion can be described therefore, "as a gift from Heaven, but only in the sense that the Greeks attributed any piece of luck to Hermes" 83. That this is so, is intimated earlier in the dialogue, when Anytus, a statesmen, is criticizing the Sophists. When Socrates asks him how it can be that he can determine that the Sophists are what he says they are, given that he has no experience of
them, Anytus replies, “I know what these people are, whether I have experience of them or not” 84. Socrates’ ironic response to Anytus, that he is “a wizard” - that is, a seer or prophet (μάντις) 85 - appears to indicate the “divine” 86 nature of true opinion. Because Anytus clearly has no personal acquaintance with the Sophists, he therefore has only true opinion, not knowledge. This is reflected in Socrates’ question: “How...can you tell whether a thing has any good or evil in it, if you are quite without experience of it?” 87. Both statesmen and poets then, in being “divine”, are not unlike seers and prophets, in that they are without knowledge, and so operate with true opinion. True opinion, by its very nature, is erratic in its results. This is because it is not “made fast with causal reasoning”, which, as has been discussed, depends on recollection 88. Therefore, when true opinion succeeds in producing right action, it is as if it were inspired.

Some commentators doubt whether Plato truly believes that statesmen are divinely inspired. Although belief that the poets’ prowess was due to divine inspiration was a traditional one 89, statesmen were not considered to act from inspiration. Indeed, it seems almost farcical on Plato’s behalf to suggest that this is so. As Tigerstedt notes, the “undeniable irony in the description of Anytus, makes it very difficult, if not impossible, to accept the statements about “political inspiration” at their face value” 90. Bluck similarly does not believe that Plato is seriously contending that the statesmen are divinely inspired. As he argues, given what Plato says about the statesmen in Gorgias, it is unlikely that he believes them to be successful, or even possessing true beliefs 91. Therefore, as noted above, it would seem that for Plato, in order for the statesmen to achieve right action, it would be nothing short of miraculous. Thus inspiration in Meno, whether it be poetic or political, is the same, and is used by Plato to indicate that the words and actions of these people that he casts as divine, are not based on knowledge 92. It is an “image” 93 or metaphor - that which is used to represent something else. Just as in the manner in which he uses myth in his dialogues, in Meno, Plato appears to be using the “myth” of inspiration to support his philosophical explanations 94. However, in the dialogues which discuss poetic inspiration, Plato is also attempting to transform completely one of the most well-known beliefs concerning the poets 95, and that which gives them their moral authority 96 - that they are divinely inspired - into the reason why they cannot be trusted as moral authorities.

In Meno, in his portrait of the poet and statesmen as inspired, Plato is demonstrating the danger that exists in having such individuals in positions of moral authority and/or power in society. As has been discussed, the Greeks believed that poetry taught one both ethical and civic virtue. Therefore, it taught one not only how to be a good man, but also how to be a good citizen 97. Statesmen were also authors, although not of poetry, but of laws and edicts 98. And, as has also been discussed, because it was believed in Athenian society that the virtue of the individual corresponded with that of the citizen, these laws were seen as “the source of all standards of human life” 99. Therefore, it could be said that the statesmen, like the poets, were also responsible for the moral care of both the individual and the state. However, Plato’s arguments in Meno indicate that the statesmen and the poets can only fail in this task. In that they operate from true opinion, which is imparted by divine dispensation, the words and actions of the statesmen and poets, the moral guides for the people, may not necessarily result in right action. Yet their responsibility for the moral care of the
individual and the state presumes that they must be sure. Furthermore, while it is imperative, in such a position, that one must be able to teach others to be virtuous, Plato's arguments in *Meno* conclude that neither the statesmen nor the poets are able to do so.

In *Gorgias*, Socrates states that the role of the statesman is to make their citizens as good as possible - to educate them in the care of their souls. He suggests that the orators should also make this their aim. But if poetry is stripped "of its melody, its rhythm and its metre...we get mere speeches as the residue." Therefore, poetry can be considered to be a form of oratory. Poetry and oratory are also alike in that poets use rhetoric as do orators, and play the part of orators in their own world of tragic theatre. Thus like the statesmen and orators, the aim of the poets should also be to make the citizens as good as possible. That is, to teach them how to care for their souls. However, in *Gorgias*, as in *Meno*, Socrates does not believe the statesmen have fulfilled this task. Rather than securing the citizens' best interests, the statesmen only pander to them, by catering to their desires, as do the rhetoricians and the poets. Socrates argues that a craftsman, in his work, can be said to have a definite goal in mind, and so does not proceed at random, but considers how all the elements of his work are integrated into a consistent and organized whole. This implies the use of reason. Socrates believes that for a soul to be good, it should be similarly ordered. On the other hand, Socrates believes that a disordered soul, which would indicate an absence of reason, would be wretched. Because the statesmen and poets encourage excess in the citizens, they must contribute to such disorder, and so must also fail to care for the souls of the citizens. Therefore, in this dialogue as in *Meno*, Socrates demonstrates that both the statesmen and the poets, the moral authorities of the *polis*, are unable to teach virtue to others. Plato is thus indicating that neither the statesmen nor the poets, in being inspired, can be regarded as authorities in matters of which they have no knowledge.

In *Protagoras*, Socrates discusses what he considers to be a fatal flaw in the democratic form of government. He notes that when the State is faced with a building project, they send for an architect. Similarly, a naval designer is sent for if the need is related to shipbuilding, and so on. However, if anyone else attempts to advise the State, who does not have technical knowledge in these matters, the man is laughed down and scorned. Yet when there is a need for discussion on the government of the country, it appears that anyone - be they blacksmiths or merchants or shipowners - are qualified to speak, despite the fact that they have no technical knowledge, or can point to anyone as their teachers. As Barker notes, "(i)gnorance was to Plato the especial curse of democracy. Here, instead of the professional, the amateur was predominant. In Athens especially democracy seemed only to mean the divine right of the ignorant to govern wrong. Any man may speak in the Assembly and help sway decisions...Besides the inefficiency which it entailed, and the parade of false equality which it involved, such a system was to Plato unjust." To Plato, justice was that each man should perform the job for which he is most suited. The function of a thing is that which it can do best. Therefore, the function of a knife is to cut. However, if a knife is used in other ways, such as in the manner of an axe, it is being misused. Similarly, a man is misused when he attempts to perform a job for which he is not suited. Plato believes this to be unjust because "not only does...(the man) not do his own proper work, but he shoves the better
man aside." According to Socrates, to know the nature of a thing is not only to know its essential characteristics, but also to know the function or purpose for which it is intended. However, if the statesmen and poets do not fulfill the function for which they are best suited, then they do not have knowledge of their own natures. As has been previously argued in the analysis of poetic inspiration in Apology, this self-knowledge is necessary to care for one's soul. Without this knowledge, the poets cannot teach others by the example of their works. Indeed, in Meno, Socrates argues that because the poets are confused as to whether virtue can be taught, it cannot be said that they are teachers "in any proper sense of the word." Furthermore, by lacking in self-knowledge, the poets cannot discern the role of reason in the soul. This ignorance of their own souls would also prevent the poets from transmitting the rule of reason in their works. As has also been noted, in Gorgias, Socrates suggests that it is the statesmen and poets who contribute to the disorder in men's souls. Such disorder implies a lack of reason. Thus the position of the statesmen and the poets in Meno appears analogous with this example from Protagoras: the statesmen and poets are not qualified to fulfill their societal role as the moral and civic guides of the people, and so advise them on a matter of utmost importance - the care of one's soul. The portrait which Plato paints of the poets as inspired in Meno is therefore no different to that of Ion and Apology. Once again, poetry as the product of inspiration is shown to be a source of danger to man: not only can neither the poets nor poetry aid him in caring for his soul, but they may also cause it harm, and this, in turn, would prevent him from leading a good and just life.

Phaedrus

Tiggesdt notes that it is difficult to discern what Plato means by poetic inspiration in his dialogue Phaedrus, particularly since this task is made even more difficult by Plato having placed his statements into a mythical setting: "(o)n the one hand, the dialogue contains Plato's most explicit statements on this subject, on the other hand, he seems to cancel them, by the way in which he pronounces them." Further, Socratic allusions to both poetry and inspiration pervade this dialogue, and add to the problem of interpretation. Indeed, interpretation remains a problem even if one limits the examination to those statements specifically concerning poetic inspiration, since it is a subject in Phaedrus on which scholars find little agreement. Therefore, because of these problems, in order to understand what Plato means by poetic inspiration in Phaedrus, his statement on poetic inspiration will first be examined in its context, and the various views as to whether Plato was serious in making this statement will be discussed. An analysis of the references, throughout the dialogue, to poets, poetry and inspiration, will assist in the interpretation.

At the beginning of this dialogue, Socrates meets Phaedrus, who has just spent the morning listening to a recitation of a speech by Lysias. Phaedrus is about to go for a walk outside the city walls, and invites Socrates to join him. Socrates accepts, as he is eager to hear this speech. Although the topic of the speech - love - is common enough, its main thesis is more contentious: that it is preferable for a young man to surrender to an admirer who is not in love with him and only wishes to be gratified physically, rather than to the foolishness of one who is "afflicted with the disease" of being genuinely in love. Having detected that Phaedrus has a copy of the speech, Socrates then persuades
him to read it aloud. On completion of the reading, Phaedrus declares his delight with
the speech, while Socrates, although claiming that he shares Phaedrus’ enthusiasm
(συνεβολοκέφεσσε) 7, appears less pleased. When asked by Phaedrus to comment on
Lysias’ speech, Socrates does not criticize its content, but only its style. Socrates
believes that the speech suffers from repetition, and is perhaps even too clever, in that it
exhibits “his ability to say the same thing in two different ways” 8. Indeed, Socrates
considers that many others have dealt with this topic far better - poets such as Sappho
and Anacreon 9. In response to this criticism, Phaedrus challenges Socrates to render a
speech of his own devising, but one which does not incorporate the arguments already
employed. To counter this challenge, Socrates states that his criticism does not mean that
the speech has failed entirely. However, he does believe that the topic of Lysias’ speech
is not an original one, but a commonplace, and further, that the arguments he makes are
pedestrian. Such a speech should only be praised if the arguments are well drawn. In
contrast, if the topic is a novel one, then the speech can be praised for its originality as
well as for the manner in which it is argued. This statement appears to be a further
criticism of Lysias’ work, in that it indicates his failure to achieve what Socrates believes
are the basic requirements of a good speech. It also allows Socrates a brief respite from
Phaedrus’ entreaties. However, it does suggest that Phaedrus’ praise of the speech is not
well founded 10, and indicates his weakness for the more fulsome aspects of rhetoric;
that is, a fondness for style over content 11, and so for the language of emotionality rather
than the language of logic 12. Socrates finally succumbs to Phaedrus’ imploring, and
agrees to speak. As Hackforth notes, this speech appears to be “extorted” from
Socrates 13. After having being compelled by Socrates to read Lysias’ speech, Phaedrus
now compels Socrates to make his own speech 14. However, Socrates states that he shall
first cover his head and then speak very quickly, so that he may get through his
discourse with as little embarrassment as possible. Although it first appears that
Socrates’ reluctance to speak is due to modesty, in that he cannot hope to surpass the
rhetoric of “a master of his art” 15, it now seems that it may be more due to his distaste
for the topic he must defend 16.

Prior to commencing his speech, Socrates invokes the Muses 17. This implies that
the substance of this first speech will be inspired 18. That it is, is then reinforced by
Socrates several times throughout the speech 19. Socrates begins his speech by making
yet another, albeit indirect, criticism of Lysias’ speech. As he states, since speeches give
counsel, one must first define the subject of one’s enquiry, so that one’s listeners may
know what the counsel is about. If this is not done, confusion will result 20. Indeed, in
Lysias’ speech, the subject, love (έρως), is never defined, but instead is presented as a
form of illness or madness. Love is then defined by Socrates by the following
explanation: the actions of human beings are ruled by two principles, “an innate desire
for pleasures” and “an acquired opinion which strives for the best” 21. These may
either work in harmony or be in conflict; with sometimes one, then the other,
predominating. When they are in conflict, and acquired opinion is dominant, then it is
called self-restraint or sophrosyne (σοφροσύνη), whereas if desires are dominant, then
it is called excess or hubris (ὑπερή). Hubris takes on many forms, which correspond
to the various desires. For example, when the desire for food conquers reason and the
other desires, it is called gluttony, and if the desire is for drink it is called drunkenness. Similarly, it is called love when the desire for the sensual pleasure of physical beauty conquers reason and the other desires 23. As he has been compelled to do, by this explanation, Socrates thus adopts a definition of love similar to that of Lysias. An individual in love is therefore one who is irrational or mad, in that he is ruled by a desire for pleasures. Having defined love, Socrates can now discuss its effects 24. He proceeds with his speech, following Lysias' format: that the young man should not surrender to the lover, and so give in to the unreasoning power of love.

Nussbaum observes that both Lysias and Socrates' speech present to the young man a choice between "good sense and madness, between good control by intellect and disorderly lack of control" 25. Indeed, Socrates' speech could be regarded as a warning to Phaedrus that he must make such a choice. The appeal that rhetoric appears to have for Phaedrus has already been noted. With regard to rhetoric, Phaedrus seems a romantic, in that he attends to the sounds of the words, their sensuous nature, rather than to the details of the argument. That is, the "appearance" of the language - its irrational and emotional aspect - from which he derives pleasure, is preferred to the truth of the statements made - its rational aspect 26.

To Phaedrus' dismay, unlike Lysias, Socrates does not demonstrate that the young man should then surrender to the non-lover, because this, Socrates believes, can be inferred from what has already been said 27. Having ended his speech, Socrates now prepares to take his leave. However, he is prevented from doing so by his daimon (Δαιμόνιον), his customary divine sign to which he refers in several other dialogues 28, unless he makes an atonement for having committed a sin against a deity, Eros or Love, as if he were evil; for if Eros is a deity 29, he cannot be evil. As Socrates states in Republic, a god can only be good. Further, no good thing can be harmful or evil, or do evil 30. Therefore, love, as represented by Eros, cannot be harmful or evil, as it is in both Lysias' speech and Socrates' first speech. Socrates states that he must therefore atone for this wrong by making another speech, in the form of a recantation, but this time in favour of the lover. Hackforth remarks that Plato's use of Socrates' daimon at this point in the dialogue is "dramatically admirable, for he is about to make a volte-face, and this is a happy means of making him do so in a dramatically convincing way" 31. Once again, Socrates notes that it was Phaedrus who compelled him to make this speech.

Socrates states that although his first speech was by Phaedrus, this second speech will be by Stesichorus, a poet who, having spoken ill of Helen of Troy, also had need to recant his words. Like Homer, Stesichorus was blind. However, as Socrates notes, unlike Homer, who was "ignorant of the reason" as to why he was blind, Stesichorus was "educated", and so knew that he should make amends to the gods in the form of a palinode 32. Once this was done, his sight returned. In stating that he is not the author of this speech, Socrates can once again ascribe to his work the traditional authority of the poets 33. However, in making this slighting remark against Homer, he is, at the same time, able to undermine subtly their most noted representative.

Socrates begins his second speech by denying the truth of the saying which teaches that one ought to favour the non-lover as opposed to the lover, because while the former is sane, the latter is insane. This would be true only if one presumes that all madness is evil. However, as he states, since "the greatest of blessings come through
madness (διὰ μανίας θεία μεντοι δοσεί διδόμενης), when it is sent as a gift of the gods”, madness cannot be evil 34. Indeed, Socrates continues, that this is so, can be seen by the many splendid benefits conferred upon Greece by the Delphic prophetess and Dodona priestesses, all of whom can be considered mad. This mantic art is but one of three kinds of divine madness 35, only one of which, the third kind, need be considered here. It is

"the possession and madness which comes from the Muses (Μουσῶν κατοκιστή οι και μανία), This takes hold upon a gentle and pure soul (ψυχή), arouses it and inspires (εγκόσμιος) it to songs and other poetry, and thus by adorning countless deeds of the ancients educates later generations. But he who is without the divine madness (μανίας Μουσῶν) comes to the door of the Muses, confident that he will be a good poet by art (ποίημα), meets with no success, and the poetry of the sane man vanishes into nothingness before that of the inspired madmen” 37.

As in all the dialogues which discuss poetic inspiration - Ion, Apology, Meno and Laws - the poet in Phaedrus is not only inspired by the Muses, but is also possessed. Further, because Socrates states that the Muses stimulate the poet’s soul into a Bacchic frenzy 38, a state in which individuals are known to lose control of their senses, possession by the gods in this passage necessarily indicates that the poets, when “mad”, are bereft of all reason. As has been noted, that the poets were considered divinely inspired was a commonplace in Plato’s time 39. However, that the poets, in being inspired, were also possessed, was not. As has been shown for Ion, Apology and Meno, in Phaedrus, Plato is once again manipulating the traditional belief in poetic inspiration in order to introduce and support a new notion - that the poets are possessed, and so operate without reason 40. Therefore, Plato is painting a portrait of the poets which did not likely exist in the public’s imagination prior to his dialogues. According to Socrates, it is this inspired and possessed state which enables the poet to compose his songs and poetry, which tell the tales (κοσμοσ) of the Heroic Age, and so allow him to educate the public. The root of this word, kosmos, would seem to indicate that such stories provide a sense of order, decorum and so are the models for good behaviour 41. Thus it appears that the inspired poet, although criticized by Plato in these other dialogues, is perhaps being praised in Phaedrus for being able to produce such edifying tales.

Indeed, as the subject matter of the poetry referred to in Phaedrus is not unlike that of the poetry which is sanctioned in the Ideal State in Republic, some commentators believe that the claims made for poetry in this passage in Phaedrus “are compatible with those made in Republic” 42. That is, if this poetry in Phaedrus is compatible with that poetry which is considered in Republic to be good, then this poetry in Phaedrus can also be considered to be good. Hence, unlike the other Platonic dialogues which discuss poetic inspiration, Plato would be praising the inspired poet in Phaedrus who creates such poetry. Some commentators have even referred to this passage in Phaedrus as Plato’s "rehabilitation" of poetry 43.

Although the poet in this passage in Phaedrus is portrayed in the same manner as in the other dialogues which discuss poetic inspiration - in that he is not only inspired, but also possessed and mad and so without reason - in none of these is the poet said to produce such tales. Further, it has been argued in this thesis that in all these dialogues,
the poetry that is created via the inspiration of the Muses is harmful, not edifying to man, in that it animates the emotions, not reason, and so prevents one from caring for one's soul, by disrupting the natural rule of reason over the body and its pleasures 44. The only reference to such noble poetry is in Republic, where it is decided that "no poetry save only hymns to the gods and the praises of good men (μιν θεούς καὶ ἔγχομα)" 45 will be admitted into the ideal state. These are works which Socrates deems are "beneficial to orderly government and all the life of man" 46. However, such work cannot be the product of the "honeyed muse" (Μουσαι μέλεσιν) - an epithet which suggests a divinely inspired poet - since he is also the one whom Socrates declares should not be granted admission to the state 47. In Ion, Socrates determines that poets such as Homer are divinely inspired 48. In Republic, it is the poetry of Homer - epic poetry - and so that which is divinely inspired, which is banished from the state 49. In Laws, the poet's work is similarly referred to as "honeyed strains" (τὴν γλυκεῖας Μουσικῆς). The Athenian stranger then contrasts this "honeyed kind of music" with that which is "sober and regulated" 50. The former he deems to be "common" or vulgar (κοινήν) 51, and is that which is produced by poets who are later referred to by the Athenian stranger as the "children and offspring of Muses mild" - that is, poets who are divinely inspired 52. The latter type, however, is that which is produced under the guidance of the lawgivers - the philosophers. But the poetry referred to in this passage in Phaedrus appears to be of the "sober and regulated" type, not the "common" type, in that it "educates later generations" 53. Therefore, the inspired poet in Phaedrus appears to be producing work unlike the work which can be assumed to be that of inspired poets in other dialogues, such as Republic, where it is considered harmful and so is banned, and in Laws, where it is carefully regulated and supervised. Given what has been presented above on the inspired poet in these and other dialogues, it is doubtful that the inspired poet in Phaedrus would be able to produce work of such educational value. The commentators who seek to prove a compatibility between the poet's works in Phaedrus and the hymns and encomia of the Republic are perhaps confounding the poetry extant in Plato's day with the poetry of the Ideal State 54. Furthermore, as pointed out by Verdenius, on this passage on poetic inspiration in Phaedrus, "Plato speaks of poetry in general and merely states its edifying influence without passing judgement on it. So he should not be supposed to regard the inspired poet as "the instrument of a divine παιδεία (paideia)", an idea which seems to me to be un-Platonic" 55. However, whether in Phaedrus Plato is serious or ironic as to the worth of the inspired poet's works, and so whether they aid or harm man, can only be finally assessed once the examination of this passage as well as the other references made by Socrates in this dialogue to poets, poetry and inspiration is complete.

In Ion, Socrates contrasts poetic inspiration and skill (τεχνη). He asserts that Ion's ability to speak well on Homer, is based on inspiration and not skill or knowledge (ἐπιστήμην). If Ion were truly skilled, Socrates argues, he would then be able to speak not only on Homer, but also on the other poets. An analogous argument is presented for the poets: that the poet is only able to compose in one genre, such as epic or lyric, and not in all genres, is due to him being inspired and not skilled. Therefore, Socrates determines that to lack skill is a deficiency, for if one possesses skill, one can
be less limited than is Ion. That is, with skill, one’s abilities proceed on the basis of
generalizable principles. One is thus able to determine the commonality between
things and their characteristics. Given that all poets share similar subject matter, if Ion
had possessed skill, he would then have been able to determine the commonality between
them, and thus have been able to speak on other poets as well as he had on Homer.
Socrates presents a similar contrast in Meno, of poetic inspiration and reason.

In Phaedrus, poetic inspiration and skill are once again contrasted. However,
unlike in Ion, where skill and its associated knowledge are championed and inspiration
appears to be disparaged, in Phaedrus, the opposite tack seems to be taken: Socrates
appears to be praising inspiration at the expense of skill. As he asserts, skill alone is not
sufficient for one to become a good poet; rather, inspiration is necessary to become a
good one. But Socrates is not contradicting himself here, since in both dialogues he is
stating that one can be successful without skill, but not without inspiration. For example,
Ion is without skill, but he is inspired, and he is a successful rhapsode. Similarly,
Socrates tells of Tynnichus, a bad poet who had never written a single poem worthy of
note, and so was clearly without skill, but then wrote one poem, which now all consider
very fine, which he describes as “an invention of the Muses”. Therefore, Tynnichus
became successful only after he was inspired, when he wrote a song which then became
“in everyone’s mouth, (and is) almost the finest song we have”. He was thus
transformed by inspiration from being a “bad” poet to being a “good” poet.

In both Ion and Phaedrus, therefore, since poets operate without skill and
knowledge, it is inspiration which enables them to gain success. Similarly, in Meno,
since the statesmen do not have knowledge, it is divine inspiration to which they owe
their eminence. However, according to Plato, when inspired, the poet is possessed by
the Muses, and so is out of his mind. The inspired poet thus acts without full control of
his rational faculties, and his poetry is produced while he is in such a state. As has been
discussed, in Ion, Socrates explains the mechanism by which poetic inspiration, and the
irrationality which it engenders, is transferred from the poet to the rhapsode and thence
to the audience. It can be seen from the audience’s response to Ion’s rendition of
Homer’s work, and Ion’s resulting prosperity, that poetry borne of inspiration is much
appreciated. The audience willingly suspend their disbelief in order to enter the make-
believe world created by the rhapsode and the poet, which enables them to indulge their
emotions. This exercise results in pleasure for the audience and success for the poet.
Thus the success of the inspired poet lies in his ability to induce in the audience an
emotional response to his work. Therefore, in Phaedrus, when Socrates states that a poet
will not be a good poet by skill alone, but by inspiration, he is not praising inspiration at
the expense of skill. However, neither is he making a judgment that the poet is “good”
based on the educational or artistic merit of the poetry produced - rather, Socrates is
referring to the success that the inspired poet has in inducing this emotional response in
his audience or readers, which then leads to his audience being satisfied and to personal
fame and fortune for the poet.

As in this dialogue under discussion, in Gorgias, Socrates also determines that a
poet is without skill, and refers to his ability to produce pleasure and gratification in his
audience. However, it can be argued that in Gorgias, Socrates is positing that in
generating this emotionality in his audience, the poet is not considering the spiritual and
moral welfare of his audience - that is, he is not considering the care of their souls. As Socrates states in *Gorgias*, the good should be the object of all actions, and all that we do should be a means to the good, and not *vice-versa*. As has been discussed, in *Gorgias*, Socrates also argues that poetry is not a science or a skill, but merely a "knack" (ἐμπειρία) 66. If one possesses a skill, one can give an account of one's knowledge and experience. For example, a skilled person such as a carpenter is able to give a rational and ordered account of his productive process. He can thus explain the order and arrangement of what he does, and the types of materials and tools that he uses in order to achieve a functional product or technique. He can then impart this information to others, who are ignorant of such things, so that they can replicate these methods for themselves, and so also become expert. Socrates believes that this process can be applied to moral instruction. That is, just as one who is taught carpentry can then be a carpenter, if one is taught the knowledge of right and wrong, one can then be righteous 67. That this was Socrates' belief, is later affirmed by Aristotle 68. However, a knack, since it is not achieved by skill or knowledge, is unable to give an account of itself, and hence the method by which its results are produced cannot be explained in an objective and structured manner, and so be taught to others and replicated by them. Instead, a knack achieves its results by what Socrates terms a "procedure" (τριβή) 69. This suggests "an activity that can be repeated on many occasions, which happens to work, but for which the agent has no explanation" 70. That this is also the manner in which poetry is composed is consistent with Socrates' argument in several dialogues that in being inspired and possessed by the Muses, the poet has no intellectual awareness or control over the production of his poetry. It would therefore appear that since the inspired poet in *Ion* and *Phaedrus* is without skill or knowledge, he must similarly achieve his results - and his success - by such a knack.

In *Gorgias*, Socrates argues that some occupations, such as poetry, can be classified as a knack because even though pleasure is their aim, they do not make a study of the nature of that pleasure or of the causes which produce it. They are thus unable to differentiate between pleasures which are good and those which are bad. In contrast, other occupations, such as medicine, can be classified as skills, because they aim at the good, and are based on a knowledge of good and bad. Good and bad are thus able to be discerned, and so the means by which one can pursue the good can also be known. Therefore, unlike medicine, poetry, in that it is unable to differentiate between pleasures, is solely concerned with gratification, and not with trying to improve its audience.

It has been argued that in *Phaedrus*, the success of the inspired poet - that which makes him a "good" poet - is based on his ability to induce emotionality in his audience. Further, it can be assumed that this results in their gratification and pleasure, as it is said to do in *Gorgias*. However, in *Gorgias*, as this emotionality is induced in the audience by the poet without regard to their welfare, poetry cannot aim at the good. It could therefore be suggested that in *Phaedrus*, the inspired poet, in inducing this emotionality in his audience, is similarly not considering the care of the souls of his audience. That is, because inspired poetry, in *Phaedrus*, is not based on skill, but instead has been shown to be a knack, it is unable to discern between what is good and what is bad for the audience, and instead, panders to them, behaving "to these assemblies as to children, trying merely to gratify them, nor caring a jot whether they will be be better or
worse in consequence” 71. This is not unlike the behaviour of the inspired rhapsode in Ion, who appears inattentive as to the effects that his performance of Homer’s poetry may have on his audience’s spiritual and moral well-being, but is somewhat more attentive as to how it relates to his own material well-being 72. Therefore, since the inspired poet does not have the knowledge to teach the difference between right and wrong, the audience will not become righteous 73 - no matter how many uplifting tales he tells of the “deeds of the ancients” 74. As Janaway notes, “this is opposed to (that which is based on) a true techne, whose criterion of success is irrespective of pleasurable reaction (sometimes at odds with it), and consists in the production of an object or outcome which is measurable against an objective standard of goodness” 75. Therefore, it appears that in Phaedrus, Plato is presenting inspired poetry as entertaining and so successful. However, in being so, poetry does not edify, and it also harms one’s soul. By this interpretation, poetic inspiration and its products appear to be portrayed in the same manner as has been discussed in this thesis for Apology, Ion and Meno.

However, this interpretation is not in accord with others, who believe that the passage on poetic inspiration in Phaedrus is a positive one, which illustrates the “rehabilitation of poetry as being really, not ironically, inspired” 76. For example, Hackforth considers that while Ion and Meno both emphasize the negative aspect of inspiration (ἐνθισμὸν), and that this is also true for a brief reference in Apology, that it is “in the Phaedrus alone that we find unqualified commendation of the poet’s μνήμη (mania), commendation which almost goes to the length of saying that the inspired poet is all the better for his lack of knowledge” 77. Hackforth argues that this is because Plato is in equal measure a rationalist and a poet, and while in the other dialogues in which poetry is discussed, such as Ion, Apology and Meno, these elements are evenly balanced, in Phaedrus, “the poet definitely gets the upper hand” 78. Tigerstedt believes that this view is popular with Platonic scholars “not least because it seems to give us a glimpse of Plato the man, so curiously absent from his works” 79. Hackforth also comments on what he considers to be the contrast between “the severely critical attitude” of Republic, and that which is shown in the passage in Phaedrus on poetic inspiration 80. However, he does caution that this passage does not imply “indiscriminate admiration of all poetry”, but rather, that admiration should be confined to the type of poetry as is stated therein - the “countless deeds of the ancients” - which is akin to the type of poetry which Socrates classifies as admissible to the Ideal State - the hymns to the gods and encomia of good men 81.

Unlike Hackforth’s view, I suggest that the interpretation which I have presented above on the passage in Phaedrus on poetic inspiration expresses similar views on poets and poetry to that of Republic, which is the dialogue in Plato’s corpus that deals most thoroughly with poetry. That is, I suggest that both Republic and Phaedrus are expressing similar, and critical, attitudes towards poets and poetry. If this can be shown, it would indicate that my interpretation of poetic inspiration and its effects on man’s soul in Phaedrus is relevant to another dialogue, and so has some validity. It would also be congruent with what has been said previously in this thesis, on Ion, Apology and Meno. However, as poetry in Republic will be examined in detail in the next chapter, this discussion will be brief.

Janaway also believes that there is no conflict between the two dialogues
concerning the manner in which Plato is portraying poetry. As he asserts, the notion in *Phaedrus* that skill is insufficient to become a good poet, and that all good poets require the inspiration of the Muses, does not clash with ideas presented in *Republic*, for although it does not mention inspiration in, "this idea is consonant with that dialogue’s chief complaint that poetry is far removed from knowledge". Furthermore, "nothing in the *Republic* requires Plato to believe that those traditionally recognized as good poets are not inspired. So we may assume that the belief in poetic inspiration found in the earlier dialogues had persisted, and surfaces again in *Phaedrus*". The allusions made by Plato to poetic inspiration in *Republic* also suggest that in this dialogue he continued to regard the poets as being divinely inspired. Therefore, it can be assumed that in *Republic*, good poets are those who are also divinely inspired. And, throughout this dialogue, there are indications that the works of such poets are pleasing to men. In the above examination of poetic inspiration in *Phaedrus*, I have argued that inspired poetry is pleasing because it appeals to the emotions of the listener. Similarly, in *Republic*, Socrates argues that poetry appeals to the lower, less rational, aspect of our souls; one that is far removed from reason - the emotions. Further, if he "is to win favour with the multitude", the poet to which Plato refers in *Republic* will prefer to represent "fretful and complicated" characters who are easy to portray and appeal to the emotions, rather than characters of "intelligent and temperate disposition", who are difficult to portray, and appeal to the reasoning aspect of the soul. Therefore, the poet’s success in *Republic* can be said to be directly attributed to his ability to represent characters and situations which appeal to the emotions. However, in doing so, the poet undermines the rule of reason in the souls of his audience.

As in *Phaedrus*, the good poet in *Republic* can be assumed to be inspired. Further, as in *Phaedrus*, the poet of *Republic* is considered good when successful, and this success - favour with the multitude - can be attributed to the emotionality that his works induce in his audience. However, as I have argued for *Phaedrus*, while it may please and gratify the audience and bring success to the poet, this emotionality is induced in the audience by the poet without regard to their welfare. In *Republic*, Socrates similarly determines that it is this very aspect of poetry which does damage to its audience. Indeed, he declares that it is not that the poetry of Homer and others "are not poetic and pleasing to most hearers, but because the more poetic they are the less suited they are to the ears of boys and men" (my italics). Therefore, as Socrates states, just as "men who have fallen in love, if they think that the love is not good for them, hard as though it be, nevertheless refrain" so, too with poetry. For although poetry may be pleasing, because it enganges the emotions, it can also cause damage to the "polity of the soul". Therefore, the poet must be banished from the Ideal State. The interpretation of poetic inspiration in *Phaedrus* presented here thus appears to be in conformity with Plato’s criticism of poetry in *Republic*. It also conforms to that which has been argued previously in this thesis for *Ion*, *Apology* and *Meno*.

Several incidents throughout the dialogue also support this reading of the passage on poetic inspiration, for as Janaway notes, elsewhere in *Phaedrus*, poetry is not particularly praised. For example, when Socrates meets Phaedrus outside of the city walls, and decides to accompany him on a walk into the countryside so that he may hear a speech that Phaedrus carries with him, he admits that his willingness to venture forth is
because he, like Phaedrus, “is sick with the love of discourse”, and so is able to share in Phaedrus’ frenzied enthusiasm (τὸν συγκορυσσόνωντα) 94. However, when he is then asked by Phaedrus as to whether he believes in a mythical event which was supposed to have taken place nearby, Socrates, now hardly acting the Corybant, soberly dismisses the myth, adding that he has no time for such things, since he has not as yet obeyed the Delphic injunction, which is “to know thyself” 95. As he states, “it seems to me ridiculous, when I do not yet know that, to investigate irrelevant things” 96. As has been previously discussed, this self-knowledge is to know that the intellect should rule the body and its emotions. It thus enables one to care for one’s soul 97. This knowledge is the ultimate aim of all those who seek wisdom - that is, philosophers such as Socrates 98. As Hamilton notes, this maxim “expresses the essence of the philosophy of Socrates, who turned philosophy away from the study of external nature to that of man the moral being” 99. Plato’s description of the surroundings in which the antagonists find themselves at this point in the dialogue is a lush and detailed one, which emphasizes the appeal they have to Socrates’ senses 100. Indeed, Socrates appears to be caught between the emotionality generated by their surroundings and the promise of hearing Lysias’ speech and his own rationality as a philosopher. This antithesis between emotion and reason is also evident in Socrates’ reply to Phaedrus’ question as to why he does not often venture beyond the city walls. Socrates declares that it is because he is fond of learning: such country places and trees will not teach him anything, whereas the people in the city - the home of philosophy - do. Therefore, at the very beginning of the dialogue, the powerful lure that the emotions can have, even for a man of reason such as Socrates, is demonstrated. Furthermore, while it may appear that this message is delivered in a light-hearted and almost comical manner by Socrates, this is only true of his expressions of enthusiasm, since in his replies to Phaedrus concerning the precedence of reason to emotion in his philosophical quest, he maintains a serious demeanour.

The metaphor of the Heraclian lodestone in Ion is utilized by Plato to describe the highly infectious nature of poetic inspiration 101. This process is similarly demonstrated by Plato in Phaedrus - albeit with more irony - when Phaedrus, having been inspired by Lysias’ speech 102, then transmits this inspiration to Socrates. It is initially shown when Socrates declares that because they both love discourse, he thus is able to share in Phaedrus’ frenzied enthusiasm (τὸν συγκορυσσόνωντα). When he completes his reading of Lysias’ speech out aloud, Phaedrus then asks Socrates for his opinion of it. Socrates declares it divine (δαιμονικός), and that he is “quite overcome by it”. Further, he indicates that this state is due to Phaedrus: “because as I looked at you, I saw you were delighted by the speech as you read. So, thinking that you know more than I about such matters, I followed in your train and joined you in divine frenzy (συνεβολεκέσκω)” 103. As in Ion, inspiration in Phaedrus is also said to be associated with possession, madness and frenzy 104; all of which indicate a lack of knowledge or reason. As has been discussed 105, since it is by means of inspired individuals that inspiration is transmitted to others, these features must also be transmitted by the inspired individual. This suggests that the language of poetry - or, in this case, rhetoric - carries within it an element of irrationality, which can also be transferred to another. As
the inspired individual, in that he is possessed and so mad, has no understanding of that which he composes or speaks, his poetry or rhetoric cannot be transmitted in a rational manner, but instead, is transmitted in the form of emotions. Therefore, in *Phaedrus*, Plato is once again demonstrating the process by which inspiration is transmitted, and so how its resultant emotionality can be communicated, via language, from one individual to another - in this case, from Lysias, to Phaedrus, to Socrates.

Having been cajoled by Phaedrus into giving a speech of his own, Socrates begins by invoking the Muses 106, as do the poets who request their aid of divine inspiration for their compositions. Socrates’ invocation, although fanciful 107, seems to imply that this speech will be inspired, and he reinforces this notion several times throughout his speech 108. Indeed, Socrates even states that he feels inspired prior to beginning this speech 109, and intimates that is the poets who have inspired him 110. Although Socrates initially states that he cannot remember the names of those who made better speeches on love than did Lysias, he then concedes that it was either Sappho or the “wise” Anacreon. Indeed, it must be they, because he feels that his “bosom is full” 111 and that he has been “filled through the ears, like a pitcher, from the well-springs of another” 112. This latter remark is not unlike the water imagery used in *Laws* of the fountain which is used by Plato to describe the inspiration of the poet - that is, that the Muses “fill” the empty vessel - the poet 113. Such imagery was often used in Greek poetry to indicate poetic fluency 114. Socrates pauses midway through this first speech, to state that not only does he is feel inspired, but also that their environment seems to be “filled with a divine presence”. He warns Phaedrus not to be surprised if he seems to be in a frenzy (νημφοληπτος) (numpholeptos) - that is, if he is caught by nymphs 115 - as the discourse progresses, since he is already uttering dithyrambs 116. Many ancient writers refer to this condition, including Aristotle, who wrote that possession by nymphs was a form of divine inspiration 117. Socrates then moves from this poetic metre to end his speech with an hexameter 118. According to Connor, in classical times, possessed individuals were often said to speak in verse. This verse was mainly in hexameters, although dithyrambic verse was also associated with divine inspiration and possession 119. Socrates declares that in using this metre, it shows that he has indeed become possessed of the nymphs to which he was exposed by Phaedrus. From the moment he begins this speech, Socrates declares himself inspired. Furthermore, during the speech, he lapses into verse and continues as such until he completes his speech. Therefore, it would seem that Plato, in portraying Socrates’ speech in this manner, is implying that poetry is “the natural expression of such a state” 120. That is, that poetry is the natural medium of the inspired state.

Both prior to, and throughout, this speech, Socrates declares, several times, that it was the result of being compelled by Phaedrus 121. He later disavows responsibility for the speech, declaring it to be the work of Phaedrus. Indeed, Socrates states that the speech was “spoken” by Phaedrus, but through his own mouth, which Phaedrus had “bewitched” 122. Socrates’ insistence on having been compelled by Phaedrus to make this speech may indicate that Plato’s use of the magnetic metaphor of *lon* concerning the manner in which inspiration is transmitted from one individual to another, is being continued. If this is so, then Socrates, in being inspired and so possessed, can therefore claim - as he does - that since it was not he who created the speech, he cannot be held
responsible for its content 123.

By having Socrates invoke the Muses prior to beginning his first speech, and then by having him suggestively refer to inspiration twice more in the course of the speech 124, Plato implies that this speech is divinely inspired 125. However, Socrates then admits that this speech was both deceptive and irreverent 126, and determines that in order to make amends to the god, he must make a second speech, in the form of a palinode or recantation. But if Socrates’ inspired speech, which is in poetic form, is deceptive and irreverent, then this indicates that poetic inspiration cannot be regarded as a reliable guide to the truth 127. The Athenian public of this period believed poetry to be an expression of moral and civic values 128. However, if, as Plato suggests here, such discourse is not a reliable guide to the truth, then it follows that any discourse expressed in such a form may be harmful to those who pay it heed. This conclusion concerning Socrates’ first speech thus supports this thesis’ interpretation of the Phaedrus passage on poetic inspiration. However, it should also be noted that if poetic inspiration is indeed the communication of emotions as has been previously argued 129, then it is the communication of these emotions which is harmful in poetic discourse, and is that which causes it to be unreliable as regards the truth.

If, as Hackforth and others believe 130, that in Socrates’ second speech, where he discusses poetic inspiration as one of the four kinds of divine madness, it is true that Plato’s “praise seems to be unreserved” 131, and that he displays “unqualified commendation for the poet’s mania” 132, then this attitude is in curious contrast to a statement that is made later in the same discourse, where Socrates appears critical of the poet. In his myth concerning the nature of the soul, Socrates describes the soul’s fall and its incarnations. It is within this context that he refers to a descending scale, in which souls are ranked “according to the fullness of their vision of true Being” 133. On this scale, he ranks the soul of the poet - “or some other imitative artist” (ποιητικος η των περι μιμησιν τις αλλος) 134, the sixth position out of a possible nine. This is immediately below one who leads “the life of a prophet (μαντικον βιον) or someone who conducts mystic rites”. A “sophist or a demagogue” takes the eighth position, and the tyrant the ninth 135. As Janaway observes, “(O)those inclined to think that “Plato’s true voice” must be showing through in the opening praise of poetry find this low rating rather a shock” 136. It is worth noting that even though in several other dialogues in which he discusses poetic inspiration, Plato likens poets to seers and prophets - which could lead one to assume that he considers them all equally - in this dialogue, the soul of the poet is placed below that of the seer or prophet 137, indicating that the soul of the poet has seen less than the seer or prophet’s soul of the realm of the gods, and so less of the “absolute justice, temperance and knowledge...that which abides in the real eternal absolute” that is associated with such a vision 138. Therefore, the soul of the poet, in that it has seen little of the knowledge of these important matters, is classified accordingly in the ranking of souls.

This passage on the ranking of souls also refers to the poet’s lack of knowledge, a characteristic of the poet which is discussed in each of the Platonic dialogues that have been examined thus far that deal with poetic inspiration. Socrates states that while the best souls are able to follow the gods, and so complete the revolution of the heavens and see something of the knowledge contained therein, others are unable to do so, and so see
“some things and fail to see others” 39. Therefore, some souls have knowledge, while others do not. Socrates’ comparison of the soul to a winged charioteer and his team of two horses explains the disparity in performance between these souls. While the charioteers and horses of the gods are all good, and come from good stock, those of mortals are a mixture of good and bad. The allegory of the charioteer and his horses is employed by Socrates to describe the nature of the soul and of its composite elements: reason, spirit and appetite 40. In those souls in which these elements are in harmony, the charioteer is able to control his team, and so is able to follow the gods more easily, complete the revolution of the heavens and see something of the knowledge displayed there. However, in those souls in which these elements are in conflict, the horses are unruly, and the charioteer has difficulty in controlling them. The team is thus less able to follow the gods, and complete the revolution of the heavens. The soul therefore sees less of the knowledge displayed there. Because the poet’s soul has seen less of the realm of the gods, he is ranked lower in the order of lives than others, and so can be compared to the winged charioteer with the unruly team of horses. Therefore, the poet’s soul is that in which the elements of reason, spirit and appetite are in conflict - where one element may dominate over the other two. Since the poet has been said to lack knowledge, it is not the element of reason. And, if reason does not rule, the soul is at the mercy of the body and its passions. Therefore, the poet’s soul is that which is ruled by the emotions, not reason. However, as has been shown, Plato believes that reason should direct men’s lives by ruling over and controlling the body and its passions 41. To know this is to care for one’s soul. This, he believes, should be the aim of every individual and every state. But if the poet is not able to do this, he cannot teach others by his example. Without access to reason, the poet’s works are created by emotion, and transmitted to others, in this form. As has been argued, this emotionality is harmful to man’s soul 42. This view of the poet thus corresponds to this thesis’ reading of the passage on poetic inspiration, and so eliminates the possibility of a contradiction between this passage and the one discussed above, on the ranking of souls. Further, it is also in accord with the arguments on poetic inspiration previously presented in this thesis for Ion, Apology and Meno.

Finally, the ending of this dialogue, where Plato criticizes the written word, asserting the superiority of the spoken word, also suggests a negative attitude toward poetry and the poets, which corresponds to the interpretation of the passage on poetic inspiration in Phaedrus that is given in this thesis, and that which has been discussed above concerning Socrates’ references to poets, poetry and inspiration elsewhere in the dialogue. The myth that Socrates relates to Phaedrus concerning the invention of writing by the Egyptian god Theuth delineates his belief that one cannot, through the medium of writing, either transmit or acquire knowledge of an art or techne (τεχνη) 43. As Socrates asserts in the telling of the myth, writing may be harmful to its users in that it encourages forgetfulness and discourages the exercise of memory; this is because one becomes reliant on these external signs, and not on one’s own inner resources, in order to remember. Further, Socrates states that the written word can also make one appear wise, when one is not, and that it allows those who receive information from writing to believe that they are knowledgeable, when in fact they are ignorant. Therefore, although it may seem that the written word teaches, all it can really do is remind one of what one already knows.
These criticisms have also been equally applied, by Socrates, to the medium of poetry. Just as those who receive their information from writing, Socrates argues that poets and rhapsodes also believe they have knowledge of the skills of which they write, speak and perform, when they really do not. For example, in Apology, Socrates consults the poets, because they appear wise, in that they have a "reputation for wisdom" 144 - but instead discovers that they are not. Indeed, it is "on account of their poetry", that the poets believe themselves to be "the wisest of men in other things as well, in which they were not" 145. Similarly, Ion is able to perform Homer in a manner which is convincing to an audience, and so appears wise. But his ability in rhapsodic performance does not mean that he is then able to discern whether the skill that is being described by Homer is being depicted accurately 146, or that he is able to give an objective and rational account of those skills 147. However, when Ion is questioned by Socrates, it can be clearly seen that the rhapsode believes that he does possess knowledge of these skills, and is unaware of his own ignorance, even arguing strenuously against Socrates in support of his belief. It can be assumed then, that the poet’s audience, may also appear wise, when they are not, and think themselves wise, when they are not, because they similarly believe that they possess the knowledge of the skills that are described in the poet’s works which they read and hear, and so act accordingly. Because the poet is thought wise, and is lauded by society as a moral and civic educator, then the public, as the recipients of the poet’s wisdom, can also expect that they will appear wise, and be wise, from ingesting these works. Therefore, such individuals who believe that they have received knowledge and skills from poetry are no different to those who receive their information from writing; both are filled with the "conceit of wisdom instead of real wisdom", and as such, will prove a burden to society 148.

When Socrates completes the telling of the myth concerning the invention of writing, Phaedrus casts dispersions upon its message, because, as he states, Socrates has the facility to "make up stories of Egypt or any country (that) you please" 149. In reply, Socrates scolds Phaedrus, stating that whereas people were once content to hear the prophetic words of an oak or a rock, "provided only it spoke the truth", now, to people such as Phaedrus, "it makes a difference who a speaker is and where he comes from" 150. Socrates’ words reflect something that has been noted 151 - Phaedrus’ tendency, with regard to discourse, to prefer style over content; to attend to the sound of the language, rather than to the rigour of the argument. It is evident that Phaedrus enjoys the emotionality that is induced by words and prefers it to the mental discipline required of logic. As has been argued, the emotionality that words impart is the reason for the success of poetry 152. However, because it can so easily impress one, poetry, or, for that matter, any discourse with similar appeal 153, can also be dangerous to man if it does not consider the truth - the good 154. But this can only occur if one has knowledge, and according to Socrates, poets, being inspired, do not. Therefore, poets do not speak or write with the correct end in sight. That is, they do not, by their works, consider the betterment of their audience’s souls 155. Indeed, Socrates has introduced this topic under discussion, concerning the propriety and impropriety of writing, in the exactly the same way: how to determine "the theory and practice which will best please God, as far as words are concerned" 156. Socrates’ rebuke to Phaedrus is therefore an attempt to explain to him this very point - that what is of importance is not the origin of the story or
the style of the discourse, but the truth of the story - its content. With regard to discourse, it appears that there is a choice to be made between pleasure and the good. Phaedrus, now properly chastened, agrees with Socrates concerning the myth’s conclusions about writing.

Socrates continues his criticism of the written word by comparing it to painting. Paintings, he states, although they may “stand like living beings”, are unable to reply if one asks them a question, and instead “preserve a solemn silence”. Similarly, written words may appear to speak “as if they had intelligence, but if you question them, wishing to know about their sayings, they always say only one and the same thing”. Furthermore, words, once written, can then be circulated among not only those who understand, but also those who do not - as Socrates states, “it knows not to whom to speak or not to speak”. Finally, the written word is unable to defend itself, needing always “its father to help it”. Similar criticisms to these are made by Socrates (as well as by Plato, in his own voice), elsewhere in the dialogues, but in reference to poetry. For example, in Lesser Hippias, Socrates states to Hippias that they should consider not including Homer’s works in their discussion, “since it is impossible to ask him what he meant when he made those verses”. Also, in Protagoras, Socrates argues the pointlessness of trying to determine the meaning of poets’ works, since “one cannot question (them) on the sense of what they say; when they are adduced in a discussion we are generally told by some that the poet thought so and so, and by others, something different, and they go on arguing about a matter which they are powerless to determine”. In Protagoras, Socrates argues that the thinking behind the poetry is lost to the reader because the poet is not present, and so cannot be questioned. Without dialogue, there can be no give and take of argument, no questioning, and no searching for definitions. Therefore, there can be no maieutic process in poetry, in which the truth is drawn out from within the individual’s soul. As Coby notes, “(p)oetry as a genre is unreceptive to interrogation, and particular poems are susceptible to specious explication that the poems themselves can neither substantiate or refute.” Indeed, that this is so, is later determined by Socrates in Phaedrus, when he declares that: “no written discourse, whether in metre or in prose, deserves to be treated very seriously (and this applies also to the recitations of the rhapsodes, delivered to sway people’s minds, without opportunity for questioning and teaching)...” (my italics). Thus poetry is open to anyone’s opinion, and manifold interpretations. But no truth is such - truth can only be that which is a unity and not a composite. It could be argued then, that what can be gained from poetry - and so the written word - can only be belief and not knowledge. As Adam and Adam contend, the purpose of the analysis of Simonides’ poem in Protagoras is “to show by demonstration that poetry does not teach virtue because in poetry there is no knowledge. There cannot be knowledge in the written words of the poets...for knowledge implies the power to ask and answer questions - its method is, in short, dialectic”.

However, if it were possible for a poet to compose his “writings with knowledge of the truth”, and then “support them by discussion of that which he has written, and has the power to show by his own speech that the written words are of little worth”, then Socrates believes that such a man need not be called a poet, but instead, he could fairly be called a “lover of wisdom” (φιλοσοφόν). On the other hand, when a man
has "nothing more valuable than the things he has composed or written, turning his words up and down at his leisure, adding this phrase and that and taking that away", he can only be rightly called "a poet, or a writer of speeches or of laws" 171.

Therefore, because words are in themselves mute, they need one to defend them. However, as has been shown, both in Phaedrus and in the previous dialogues discussed, a poet, being inspired and so possessed, is without knowledge of that which he writes 172. Therefore, he is unable to enter into a dialogue with another in order to defend those words. As Guthrie observes, "to change men's habits of thought requires personal contact, and for Plato...philosophy and dialektike (which ordinarily meant conversation) were two names for the same thing" 173. Socrates concludes that although the written word may prove useful as an aide-mémoire to the author and readers of what they know, it really should be seen as a pastime or recreation (παραδοχα), rather than as a serious business (σπουδή) 174 which can treat topics of great importance. Such topics belong to the art of dialectic, and are not written in ink, but in the soul of the learner.

Similarly, poetry can be seen as a pastime. As Socrates states: "no written discourse, whether in metre or in prose, deserves to be treated very seriously" (my italics) 175. Unlike poetry, which, as has been shown in this thesis, can harm man's soul, dialectic, in that it can "defend itself and knows to whom it should speak, and before whom it should be silent" 176, thus allows of knowledge and skill, and so can aid man's soul in guiding him to the truth - the knowledge of just and the good and beautiful. This, Socrates believes, is what truly makes man happy, in contrast to the fleeting amusement to be gained by the written word and poetry. This contrast is delineated in Socrates' comparison of "the garden of Adonis" and the garden of the serious farmer 177. Adonis, a mythical figure who was said to have died untimely, "was celebrated by forcing plants in shallow vessels, like our window boxes, so that they produced blooms without being properly rooted" 178. Therefore, Socrates' reference to the "garden of Adonis" indicates the transient pleasure of the written word, where one is granted little but emotions, as compared to the serious pursuit of the sensible "farmer" - one who uses dialectic, and "plant(s) his seeds in fitting ground" 179, and so has something of worth, of permanence - true wisdom and understanding.

Therefore, what is stated in Phaedrus, concerning the written word, has been shown in other Platonic dialogues to be applicable to poetry. This then indicates a correspondence between this criticism and what has been discussed above concerning Socrates' views on poetic inspiration in Phaedrus. Further, what has been discussed in this thesis concerning poetic inspiration in Phaedrus, is akin to that which has been shown for Ion, Apology and Meno.

Laws

As with Republic, Laws can also be said to be "a broad, comprehensive account of human life (βίος)" 1, where education is considered pivotal to the running of the state. Indeed, according to Jaeger, Laws is devoted to the construction of a powerful educational system 2. And, as in Republic, poetry in Laws is discussed in regard to its role in this system of education. The several references to poetic inspiration in Laws are mainly related to this concern. However, unlike Republic, which does not overtly describe the poets as inspired 3, in Laws, as in Ion, Apology, Meno and Phaedrus, poets
are again depicted as inspired. It could even be said that the role that poetry plays in the educational system outlined in *Laws* is the result of Plato taking their inspired state, and its effects on man, into consideration. Consequently, in order to understand what Plato means by poetic inspiration in this dialogue, it is thus necessary to examine it with regard to the role of poetry in his system of education. As this examination is also necessary to understand what Plato means by poetic *mimeis* in *Laws*, it will provide the basis for that discussion, in the next chapter, as well.

While *Republic* presents a theoretical ideal for education, *Laws* displays its practical application 4. Unlike *Republic*, the educational system in *Laws* caters to all free citizens, and not just to a select group; although, as in the former, there is in *Laws* a brief discussion of such an education 5. Further, in *Laws*, education begins at a much earlier age than in *Republic*. Thus the elite higher education of *Republic* gives way in *Laws* to a plan which aims to educate a far wider group 6. Jaeger notes that while in *Republic* Plato's chief purpose was “to test the content and form of “music” by the new ethical and metaphysical standards set up by his philosophy”, *Laws* shows him “chiefly interested in the psychological basis of education” 7. That is, the effects that education and so, poetry, has on the individual's soul. It has been the argument of this thesis that in his dialogues concerning poetic inspiration, Plato's criticism of inspired poetry is because of the harm that it can do to man's soul in its blocking of the rule of reason, which then affects his overall harmony and well-being. In *Laws*, Plato demonstrates that while he still considers this to be so, it is also possible to utilize inspired poetry in such a way which allows it to be beneficial in its effects to both man and the state.

*Laws* opens on a discussion between three elderly gentleman, an unnamed Athenian, whom some consider represents Plato himself 8, Clinias, a Cretan, and Megillus, a Spartan, on the origins and purpose of the laws of the Dorian states. The Athenian stranger determines, from Clinias' account of the laws and customs of his country, that as these laws predominantly emphasize courage and physical endurance, their aim can only be to ensure victory in war over all other states. Clinias agrees that this must be so, since continual conflict is the natural human condition at both an individual and a state level. As he states, “in the mass, all men are both publicly and privately the enemies of all, and individually also each man is his own enemy” 9. Further, he asserts that this means that while victory of self may be the “first and best” of all victories, self-defeat is “the worst and most shameful” of all defeats 10. Guthrie notes that this observation introduces a familiar theme from the Platonic dialogues - the “internal tension between a man’s better and his worse self, of mastering or being mastered by oneself, in short of the virtue of sophrosyne” 11. The Athenian suggests to the two Doriens that the genuine lawgiver can only be one who designs laws which promote peace and harmony among men 12, and not war and discord.

Employing the works of the poets Tyrtaeus 13 and Theognis 14, the Athenian then illustrates how the Dorian laws are inadequate because they concentrate solely on courage at the expense of the other virtues. Although he appears to hail Tyrtaeus as an “inspired” poet (ποιητος όπιστος), who “seems both wise and good (my italics)” 15, the Athenian's proposal that good laws should instead be designed to inculcate all parts of virtue - “goodness as a whole” (ποταμον αρετην) 16 - is in disagreement with Tyrtaeus' high praise of courage. The Athenian thus sides with Theognis, who teaches
that all virtues are comprised of justice. Therefore, not only courage should be addressed by laws, but also justice (δίκαιοσύνη), self-control (σωφροσύνη) and wisdom (φρονησις). But as the Athenian observes, even the Spartan’s system of training with regard to courage is lacking, for this virtue is more than just the resisting of fear and pain, it is also the battling of desires and pleasures, with their “dangerous enticements and flatters, which melt men’s hearts like wax” 17. This notion also makes an appearance elsewhere in the Platonic dialogues. As in Laws, Socrates suggests in Laches that there are many forms of courage, including the resisting of pleasures and desires 18, and in Republic, he discusses the possibility of testing young men to see if they are able to resist pleasures and desires and yet maintain the “true rhythm and harmony” of their being 19. In Laws, the drinking parties (συμμοσια) that the Athenian advocates would be able to function as an educational device in which individuals could be safely exposed to such testing 20. As Belfiore notes, although this passage on symposia has been “much scorned and neglected” 21, its philosophical basis is important to the construction of this dialogue’s system of laws and education. Indeed, the Athenian later determines that “when men are investigating the subject of laws their investigation deals almost entirely with pleasures and pains, whether in States or individuals” 22. As he observes, this is because the way in which an individual experiences pleasures and pains can affect one’s life, for one must be able to draw out the right amount from the right one at the right time. If this is done, one will live a happy, and so virtuous life, but if it is not, then one will fare adversely 23. Therefore, legislation is regarded by the Athenian as a training in virtue. This training has as its aim a resolution of the conflict which exists at an individual and state level, in order to create harmony in both the individual and the state. And while it may not appear to benefit the state to train any one individual in such a manner, as the Athenian argues, when citizens are thus trained, it is of great benefit to the state - for this will make them good men, and it is good men that enable a state to succeed 24. Therefore, it could be said that the training, or care, of the individual soul is that which aids the welfare of the state.

From this discussion of laws, the talk between the three gentleman seems to lead naturally to education, for as the Athenian says, it is impossible to discuss a correct theory of culture if one does not first consider the subject of education. Indeed, he believes that law is a form of education. Therefore, if law is a training in virtue, then so is education. As the Athenian states, education is “a training from childhood in goodness (αρετην), which makes a man desirous of becoming a perfect citizen, understanding of how to rule and be ruled righteously” 25. However, the Athenian does specify that the term “education” does not refer to “banusic” (βανουσιον) activities; that is, those which are “vulgar and illiberal”, in that they aim at making money or cultivating physical strength 26, but rather, it should be reserved only for that which is guided by reason and justice.

In Republic, it is the philosopher who is also the ruler, “the man of natural wisdom perfected by Platonic education culminating in mathematics and dialectic” 27. Plato believes that because such a man would always know the right thing to do, in every circumstance, and since “no law or ordinance is mightier than Knowledge (ἐπιστημη)” 28, the philosopher is thus qualified to rule autonomously, without the
need of laws. That is, because his education is so perfect, legislation is rendered superfluous. However, in *Statesman*, although it is clear that Plato still believes in this ideal, in that if one so "preeminently fitted in body and mind" did exist, he would be welcomed, and would direct "to their weak as sole ruler a perfectly right form of government", Plato now admits it unlikely that "there could ever be any one worthy of such power or willing and able by ruling with virtue and justice and equity rightly to all". In *Laws*, Plato maintains this position. Therefore, for the state of Magnesia, the "second-best" is chosen - "ordinance and law, which see and discern general principle, but are unable to see every instance in detail". Therefore, while in *Republic*, it is the philosopher-king who carries the idea of Good in his soul, and uses it as a "pattern for the right ordering of the state and the citizens". In *Laws*, it is the citizens who must now know good in its more general aspects. Education is thus vital to instituting this system of law, for as the Athenian notes, if one has the correct training or education, one, as a rule, will become good. This education is therefore based on right belief, not knowledge. This is also shown in *Republic*, where as Grube notes, "the goodness of the majority of men...is based on right belief only, though it ultimately derives from the knowledge of others". This is not to say that Plato renounces higher education in *Laws*, but rather, that when dealing with a majority, it is unsuitable. Therefore, Plato is more concerned in *Laws* with the education of the masses.

*Laws* also stresses early education. Plato is described as being the first to recognize that certain preconditions exist for intellectual growth. In *Republic*, Socrates posits that because the beginning of any thing is its most important period, "especially for any creature that is young and tender", it is at this time that "it is best moulded and takes the impression that one wishes to stamp upon it". Socrates also refers to this critical period for nurture in *Euthyphro*. In *Laws*, the Athenian similarly emphasizes the importance of the earliest stages of growth in every living creature in stating that they are "by far the largest and the longest growth". It therefore appears that it is because of these conditions - what Jaeger terms "the plantlike element in ethical or biological perfection" (author's italics) - that education in *Laws* commences at an early age. According to the Athenian, early childhood is also the period in which the child initially feels the sensations of pleasure and pain, and it is via these that virtue and vice first enter the soul. This corresponds with what has earlier been determined; that is, that the way in which an individual experiences such pleasures and pains can affect one's life. Education is thus defined as the correct channeling of these feelings, before the child is able to comprehend a rational account for this. When he is able to comprehend such things rationally, his reason and his emotions then agree. This indicates to the child that he has been correctly trained or "educated" with regard to pleasure and pain, "so as to hate what ought to be hated...and to love what ought to be loved". Children's feelings of pleasure and pain can be correctly channelled by using their games, in order for them to be imbued with a liking for the occupation in which they will have to work successfully as an adult. Therefore, they learn through play - *paidia* (παιδία) thus becomes *paideia* (παιδεία). For example, by allowing a child who intends to be a builder, to be surrounded by miniature versions of the tools of his future trade, and to spend his time playing at building toy houses, the child will then develop a liking in his soul for that trade in which he must work. As has already been noted by the Athenian,
such an example can be regarded more as technical training than "education". However, a child can be similarly educated in virtue. That is, educated so as to attain this general concord between reason and emotion. This harmony (συμφωνία), the Athenian believes, is best achieved with the aid of the musical arts or mousike - poetry, music and dance.

In his emphasis on the primacy of musical education, Plato is not expressing in Laws an idiosyncratic viewpoint; rather, his words reflect the importance that these musical arts played in the education and lives of the ancient Greeks. The Athenian proposes an explanation for the hold that these arts have on man, and, in doing so, develops a method by which the musical arts can be best employed to serve the interests of the individual and the state in the creation of peace and harmony. That is, the method is designed so that right habits can be reinforced by the musical arts to reflect the will, and thus, the law, of the state. If this can be done, then the citizens, with the aid of the musical arts, will love and hate according to what the law prescribes and forbids.

According to the Athenian, "an account (λόγος) that is harped on nowadays" states that children have an innate restlessness, and so are unable to keep either their bodies or their tongues still. Instead, they are "always striving to move and to cry, leaping and skipping and delighting in dances and games, and uttering, also, noises of every description". To this description he adds that children are also innately "fiery" - that is, they are naturally spirited or mettlesome. Yet despite this disorderly nature, the child, alone among young animals, possesses a "dormant rational element" (author's italics), in that it is sensitive to the order that exists in bodily movements and vocalizations. However, the rational element in the child is overwhelmed by "the flood of sensations which come surging in upon the soul,...(which) give rise to all kinds of disorderly impulses and affectations...some considerable time must elapse before the submerged reason can rise to the surface and assert itself." This is also indicated by Plato in Timaeus. The order in motion which the child is able to recognize can be termed "rhythm" (ρυθμός), and the order in voice, "harmony" (αρμονία). Plato believes that rhythm and harmony have powerful effects on the soul of the individual. As he has Socrates state in Republic, "education in music (μουσική) is most sovereign, because more than anything else rhythm and harmony find their way to the immost soul and take strongest hold upon it, bringing with them and imparting grace, if one is rightly trained, and otherwise the contrary". Indeed, in Laws, man's ability to perceive rhythm and harmony is considered to be a gift of the gods, for it is this which induces one to move and vocalize, and so join with others to dance and sing. Further, it is also that which causes one delight. Since the rational element within these arts is a gift of the gods, the Athenian thus postulates that education must owe its origin to Apollo and the Muses.

In his description of the nature of the child, the Athenian thus determines that the child is bound by certain instincts as well as the love of pleasure and the dislike of pain: "the love of mimicry" (μυθησις), "delight in the motion of the limbs" and "delight in the motion of the tongue and vocal cords". This is "the human material which the Educator has to lick into shape" (author's italics). However, in order to educate the child, so that he hates what ought to be hated, and loves what ought to be loved,
according to society’s dictates, the emotions of pleasure and pain which are generated by these irregular movements and vocalizations must be made to correspond with his dormant rational element. But rather than inhibiting and repressing these natural tendencies, the Athenian suggests a method by which the child can be educated which utilizes them. As the Athenian has already noted, it is the child’s sense of rhythm and harmony which induces it to sing and dance, and from this he derives pleasure. Therefore, the Athenian suggests that song and dance—music and gymnastics—be blended together, as choristry, to effect the purpose of educating the child to virtue.

The classical Athenians believed that a complete education was one in which both music and gymnastics were used to train man’s intellectual and physical aspects. But as Socrates notes in Republic, this is not done, as some suppose, so as to isolate these two aspects from each other, “to treat the body by one and the soul by the other”. As man has both these elements in his nature, and they interact with each other, the treatment of the body necessarily has an effect on the disposition of the mind. The aim of such training should therefore be “ordained...chiefly for the soul’s sake” with a balance being maintained between the treatments of the mind and the body—what Socrates calls “the harmonious adjustment of these two principles by the proper degree of tension and relaxation of each”. Plato also discusses the importance of maintaining such “symmetry” in Timaeus. In Laws, the Athenian suggests the establishment of choruses to bring about this alliance of the mind and body; this would allow the child’s emotional disorder, induced by his movements and vocalizations, to marry with his latent sense of order, rhythm and harmony. Therefore, if choral training allows an individual to achieve a concord between his reason and his emotion, it fulfills the definition of what the Athenian has stated is necessary for one to be considered virtuous and so educated. That is, it must inculcate right principles into the individual, which would result in the adoption of habits appropriate for one desirous of becoming a perfect citizen who understands how to rule and be ruled as justice demands. The Athenian’s confidence in the feasibility of this account is shown in his declaration that “an educated man” is one who is “fully chorus-trained”.

The application of the theory which the Athenian expounds on education, concerning the correct discipline of the child’s feelings of pleasure and pain, is in the harnessing of the child’s irregular movements and vocalizations, from which he derives pleasure. These are given expression in the regulated dancing and singing of a chorus. There, order is imposed on the child’s soul in the training of these natural movements—“on the bodily movements by teaching rhythm, and on those of the voice by teaching harmony”. By this conditioning, the child is then able to associate the pleasure which he had formerly felt when making these random movements and vocalizations with the rhythmical and harmonious activities of choral training. The music to which the child is exposed in the chorus is also an integral part of this conditioning process. The Greeks believed that that there was a correspondence between types or “modes” of music and modes of feeling. Therefore, music was thought to be imbued with a moral significance. Since as the Athenian states, the aim of education is to teach the child to be a good individual and so a good citizen, the music which accompanies the choral activities must necessarily be of the type which represents the feelings of the good man. That is, it must be the type of music in which the good man would take pleasure.
Therefore, the musical arts, via these choral activities, are used to instill right principles into the child. These principles, through the music, and through the order instilled in his soul by the rhythm of the dance movements and the harmony of the songs, are thus linked to the pleasure the child feels when he performs in the chorus.

Two lines of Platonic reasoning are important to this educational theory and its method of application in *Laws*. The first concerns Plato’s psychological explanation in *Timaeus* on the use of external motion to quieten the internal motions of the individual’s soul. The second concerns the Damoian theory on the effects of music on the soul, to which Socrates refers in *Laches* and *Republic*, and in *Laws* is applied to the training of choruses. This association of musical modes with moral feelings has been briefly mentioned above, and will be discussed in greater depth in the next chapter, on *mimesis*. With regard to the first, in order to understand fully the importance of motion, such as dance, and so the role of the chorus, on the education of the individual’s soul in *Laws*, one must look to Plato’s dialogue *Timaeus*, where man’s first contact with the world is described. As elsewhere in Plato’s dialogues, the human soul in *Timaeus* is seen as divided, and sustaining a motion of its own. When the gods first introduce the immortal aspect of the soul, to its mortal and corporeal aspect, great confusion arises, since it is now linked not only to the irrational feelings and passions associated with the mundane, but also to an entity which, like itself, is in motion. Moreover, it is now subject to external sensations, which further add to its chaos. Thus when “the Soul is bound within a mortal body it becomes at first irrational.” Not only is this newly incarnated soul incapable of rational thought, but it is also “full of falsehood and folly.” The calming of the soul so that rational life becomes possible occurs with the “cessation of physical growth and development” as well as with proper training.

In *Laws*, when the Athenian discusses the importance of movement in a child’s education, he notes that just as the music and dancing of the Corybantes is said to cure certain pathological states in which the afflicted person is overcome by a desire to dance, so too a child’s restlessness is cured not by stillness and quiet, but by the movement and noise made by the mother when rocking the child in her arms and humming a lullaby to him. The Athenian believes that both these states - the Corybantism and the child’s restlessness - are brought about by fear (φόβος), the result of “a poor condition of the soul.” If treated by vigorous movement, this external motion cancels out their internal agitations, and induces a calm and peace. Thus with these methods, those who are afflicted with Corybantism are restored to mental health, and a wakeful child is lulled into sleeping. Therefore, since the soul of the child is still in a state of inner turmoil, the educational methods used in the choral training of *Laws* - the external motion created by singing and dancing - would similarly act as a therapy to calm the soul and allow for the emergence of rational thinking, where reason and emotions are in concordance. Indeed, in *Timaeus*, it is said that the rhythm and harmony of music act as “an auxiliary to the inner revolution of the Soul...to assist in restoring it to order and concord with itself.”

This process of education via music, is described by the Athenian as a “drawing and guiding” (ολκὴ ὁ λὶ καὶ σωματι) of the child’s soul. In *Phaedrus*, this form of gentle persuasion is termed *psychagogia*, the art of leading souls (ψυχοκουσια). As law is a form of education, the legal system of the state described in *Laws* should also function in the same way. The preambles to the laws serve this purpose, for their
function is to persuade, to direct the soul to what is right, rather than to dictate. The educational and legal systems of Laws are devised so as to persuade the soul that the feelings and passions to which one’s body falls prey must be trained and disciplined, under the guidance of reason. The achievement of this concord, the Athenian believes, enables one to act as a moral individual, and so be a good citizen. To choose reason to rule over one’s emotions and passions is thus to choose the good for one’s soul, and for one’s state. In Laws, the Athenian seeks to persuade one that to make this choice, to live the good life, is also a choice to live a life which is the most pleasant. Rather than the most pleasant being seen as that which is good, he aims to persuade the individual that the good is that which is the most pleasant. The method by which the soul is guided to this knowledge in Laws, which employs the singing and dancing of choral training, is also the most pleasant for the individual. This educational system, in that it directs the soul to the good life, and utilizes a method which can establish this as the most pleasant life that one can choose, is thus consistent with the philosophical principles set down elsewhere by Plato in his dialogues.

The role of the chorus is thus central to the educational system of Laws. But what is the function of the poet within this educational system? The chorus began as a troupe of dancers who sang, to the accompaniment of music, under the supervision of a leader. These troupes were composed of “citizen-amateurs”, who performed in public religious ceremonies as well as at semi-religious ones, such as banquets, weddings, funerals and harvests. Choruses competed at the Panhellenic games and at the lesser, regional festivals. The famous Parthenon frieze by Phidias, of the Panatheniac procession, is a depiction of such a chorus. Poets composed the lyrics to the songs sung by the choruses. The first choral lyrics were dithyrambic, dedicated to the god Dionysus. Indeed, it is generally believed that tragedy had its origin in this form of choral lyric. Originally, poets also composed their own music to fit the words. The Greeks believed that words and music were intimately connected, for as Socrates states in Gorgias, prose is only poetry stripped of its melody, its rhythm and its metre. Therefore, these elements, which we now tend to see as being purely musical in nature, were seen by the Greeks as being the constituents of poetry. As the Athenian states in Laws, the union of these elements forms “choristry”, and, as with poetry, were given to man as gifts by the gods. Plato acknowledges the powerful influence that these elements have on men’s souls, and notes in Laws that it is our pleasurable perception of them which differentiate us from the other animals. Therefore, it is the poet, via the Muses, who is responsible for these elements in the choral performance that so influence the souls of men.

It has thus been established that the poet was central to the chorus in ancient Athens. As choruses were composed of delegates from each of the ten Athenian tribes, they were representative of the community. They also allowed a great many individuals to participate in the political, religious and cultural life of that community, as well as in competitions not only with other tribes, but also with other city-states. It could be argued, therefore, that both the performances of these choruses as well as the experience of performing in them, promoted social cohesion. Further, in that they were an integral part of many of the political, religious and cultural events of the community, choruses also reinforced the traditional values of the state. This corresponds with what has been
previously established in this thesis, that the poet in ancient Athens was believed to fulfill a didactic role, and his work was thus expected to imbue the populace with a sense of unity and civic virtue. As the chorus in Laws is similarly employed, one would presume, then, that the poet, as the architect of the chorus, is central to this dialogue’s educational system. As such, would he not be lauded, just as he was in Athens, as the educator of society? However, this is not the case in Laws.

Although it is the poet who composes the choral works required by the state to educate its citizens, he is not given artistic license in Laws to determine the specifications of those works. This is contrary to what is indicated in Aristophanes’ Frogs, for example, where Aeschylus appears to be given a free rein in designing the works which are to educate and thus “save” Athens. Rather, in Magnesia, according to the Athenian, the poets cannot be permitted to do as they please since they are not likely to know “what saying of theirs might be contrary to the laws and injurious to the State.” Therefore, rather than allow the poets to compose anything that may violate what the State holds to be “legal and right, fair and good” (νομίμα καὶ δικαία τὸ κολά ὑπὸ κολά) the legislator will persuade them - or failing persuasion, compel - to utilize their linguistic and mimetic skills to portray “men who are temperate, courageous, and good in all respects.” Furthermore, since it is doubtful that the poets truly understand the laws and so what is right, they will be required to submit their compositions to the judges appointed to deal with such matters, and to the Law-wardens, to obtain their approval, before being allowed to show them to any private individual. And, if they then do not meet the standards required by the law-givers, the poets will not be granted a chorus. That is, they will not be granted leave to stage their plays. Therefore, as in Republic, the works of the poets in Laws are similarly subject to censorship by the state.

Jaeger notes that in Laws the “supreme assumption” of all education is that “moral standards are unchangeable and that state institutions designed to produce a good tradition are permanent.” In Laws, poetry, in that it is an important element of the chorus and so the state’s educational system, is designed to aid in the preservation of these moral standards and state institutions. The Athenian believes that this can be achieved if the criteria for the music (i.e., μουσικὴ) of the state is fixed. In Republic, Socrates also insists on the importance to the state of invariance in music: “modes of music are never disturbed without unsettling of the most fundamental political and social conventions.” This belief is affirmed in Laws by the Athenian when he attributes Athen’s decline to the relaxation of the correct and legitimate standards of music. As he later states, nothing is more perilous to the state and its laws than change - “in respect of everything, save only what is bad.” Indeed, the Egyptian method of consecrating all dancing and songs is hailed by the Athenian as a way of preventing any alterations to the musical standards of the state. He explains that by this procedure the Egyptians were able to prescribe not only what dances and songs were to be performed, and under what circumstances, but were also able, under penalty of law and religious custom, to prevent the dances and songs from being altered in any way. Therefore, once consecrated, no features of the songs and dances of Magnesia should be altered. The same citizens of the same state will thus be able to enjoy the same pleasures in the same fashion - this is, the Athenian believes, the secret of a happy and blessed life. The
Athenian argues that the play of children, in that it likewise has a valuable educational function in the state, must also be regulated, so that “the same children always play the same games and delight in the same toys in the same way and under the same conditions” 114. For just as those who seek new songs may become desirous of political and social change, so too “those who innovate in their games grow up to be men different from their fathers; and being thus different themselves, they seek a different mode of life, and having sought this, they come to desire other institutions and laws” 115.

As in the ancient Athens of Plato’s time, poetry in Laws is integral to the chorus, and the chorus is, in turn, integral to the state’s educational system 116. However, the poet in Laws is neither considered nor treated in the same manner as he was in Athens. Rather than being lauded as the educator of the citizens, whose duty is to teach them what is right and proper 117, the poet appears to be seen only in terms of certain abilities which he alone possesses - his linguistic and mimetic skills - which the lawmakers then utilize in order to promote and perpetuate the moral standards of the state. The poet, is, in effect, a tool of the state for the purposes of propaganda. Further, since the poet is not considered capable of determining what saying of his might be contrary to the laws and injurious to the citizens and so the State, he is restricted from functioning on his own without supervision 118. Therefore, because he is unable to determine the difference between “what is good and what not” 119, the poet cannot be said to have knowledge. Thus the poet in Laws is not granted that which he had in ancient Athens - what we would now term artistic licence - the freedom to compose whatever he desires. He is therefore treated by Plato in this dialogue with little regard. This view of the poet in Laws is in accord with those views expressed by Plato in the dialogues which have been already discussed in this thesis with regard to poetic inspiration. Indeed, the several references to poetic inspiration in Laws confirm this reading.

In the first reference to poetic inspiration in Laws, the Athenian notes that “(f)or being divinely inspired (епιδεσκαστικυς) in its chanting, the poetic tribe, with the aid of Graces and Muses, often grasps the truth of history” 120. As in Ion and Meno, Plato admits in Laws 121 that despite the fact that he is divinely inspired, the poet occasionally utters something that is true. Similarly, in Republic, Socrates notes that even though fiction (μυθος) such as children’s stories, are mainly false (ψευδος), they can also contain some truth (αληθη) 122. Thus the inspired poet may sometimes deliver the truth. These quotes indicate that according to Plato, inspiration and knowledge do not always coexist. As Plato states in all his dialogues which discuss poetic inspiration, because the poet is divinely inspired, he is without knowledge 123. As is demonstrated in Meno, the poet cannot, therefore, make his judgements on that basis; rather, they must be constructed from true opinion. As has been previously discussed 124, while judgements that are based on knowledge will always be successful, those based on true opinion will be less so. Knowledge, in that it is acquired from first-hand experience, carries with it the conviction of knowing the truth, whereas true opinion is acquired second-hand and so is less certain. In this latter case, one cannot be sure that one is being told the truth. And, even if one is told the truth, one may not recognize it as such. Therefore, it is because the divinely inspired poet is without knowledge, and instead utilizes true opinion, that he can be right only some of the time - while he may often grasp “the truth of history”, this is not invariably the case.
But if the poets compose their poetry according to true opinion, and it is their poetry that directs the citizens, if they were allowed to compose freely, they may make incorrect judgements, and so misdirect the citizens. And, since they use poetry, with its associated elements of rhythm and harmony - a medium with demonstrably powerful effects on man's rational and emotional life - to transmit these judgements, their resultant influence on the souls of the citizens would be profound. Thus the Athenian, in placing restrictions on what the poets are allowed to compose, is trying to prevent such misdirection. This censorship under which the poets must labour therefore demonstrates that the Athenian believes the poets to be inadequate to function in Magnesia as they did in Athens as the educators of society.

However, the poet in *Laws* does still act in some capacity within the educational process. As has been discussed, rhythm and harmony - the elements of poetry and the choral performance that were given to the poets by the gods - enable poetry to be pleasurable, and thus influence the souls of men. The legislators utilize the poets' inspired gifts to deliver their moral lessons to the people in a form which renders them extremely pleasurable and palatable and so easily instilled. Curiously, it is because they are inspired, that the poets are said to be without knowledge, and are thus prevented by the legislators from operating with the same degree of artistic freedom as they had in Athens, and from functioning as educators. However, it is also because they are inspired that the poets are then employed by the legislators - albeit under strict supervision - to be the emissaries of the state's educational system.

In the second reference to poetic inspiration in *Laws*, the Athenian notes that in being "frenzied and unduly possessed (βακχευοντες και μαλλον τον δειοντος κατεχομενοι)" by a spirit of pleasure", the poets were ignorant of what "was just and lawful in music", and so

"mixed dirges with hymns and paeans with dithyrambs, and imitated (μυουμενοι) flute-tunes with harp-tunes, and blended every kind of music with every other; and thus, through their folly, they unwittingly bore false witness against music, as a thing without any standard of correctness, of which the best criterion is the pleasure of the auditor, be he good man or bad".

This passage appears to demonstrate what has just been discussed above, with regard to the first reference on poetic inspiration in *Laws*: that because the poet is inspired, and so is without knowledge, his actions and judgements may not always be correct. In this instance, the poet is said to have "unwittingly" (ανωτατος) - that is, "without understanding" or in his "folly" combined the various modes of music and imitated the sound of one instrument with another, "without any standard of correctness". Previously, the Athenian has stated that to make mistakes in the handling of music can cause great harm, and that the poets, in that they do not possess the Muses' skill, are apt to make mistakes, not unlike those mentioned in the above passage. Once again, these mistakes are not made intentionally by the poets, but rather, *it is because they do not have knowledge* - it is their "senselessness" in "mixing such things, and jumbling them up together" (my italics). However, this ignorance on behalf of the poet had powerful repercussions on the state, for as the Athenian explains, such musical license "bred in the populace a spirit of lawlessness with regard to music".
In believing themselves capable of understanding this music, the citizens then considered themselves experts in all fields. In turn, the arrogance that “thinking themselves knowing” engerded in the citizenry then lead to their general disregard for law. Thus the Athenian’s explanation of the outcome of the poet’s musical license bears out the Damonian thesis of music with which Socrates agrees in Republic: that altering modes of music will also cause alterations to the political and social constructs of society. The method by which the poets represent the various modes of music so that they correspond to certain ethical standards, and thus affect the soul, will be discussed in the next chapter, on poetic mimesis in Republic and Laws.

However, even without elaborating on this method, it is clear that in this passage, as in the previous passage discussed, Plato is once again challenging the poet’s traditional role in society as a teacher, and in particular, as a teacher of morality. This passage shows that the poet’s limitations - and why his activities are rigidly circumscribed by the lawgivers - are related to his being under the influence of divine inspiration. It also demonstrates why, if the poet were to be granted his artistic freedom, his compositions would not only not educate, but would also damage the souls of the citizens. As the Athenian warns, in the past, it has been shown that the poet, in being inspired, was ignorant of what is just and lawful in society, and so composed poetry which bore “false witness against music” in that it catered to the pleasure of the masses, rather than to the feelings of the good man. However, as has been previously stated by the Athenian, the aim of education is to teach one to be a good individual and so a good citizen. Therefore, the music which accompanies the choral activities which comprise education, must necessarily be the type of music in which the good man would take pleasure. But by instead gratifying the pleasure of the masses, the inspired poet is not directing the citizens to the right ends. Rather than teaching that which is good is pleasurable, the poet is teaching that which is pleasurable is good. For as the Athenian states, although pleasure is a proper criterion in the arts, it is not “the pleasure experienced by anybody and everybody. The productions of the Muse are at their finest when they delight men of high calibre and adequate education - but particularly if they succeed in pleasing the single individual whose education (πολιτικός) and moral standards (κρατικός) reach heights attained by no one else.” That is, music should not be considered as an entertainment, but as an educational instrument with which to teach the citizens morality.

In satisfying the emotional elements of the citizen’s souls, the poet is also strengthening that element at the expense of reason. And in causing this disruption to the natural rule of reason in the individual, the poet’s actions, which result from him being inspired, destroy the harmony of the individual’s soul. In turn, this disharmony prevents the individual from caring for his soul, since this can only occur when reason, or the intellect, directs one’s life by ruling over the body and its passions. And, if one cannot care for one’s soul, one cannot lead a happy, and so virtuous life. This confirms what the Athenian has earlier argued: that in the individual, a balance between his reason and his emotion - what he terms a “concord” or “consent” (συμμετοχής) - is necessary in order to live well. But as he further notes, such a balance - between the rulers and the ruled - is also needed for the state to function properly, “in its intercourse both with itself and with all other states.” The
Athenian’s earlier argument, that it may not appear to benefit the state to educate any one individual, but when citizens are thus trained, it is of great benefit to the state - for this will make them good men, and it is good men that enable a state to succeed 148 - can be turned on its head to argue the case against allowing the poets’ free execution of their work. That is, even though it may not appear to harm the state if the poet’s work affects any one individual soul adversely, when citizens are affected adversely, it is of great harm to the state - for the poet’s work can make them bad men, and it is bad men that can bring down the state. Once again, the Damonian thesis of music that is quoted by Socrates in Republic can be invoked. Therefore, it could be concluded that inspired poetry, in that it prevents the care of the individual soul, is also that which harms the welfare of the state.

Finally, as elsewhere in the dialogues which discuss poetic inspiration, in this passage under discussion, Plato once again equates divine possession with poetic inspiration. Thus the poets, in being inspired, are also possessed by the gods. It is because they are inspired and possessed that the poets are out of their senses, and so ignorant of the correct and lawful standards of music in the state. This divinely induced ignorance thus leads them to commit the musical blunders which are so detrimental to the citizen’s souls and to the welfare of the state. Furthermore, the poets are not only depicted by Plato as inspired and possessed, but also as frenzied or mad. Thus the poets’ musical deeds can also be attributed to this Bacchic frenzy, the condition of the ecstatic worshippers of Cybele depicted in Plato’s Ion and the Dionysian revelers of Euripides’ Bacchae. In their frenzy, these devotees have been described as being out of their senses or mad, and so without reason 139. The poets’ actions, therefore, can similarly be said to result from just such a lack of reason. However, as has been argued elsewhere in this thesis, neither possession nor frenzy were considered to be characteristics of the traditional model of poetic inspiration that existed in Plato’s time. Rather, it appears that Plato’s depiction of poetic inspiration is a unique one, devised to suit his own philosophical purposes 139. Thus Plato, in order to support his arguments in Laws that the poets’ works, being inspired, would be harmful to the souls of the citizens of Magnesia - a situation which justifies the actions that are taken by the lawgivers to supervise their activities - accuses the poets of behaviours which were not commonly identified by the Greeks to be associated with poetic inspiration.

Besides one other passage in which the Athenian twice addresses the poets by briefly acknowledging the divine nature of their inspiration 131, the third and final reference to poetic inspiration in Laws is the one in which both poetic inspiration and poetic mimesis are mentioned by the Athenian in the same passage 132. This passage has also been cited and briefly discussed elsewhere in this thesis 133. The Athenian has just been discussing with Clinias what form the laws which they are now devising should take, and suggests that he should take the position of the poets in order to examine this question. Now imagining himself as the poets, the Athenian addresses the lawgiver, prefacing his address by declaring that what he is about to state is “an ancient saying” (παλαιος μηθος) that is not only well-known to everyone, but is also accepted by them. In doing so, he is attempting to cede to it a greater credence than it may otherwise have obtained; firstly, by according it a venerability that will be respected and thus heeded 134, and secondly, by deeming that what he says has common currency and
thought believable. However, as he is addressing the lawgiver in the role of a poet, his words must also contain the authority of the poets themselves. That is, the truth of the poets’ words can be “vouched for by the fact of their divine inspiration” 153. Indeed, throughout his work, Plato utilizes the great trust the Athenian public had in their poets by quoting them to support his own arguments 156. Therefore, in this passage, Plato appears to be taking great pains to present his remarks concerning the poet’s inspiration and his use of mimesis in a convincing manner.

In this passage, the Athenian places the poet on the “Muses’ tripod”, which corresponds to the one on which the Pythia sat in Apollo’s temple at Delphi 157. This comparison is not a novel one, for as has been discussed, elsewhere in the dialogues in which he discusses inspiration, Plato likens the poets to seers, oracles and prophets. Indeed, the parallel that Plato draws between the two groups may not entirely be without foundation 158. However, this comparison implies that like the Pythia, the poet is also inspired and possessed of a god, and perhaps makes incomprehensible utterances, which must then be interpreted by man. This reading is borne out by the Athenian’s declaration that the poet “is not in his senses (οὐκ ἐμφέρων), but resembles a fountain, which gives free course to the upward rush of water”. Once again, the poet, in being inspired, is said to be possessed and mad, characteristics not commonly believed to have been associated with poetic inspiration 159. Not only is the poet, in being inspired, possessed and mad, but he is also described by Plato as being passive in his receipt of the divinity. This indicates that the god has become the controlling force, the force who regulates the thoughts, words and actions of the individual who is possessed 160. As Tseretsel notes, the poet “can resist the inspiration as little as a fountain can resist the pressures of the waters” 161. In this analogy of a fountain to convey the poet’s divine possession and subsequent passivity, Plato employs a comparison made frequently by the poets to indicate poetic fluency 162. However, only a torrent of words is indicated by the “upward rush of water”; Plato does not directly say here whether they are intelligible or unintelligible to those who hear them. But since the poet is said to be passive, then he cannot contribute to the poetry which passes his lips, or have knowledge of what he says. The Athenian affirms this when he states that the poet is compelled “often to contradict himself, when he creates characters of contradictory moods; and he knows not which of these contradictory utterances is true (my italics)”. Therefore, the poet’s words, in that they are made without knowledge, cannot be true, and so cannot be relied upon for moral direction or used for didactic purposes. The second part of this passage, that the poet’s art consists of imitation (τεχνῆς...μιμήσεως), which then often causes him to contradict himself, will be discussed in the next chapter.

In this passage, although Plato uses the dramatic device of having the Athenian pretend that he is a poet addressing the lawgiver in order to criticize the poets in the same manner as he does elsewhere - because they are inspired - he also uses it to advance the topic of the discussion, the question of what form the laws should take. Unlike the poet, the lawgiver, “must always publish one single statement about one matter” 163. That is, the laws should not say two different things on the same subject and so confuse the citizens as to which is the right one to obey. Indeed, to ensure further the citizens’ understanding and so their compliance with the laws, the Athenian and Clinias decide that before each law a preface or “preamble” (προοίμιον) 164 should be affixed, which
explains the principles on which the law is based, and persuades the citizens to accept it by showing that it is the logical result of principles in which they believe. Since the function of both the law and education in Magnesia is to train the citizens in virtue, so that one's habits and desires are guided in such a way as to correspond to reason - to hate what ought to be hated and to love what ought to be loved - the prelude, as the tool of the law, is similarly designed to harmonize these disparate elements of man's soul. However, unlike the lawgiver, the inspired poet is not unequivocal in the statements that he makes. Indeed, he does not even know which of his statements represent the truth. The poet is not, therefore, in the position to educate the citizens - to channel correctly their feelings of pleasure and pain. Because the individual citizen in this circumstance would not know the right way to act or what to obey, the conflict that resides in his soul between his desires and his reason would not be resolved. And, as has been discussed, in harming the individual soul, the poet also threatens the welfare of the state. Therefore, this passage also affirms what the Athenian has stated earlier, that the poets should not be given license to compose freely, "(f)or they would not likely to know what saying of theirs might be contrary to the laws and injurious to the State." All three passages in Laws concerning poetic inspiration thus correspond to my earlier assessment, that the poet, in that he does not have knowledge, is not qualified to educate freely the citizens so that they may live in a "morally stable, happy and united community." As has been shown in these three passages, the inspired poet is just as liable to direct the citizens wrongly as he is to direct them wisely, and not know which is which. Misdirection such as this can affect the harmony of the individual's soul. By his encouragement of emotion, the inspired poet, in strengthening this element at the expense of reason - the soul's rightful ruler - can also harm the individual's soul by destroying its harmony. This reading of Laws depicts the inspired poet, and so poetic inspiration, in the same way as has been described earlier for Ion, Apology, Meno and Phaedrus.
CHAPTER THREE

MIMESIS IN PLATO'S CRITICISM OF POETRY

Introduction

As has been shown in the dialogues so far discussed, Plato presents a picture of poetic inspiration which differs from the manner in which it was historically portrayed in his time. Some features are added to this historical rendering by Plato, such as the divine possession and passivity of the inspired poets, while others, which were also traditionally regarded as features of poetic inspiration, such as the poets' wisdom and skill, are not discussed. Plato's tinkering with the traditional form of poetic inspiration thus corresponds with the manner in which it is criticized by him - the poet, in being inspired, is possessed and passive in receipt of his divine gift. Because of this, the inspired poet is said by Plato to be without knowledge or skill, and so incapable of teaching others. But what of the other element of poetry that is criticized by Plato in his dialogues, poetic mimesis? Does his depiction of poetic mimesis also differ from the manner in which it was traditionally understood?

In Republic, Plato sharply criticizes poetry by referring to its mimetic elements. However, in Laws, poetic mimesis is incorporated into the educational system of the second-best state. Does that mean that the manner in which Plato uses the concept of poetic mimesis differs from one dialogue to the next? McKeon believes that in Plato's discussions of poetry in these dialogues, at no time is mimesis "established in a literal meaning or delimited to a specific subject matter...Like most of the terms that figure prominently in the dialogues, "imitation" as a term is left universal in scope and indeterminate in application". Since the meaning of a word and the role that it plays in an argument can "alter with a change in either context or peculiarities of method" 4, Sorbon considers that this criticism is "not all together true" 5. Plato's use of poetic mimesis will thus be analyzed in the dialogues Republic and Laws with regard to its literary and philosophical context.

Sorbon believes that while the views that Xenophon, for example, has of "artistic" mimesis, probably conforms to the outlook of the educated Greeks of his time, Plato's discussions of poetic mimesis in these dialogues are instead "indissolubly linked to a personally developed philosophy. Thus they may not reflect the common Greek outlook on artistic mimesis but express Plato's own morally and philosophically preconceived views on art and mimesis" 6. Therefore, as has already been suggested in this thesis 7, if it can first be established how mimesis was understood prior to Plato, the changes that he makes to its traditional form may be seen. In turn, this may illuminate Plato's view of the nature of poetic mimesis 8.

According to Sorbon and others, mimos appears to be the original word from which the verb mimeisthai derives 9. Mimesis, mimema, mimetes and mimetikos are the earliest and most important members of this word group; all are derived from mimeisthai, and all are traditionally associated with "imitation". Mimeisthai indicates the activity of "imitating, representing, or portraying", mimos or mimetes are the persons who perform this activity, mimema is "the outcome of the activity of imitating", mimesis is "a noun which denotes the activity of imitating", and mimetikos refers to
“something that is able to imitate” 10. Mimos also indicates “a kind of prose drama”, a mime, such as that written by the Syracusan writer, Sophron 11. This meaning refers to a dramatic production, probably of Sicilian derivation, which gives “an unvarnished picture of life, usually low life” 12. Koller, Else and Sorbom all investigate the origins of the words of the mimeisthai-group, and its pre-Platonic usage 13. As an understanding of the origins and meaning of the words of the mimeisthai-group is useful for this thesis, the accounts of these three scholars will be examined in order to illustrate the similarities and differences between their findings. These three interpretations represent divergent views on this subject, and will be the basis for comparing Plato’s use of mimesis with that which was current in his time 14.

According to Sorbom, in the literature of the fifth century, there are 63 occurrences of words that belong to the mimeisthai-group. Of these, 19 are found in “aesthetic contexts, i.e. the words are in some way or other used in connection with works of art” 15. With regard to the origins of this word group, while Else covers all known instances of the mimeisthai-group in the literature of the fifth century, Koller’s research is more limited, in that he discusses only some of the earliest occurrences of the words belonging to this group 16. His selectiveness results in what Else believes is “an interpretation which contains important elements of truth, but also...some serious distortions” 17. Sorbom’s research lies somewhere between the scholarship of these two authors - he discusses in detail all 19 passages that relevant to art, many of the remaining 44 examples, as well as some other examples from the fourth century 18.

Else believes that Koller’s account of the origin and development of the concept of mimesis in classical Greece is the antithesis of the common view, that “mimesis - or mimeisthai - began by meaning “imitation”, and then took on other senses by extension or adaptation” 19. Koller argues that most of the early occurrences of the words belonging to this mimeisthai-group are found in contexts where music and dance play a major role. Therefore, the original meaning of these words cannot have been “imitation” in the sense of “copying” as is commonly thought - this is only a secondary meaning, which they took on at a later date 20. Koller believes that because these words originally delineated the activity of music and dance performances - that is, the dancing which is performed in religious or cult dramas, such as during Dionysus worship 21, and to its musical accompaniment 22 - they also came to mean to “represent, express by means of music and dance” 23. Therefore, mimesis was “representation” 24, “presentation” or “expression” 25. That is, Koller believes that the words belonging to the mimeisthai-group originally designated the outward form, or “expression”, of the spiritual content of the music and dance performance - the representation, or presentation, of the meaning behind some sacred story that was told by the music and dance of cult dramas 26.

However, as Sorbom notes, even if it were true, as Koller believes, that the words of the mimeisthai-group were used to describe the content of performances of music and dance, it cannot then be concluded by him that they also mean “representation, expression by means of music and dance” 27. Furthermore, although many of the examples of the occurrence of the words of the mimeisthai-group can be seen to be linked with music and dancing, this is not true for all known occurrences 28. And, as Else argues with regard to one particular example, even when the imitation does occur in the medium of song and dance, the performance that is carried out “is (still) an
imitation, ... of men's characteristic movements." Therefore, as both Sorbon and Else agree, the early meaning of *mimesis* cannot be limited to the expression of the content of cult-dances and their musical accompaniment, as Koller believes. Sorbon also argues that Koller's inadequate description of his basic terms causes difficulty in following and accepting his thesis, although it does appear that they all refer to the "presentation of character." As Tate explains, according to Koller, in these cult-dramas, "the dancing, music and words formed a unity, (with) the whole performance exhibiting a character or a story." It is only later, Koller believes, that *mimesis* became "imitation." At first, *mimesis* was a "technical, ethically neutral concept of "imitation"." However, this definition of *mimesis* was then expanded upon by Damon and the fifth century Pythagoreans to become a "quite different, ethically oriented one" - one "which embraced the whole range of emotional, therapeutic (cathartic), and educational uses of music." Koller believes that it is from this Damonian-Pythagorean doctrine that Plato and Aristotelian "partly adopted, partly adapted and distorted" their ideas of *mimesis* as it applies to poetry.

Else disagrees with this finding. While he does concede to Koller that there did exist a fifth century doctrine on the ethical effects of music on the soul which can be attributed to both Damon and to the Pythagoreans, and which did greatly influence Plato, he contests firstly, that their doctrine was a doctrine of *mimesis*, and secondly, that Plato then took their "doctrine" of the assimilation of the soul to the moral elements inherent in all music, *holus-bolus*, and made it applicable to poetry in general, and that this then became the Platonic doctrine of *mimesis*. Rather, Else believes that Plato's criticism of poetry with regard to *mimesis* is due to a synthesis of "*mimesis*, with its dramatic connotations, and the concept of assimilation which was at home in music" (author's italics). That is, Else considers Plato's use of *mimesis* to be a combination of the manner in which the words of the *mimeisthai*-group were used at the time with regard to *mousike* - such as poetry and dancing - and the Damonian theory on the ethical assimilation of music to one's soul.

Else's article directly opposes Koller's thesis. However, as Sorbon notes, Else's article is not only a detailed criticism of Koller's thesis, but it is also constructive, in that it adds "new material to the discussion and offers a positive alternative to Koller's view." Unlike Koller, Else believes that the basic meaning behind the earliest occurrences of the words of the *mimeisthai*-group is "miming" - *mimos* (μιμος) - and that there are two "natural extensions" from this meaning: "imitation of persons by persons, but without physical mimicry", and "imitation of persons or things in an inanimate medium". According to Else, all three meanings can be found in the examples of this word-group in the latter part of the fifth century, around the time of Plato's birth. From the examples that Else discusses in his article which pertain to this first category, such miming - this "root sense" - did not refer to the actor who mimed, but rather, to the performance in which one person mimics another person's most obvious external characteristics - such as the timbre of one's voice or the cadence of one's speech, one's dialect, and one's distinctive bodily and facial movements. An example which illustrates this is from Aeschylus' *Choeuroroe*, where Orestes suggests to Pylades that they both imitate a Phocian accent. Similarly, in the *Delian Hymn to Apollo*, choruses of Delian maidens charm their guests by imitating the dialects "of all
men and their chattering speech” 43. In both of these cases, the imitation is achieved with one’s voice, by mimicking how others sound 46. Else also cites two examples in which animals are mimed, in Euripides (?) and in Aeschylus 47.

The media in which this mime was performed was often music and dancing, as in the cult-dramas, but it could also be performed by speech and gesture 48. Although Else believes that mimos was the original form of this word-group, he did not find it in common usage among Attic and Ionian writers, even though other words of the mimeisthai-group, such as “mimeisthai, mimema, or even mimesis” 49 had currency at this time. Else suggests that this was possibly due to the association of mimos with the Sicilian dramatic form, and with the “low position and repute of the mime (actor)” 50. In his analysis of an extract in Aeschylus’ Edonoi, Else suggests that in this case, the word may also carry with it not only a measure of distaste for the reasons cited above, but also connotations of “deliberate deception”. This is “an implication which Koller finds nowhere before Plato” 51. Sorbom also discusses several examples of mimesis in the literature of the fifth (and one from the fourth) century which indicate such deliberate deception 52.

Else believes that the other two senses of mimesis were generated, at a later stage, from this primary one. In the second sense, one person’s actions are imitated by another in a general way – “to do as or what he does”. Else gives an example from Theognis (?) which supports his creation of this second sense 53. Else believes that this example demonstrates an “ethical sense”, in that it extends the meaning of the first sense, physical mimicry, to moral imitation 54, as in the concept later developed by Damon 55 and the Pythagoreans, which was later so central to Plato’s discussion of poetic mimesis 56 in Republic and Laws. Other examples which Else cites from Euripides also appear to illustrate this 57. In Helen, Theonoe is advised by Helen to comport herself in the same manner as her father, by imitating his ways in being just (μήτιον τρόπον πατρός δικαιον) 58. Similarly, in Euripides’ Hercules Furens, Megara determines to follow her husband’s example, and be courageous (εγις τε μητή ταν τον σωστόν) 59. In Else’s third sense, a person is replicated when their likeness is transferred to a material image, such as a painting or a sculpture. For example, in Euripides’ Helen, Teucer believes Helen to be an image (εικον) - a mimema (μημημο) - of herself 60. Similarly, in his Ion, the figures that Creusa had woven onto Ion’s swaddling cloth represent the characters of an ancient myth, of Athena and Erechtheus (Ερεχθεον γε του μημετο) 61. Else believes that it was from these three senses of mimesis, “in combination with other ideas of different provenance”, that the Platonic concept of mimesis developed 62.

In criticizing Else’s categories, Sorbom also demonstrates his own views on the development of the mimeisthai-group. Although Sorbom finds most of Else’s interpretations “sound” and his conclusion generally “acceptable”, he does raise some objections to Else’s categorizations 63, in that he does not believe that the development of these three senses of the words of the mimeisthai-group occurred in the manner in which Else supposes, where two new senses were generated from an original one. Rather, Sorbom believes that initially some of the words belonging to the mimeisthai-group were coined as a “metaphor” 64. This means that he does not believe that these
words were used in a technical sense, in that they referred to the act itself - that is, the
performance - but instead, they were given a wider and looser usage”: “to behave like a
mime actor” or “...as people do in the mimes” 65. Over time, the “range of phenomena
to which the words belonging to this word-group was widened” - that is, the range of
phenomena to which they could be applied, expanded. In so doing, “the metaphor was
worn out and the metaphorical sense faded away” 66. The metaphor thus became
“naturalized” 67. That is, the words belonging to this word group gradually took on a
more general meaning of “imitation” - “to represent something vividly and concretely
by means of qualities that are similar to qualities in other phenomena” 68. Therefore,
instead of there being dividing lines between the three senses in which these words were
used as Else contends, Sorbom suggests that these usages may have “shade(d) into one
another according to the different degrees of naturalization of the metaphor and the
range of things to which the words were applied” 69. This indicates that the meaning and
the use to which the words of the mimeisthai-group were placed did not change from
one thing to another, but rather, broadened 70. Sorbom thus believes that Else’s
classification of the development of the meaning of mimesis is unnecessarily rigid 71.

As can be seen, there are some commonalities between the various authors. Both
Else and Sorbom disagree with Koller’s contention that the original meaning of the
words of the mimeisthai-group was related to their use in religious or cult dramas and so
was especially associated with music and dancing 72. Others who have reviewed Koller’s
work also disagree with his view 73. Rather, Else and Sorbom believe that the original
meaning of these words was related to mime 74. However, although they agree that these
words were associated with mime, they disagree on the details. Sorbom also believes that
he places far more emphasis than does Else on this association 75, such as the manner in
which the mime was presented.

Both Else and Sorbom believe that the words of the mimeisthai-group were of
Doric derivation, probably Sicilian, since that is where mime, as a dramatic form,
originated 76. But while Else believes that mimos 77 referred to the performance, and not
to the actor who acted out the mime 78, Sorbom believes that it referred to the actor
himself 79. However, Sorbom does note that mimos is acknowledged to have carried both
meanings at a later point in time 80. Sorbom also suggests that Else, in his article, may be
intimating that mime is “some kind of portraiture”, and, if this is so, then Else is
incorrect. While Sorbom believes that mime was “true to life”, he does not mean, like
Else, that it was a copying of a particular model or “an exact copying of nature” 81, but
rather, that the manner in which mime was performed was distinguished by its
“simplification, choice of characteristic detail, overstatement, over-emphasis or
 caricature” 82. Sorbom believes that in this way, the mime presented the generalizing
aspects of a model, its “species-characteristic traits”, and not its individualizing aspects,
or its “individual-characteristic traits” 83. For example, a mime would portray the typical
manner in which cowards in battle would act, and not the actions of any one particular
coward. This feature of mime appears to be not unlike the method of collection or
synthesis (συνεργασία) of Platonic dialectic, which Socrates explains in Phaedrus, where
particulars are ordered according to what is common between them 84.

This feature of mime also corresponds with the manner in which the classical
Greeks approached the plastic arts, such as sculpture. As Sorbom notes, the artists of
this period did not appear to employ particular models 85, but instead, sought to represent to their audience more general ideas, which they packaged in a concrete, not abstract form. The finished art, therefore, while lifelike or realistic, was not "an exact copying of nature" 86. For example, if a statue were commissioned to honour an Olympic victor in running, the artist would not necessarily sculpt a portrait of that particular person, but would represent in his work the typical characteristics that would constitute such a runner 87. However, if a particular individual were to be portrayed, the sculptor would then inscribe that individual's name at the bottom of his work 88. Finally, Sorbom believes that unlike tragedy and comedy, both of which depict the actions of gods and heroes, mime portrayed how ordinary humans behave 89. This can be seen from the examples discussed by both Else and Sorbom.

As well as there being some commonalities between two of the three authors discussed with regard to the manner in which mime was understood and performed, Koller, Else and Sorbom all agree that the last meaning by which the words of the mimeis-thai-group were defined was as imitation in the sense of representation 90. This is largely the meaning which this term still possesses, in aesthetics or in the philosophy of art. That is, a poem, a painting, or music "represents its object in virtue of being an imitation of it" 91. However, imitation or representation would now be considered to be less "copying", and more "to give a rendering". The term thus incorporates cultural differences, which allow for different conventions in representation, as well as individual stylistic differences in the artistic interpretation of an object or phenomena 92. However, Koller believes that the meaning by which mimesis was understood by Plato's time - imitation - was a secondary one, in that it originally applied solely to music and dancing, and was then adapted and extended to new fields, such as poetry and painting, "where it did not properly belong" 93. As has been noted, Koller also believes that in being defined as imitation, mimesis was initially an ethically neutral concept, which then later took on ethical overtones 94.

Despite their many theoretical differences, both Else and Koller "see a change in the uses and meaning of the words belonging to the mimeis-thai-group" 95, and indeed, both divide this development into three stages. Else's concept of mimesis as imitation, furthermore, is not that different from Koller's. Like Koller, Else believes that imitation was a secondary sense, which had been generated, at a later stage, from a primary sense, and that this secondary sense can be bifurcated. Both see these secondary senses as "watered-down" (Koller) 96 or "colorless" (Else) 97 - that is, less vivid and concrete versions of the primary sense 98. Else also believes, as does Koller, that one of these senses is an ethical one, in that it is not a mere physical copying of another's actions. The other sense of mimesis as imitation, which Else alone determines, is the rendering, by the artist, of a thing or a person into a material form. Sorbom considers that since it is the "representation by means of qualities that are similar to qualities found in other things that matters, whether in material form or not" 99, that this latter sense of imitation - the "transference from animate to inanimate" 100 - is unnecessary. Unlike Koller and Else, Sorbom does not outline specific "stages" of development in the meaning of the words of the mimeis-thai-group. As has been discussed, he sees this process as being one of gradual change, a subtle shifting of meaning, where the "different usages shade into one another" 101 - from the initial meaning of miming to the meaning of imitation.
which existed in Plato’s time. As Sorbom states, “to behave like a mime actor” merged into something like “to represent something vividly and concretely by means of qualities that are similar to qualities in other phenomena” 102.

Therefore, one of the main points to be gleaned from this discussion of the works of Koller, Else and Sorbom, in which they discuss the pre-Platonic origins in the usage of the words of the mimeisthai-group, is that the consensus between these authors shows that a mime, or to behave as one does in mimes, was the original meaning that these words possessed. That is, mimos, the original form from which this word-group derives 103, may denote either the performance or the actor. Furthermore, all three authors conclude that mimesis as imitation or representation appears to be the meaning that was current at the time of Plato. Moreover, from their analyses of the literature which features mimesis or its cognates, they all suggest that there is also an ethical dimension to this word-group. This definition of mimesis, in both its forms - ethical and ethically neutral - will now be compared with the manner in which Plato employs poetic mimesis in his dialogues, Republic and Laws. This description of Plato’s usage will necessarily be schematic, as it will be covered later in this thesis, in greater depth, in the analysis of the role of mimesis in these two dialogues.

How, then, does Plato’s use of the term “mimesis” in his criticism of poetry in Republic and Laws compare with the view of this concept that, according to these critics whose studies have just been discussed, was current in his time? Keuls believes that Plato was the first to associate mimesis with any literature other than drama 104. If this is true, just Plato’s application of the concept to poetry alone could be regarded as innovative, and so differing from the manner in which it was used by his contemporaries. Indeed, Keuls also believes that Plato was the first to demonstrate that in their employment of mimesis, a commonality existed between what we would now call the “creative arts” - literature, music, dance, painting and sculpture 105. But is Plato’s definition of mimesis the same as that used by others of his time? Keuls suggests that Plato uses the words of the mimeisthai-group in “a variety of nuances, which reflect his preoccupation with the relationship of model and imitation, form and shadow, truth and fiction” 106. These words would then be used by Plato to support the philosophical beliefs which he propounds in his dialogues 107. It would follow then, that Plato may have had to alter or adapt the traditionally held meaning of mimesis in order for it to be applicable both to poetry and to his philosophical writings 108.

There has been much argument as to whether Plato is consistent in Republic, from Book III to Book X, in applying the concept of mimesis to his criticism of poetry 109. Indeed, it has even been suggested by some critics that the last Book of Republic was written at a later time 110, and so could be considered “an afterthought” 111, “an appendix” or “coda” 112. However, I am in agreement with Janaway, who states that although the two discussions contained in Books III and X may use “different senses of mimesis...the reference of the term has a certain stability: instances of the poetic mimesis in the Book 3 sense are also the central topic of Book 10” (author’s italics) 113. These concern the detrimental effect that poetic mimesis has on one’s ability to care for one’s soul and the subsequent harm that this has on the welfare of the state. This issue will be discussed later, in the analysis of mimesis in Republic and Laws and in the Discussion.

As has been previously noted 114, Plato’s concern with poetic mimesis in these
dialogues is correlated with the importance of the role that poetry, and thus its major feature, poetic mimesis, played in the educational system of the time and so in the lives of Athenians. Accordingly, Homer, the most influential of all the poets to the Greeks, is also the poet most often cited by Plato in Republic and Laws, both of which discuss poetic mimesis. Homer also appears to be the one most criticized in Republic. However, despite this importance of poetry to Greek education and society, Plato indicates in Republic that because of its use of mimesis, poetry is a source of danger to man throughout his life - as a child (Book III) and as an adult (Book X).

It is in Book III of Republic that Plato first introduces poetic mimesis. After Socrates has criticized the content of Greek poetry, he begins a discussion on the various forms that are taken by poetry - that is, the "methods of telling a story." According to Socrates, poetry can be classified according to whether it proceeds by "pure narration or by a narrative that is effected through imitation (μιμησις), or by both." In the first category is lyric or dithyrambic poetry. This uses indirect speech or narrative; that is, the "poet is himself the speaker and does not even attempt to suggest to us that anyone but himself is speaking.”

The second category uses direct speech or dramatic representation, as in tragedy and comedy. In such poetry, the poet delivers the lines as if he were not himself, but rather, as if he were the character he is portraying. Thus the poet, by his "speech or bodily bearing", imitates another. This latter category Socrates terms "mimesis". But in imitating another in this fashion, the poet or actor must do more than speak the lines, he must "put himself in the position of the character speaking, think his thoughts and feel his feelings". That is, the poet or actor must behave like that character - not only physically, in copying his voice, his walk, his gestures and so on, but also mentally and emotionally - in assimilating into his own persona the character's reason and desires. The extent to which an actor identifies with the character he is playing can be vividly seen in Plato's Ion. When asked by Socrates whether, when performing the speeches of characters from Homer, he is ever carried out of himself to the point that he supposes himself among the scenes that he is describing, Ion, a rhapsode, strongly answers in the affirmative, that when he relates a tale of woe, his "eyes are filled with tears"; and when it is of fear or awe, his "hair stands on end with terror" and his "heart leaps". Such "imaginative identification" with the character was expected, not only for the poet or actor, but also for the schoolboy, who was similarly required "to throw himself into the story and deliver the speeches with the tones and gestures of an actor" when speaking or reading poetry aloud. In his eponymous dialogue, Protagoras refers to this dramatic identification in his speech on education:

"the children...are furnished with works of good poets (ποιητων αρχηγων) to read as they sit in class, and are made to learn them off by heart; here they meet with many admonitions, many descriptions and praises of eulogies of good men in times past, that the boy in envy may imitate them and yearn to become even as they (my italics)."

It should be noted that because the Athens of Socrates' time was predominantly an oral society, not a literate one, poetry was usually not read silently, but read or sung aloud. Indeed, "(c)pic poems had been sung of the deeds and speeches of heroes down the centuries, while tragedy and comedy had their roots in the singing of dithyrambs at
festival. Literature was thus composed with the consideration of its oral performance..." 129. The oral nature of poetry may have also enhanced the audience’s ability to empathize with the characters and situations of which the poets spoke 130.

According to Socrates, the third and final category by which poetry can be classified is epic poetry, such as that of Homer and Hesiod 131. This is where the poet may alternately speak as himself, and then as the character(s) whose lines he is delivering. Therefore, epic poetry can be understood as “an example of poetry partly with and partly without mimesis” 132.

As has been discussed, it is the emotional effect that poetry gives that affords man his pleasure 133, Socrates believes that “the greater the poetry’s pleasure-giving potential, the more pronounced the effect on one’s character is likely to be” 134. Since the dramatic identification which poetry induces in man can generate intense emotion - as can be seen in the examples quoted above from Ion and Protagoras 135 - it does not seem that it can be without effect. Indeed, Socrates believes that such identification can be pernicious to man. As he states, citizens should, “from childhood up imitate (μεικταισθαι) what is appropriate to them ... but things unbecoming the free man they should never do nor be clever at imitating (μεικταισθαι), lest from the imitation (μεικταισθαι) they imbibe the reality” 136. Therefore, it appears that Socrates considers that what one derives from poetry via mimesis has ethical consequences for one’s soul, which can be either positive or negative. While the negative effects of emulating another on man’s soul will largely be discussed in the analysis of poetic mimesis in Republic, the positive effects will be dealt with in poetic mimesis in Laws.

Plato continues his criticism of poetry with regard to mimesis in Book X. As with Book III, this will be examined later in greater detail. The purpose of this introduction to mimesis remains to determine how Plato’s portrayal of mimesis in Republic corresponds with the manner in which it was traditionally used, such as in the examples from other Greek authors noted by Koller, Else and Sorbom. Of this section of the dialogue, Nehamas states that “[t]hough not perfectly consistent with Books 2 and 3, Book 10 is not simply an incomprehensible return to a subject that these two books have exhausted; for a crucial part of its function is to justify the omission of poetry from the city’s adult inhabitants - a subject not accounted for in Books 2 and 3” (my italics) 137. That is, Plato now explains why poetic mimesis is deleterious to the harmony of one’s soul and to the city and so must be banned. In order to demonstrate this, Plato refers to the first of the two types of poetic mimesis that he uses in the arguments of Book X: mimesis as it was commonly known - as imitation or representation. Although Plato bases Socrates’ initial argument against the poets and poetic mimesis on his theory of Forms, the type of mimesis described therein is still only that in which a poem, a painting, or music “represents its object in virtue of being an imitation of it” 138. Plato employs this form of mimesis 139 in order to show that the poet is without knowledge; if this is so, then it follows that the information thus derived from poetry can only be misleading and so harmful to the citizens of the city. Whereas the type of mimesis that is to be found in Book III could be called its “ethical” or “educational” sense, this type of mimesis, the one first mentioned in Book X, could be called its “technical” sense 140.

In Cratylus, Socrates determines that phenomena have two natures: an
“essential” nature, as well as another, which consists of shapes, colours and sounds 141. Socrates also refers to these two natures of phenomena in Phaedo 142 and further explains the difference between them in his simile of the Divided Line in Republic 143. While individuals such as poets - that is, those whose works can be deemed “mousike” 144 - are able to produce and exhibit likenesses or imitations of this second nature for audiences 145, “no earthly poet”, as Socrates declares in Phaedrus, ever has, nor ever will, sing of the essential nature of phenomena - “the region above the heavens” - the “colourless, formless, and intangible truly existing essence, with which all true knowledge is concerned...and is visible only to the mind” 146. This essential nature of a phenomenon Plato terms a Form (εἶδος) or Idea (ἰδεя) 147, which could be described as “an object of intellectual apprehension having a metaphysical existence outside the apprehender” 148. This Form or Idea relates to the function for which the thing was designed 149. For example, the couch to which Socrates refers in Book X, Republic, would have two natures: a visible one, which would describe its appearance - its size, colour etc., and an invisible one, its essence or “couchness”; this would correspond to its “function or need” - namely that there should be things for men to sleep on” 150.

In Book II, Republic, when Socrates enlarges his “healthy” state - what Glauccon has just called a “city of pigs” 151 - making it into a “luxurious” and unhealthy one, he then allows individuals such as “imitators” (μιμήται) to enter. These individuals, he notes, are “occupied with figures and colours and many with music - the poets and their assistants, rhapsodists, actors, chorus-dancers...” 152. Thus such imitators do not represent the essential nature of phenomena - that which is perceived by the mind, but instead, only the shapes, colours and sounds of which it is composed - its appearance or “visible” nature - that which is perceived by the senses.

In his first argument against mimetic poetry in Book X, Socrates declares that while there are many couches, only one Form of a couch exists which depicts its nature, its “couchness” 153. As it was produced “in nature unique” 154, Socrates states that this Form cannot have been made by man, but rather, it can only have been made by God. Therefore, a craftsman, such as a carpenter, who wishes to make a couch, can only make a copy of it. This indicates that he must understand, at least to a limited extent, the use or function to which a couch may be placed. However, a painter, who wishes to paint such a couch, has no such knowledge, and so would only be able to imitate the carpenter’s work. Why the painter has neither right opinion nor knowledge about the function of a thing is stressed by Plato later in Republic 155: “there are some three arts concerned with everything, the user’s art, the maker’s and the imitator’s (μιμησομενην)” 156. While the user has knowledge (επιστημην) about the thing, and the maker has right opinion (προτιν ορθην) about it - because he associates with the man who knows and is compelled to listen to him - the imitator (μιμηται) has neither knowledge nor right opinion, because he does not use or make the models of his representations, and does not associate with those who do 157.

While that which the carpenter makes is not “real being but something that resembles real being but is not that”, and so is only “a dim adumbration in comparison with reality” 158, that which the painter makes must be even further removed from reality. As an “imitation of a phantasm” and not the “truth” 159, the painter’s product
is only an imitation of something which is also an imitation - it is, as Socrates famously states, "three removes from nature" 160. But if the poet were to depict a couch in words, his product would also be an imitation of the imitation which the carpenter makes - like that of the painter's, it would only be a portrait of a particular couch; it would not be the "real couch, the couch in itself" 161. Therefore, the mimetic art of the poet, by being "three removes from nature", is similarly "far removed from truth" 162. Socrates' argument concerning the painter and his products can thus be extended to the poet and his products. Unlike the poetic mimesis discussed in Book III, in this passage in Book X, Socrates employs a form of poetic mimesis, which, according to Koller, Else and Sorbon, would have been used at the time of Plato - as imitation or representation 163. That is, that in this context, both the painter and the poet use the "technical" form of mimesis in that they imitate the appearance, but not the essence, of an object - a couch 164.

In the later arguments of Book X, Socrates uses mimesis in the same fashion as he does in Book III 165. That is, the second type of mimesis that Socrates employs in Book X is as imaginative or dramatic identification - the "ethical" form of mimesis 166. However, unlike Book III, in which he discusses the moral danger that poetic mimesis can pose for the actor or reader of poetry, in Book X, Socrates discusses how it can also affect the emotions of the audience who are watching or listening to a performance of poetry 167. In its effect on both the actor/reader and the audience, it appears that mimesis acts in a manner not unlike that in which poetic inspiration is said to act in Ion - as a Megarian stone 168. Just as in Ion Socrates tells of how the Muse inspires the poet, who, in turn, inspires the rhapsode, who then inspires the audience, so too in Republic, in Book III and X, the poet, by his mimetic ability, infects the actor/reader, who then infects the audience with the emotions of the characters that he creates. Therefore, mimesis in Republic can be seen as a two-step process - the poet, by his use of mimesis as imitation or representation ("technical" sense), psychologically affects the actor/reader/audience who assimilate his words in a mimetic fashion ("ethical" sense). This two-step process of mimesis can also be seen in Laws. In some of these cases 169, Plato is likely referring to mimesis in its "technical" sense 170. Further, the products of such arts are shown by Plato in Laws, Book III, to affect others in a moral fashion 171 - the second way in which Plato uses mimesis - in its "ethical" sense 172. Thus, as in Republic, a two-step process of poetic mimesis is demonstrated in Laws.

In Laws, as in Republic, Books III and X, Plato also portrays poetic mimesis as imaginative or dramatic identification. However, while in Republic the negative effects of poetic mimesis on the reader/actor/audience are predominantly stressed by Plato, in that he argues that they are harmful to the soul of the individual and to the welfare of the state 173, in Laws, he demonstrates that the converse can be also be true. That is, that the effects of poetic mimesis can be positive if it can be made law that all the poetry that is to be composed and performed for the citizens of the state must specifically teach ethical lessons, which bear the good of the individual soul and the unity of the state in mind, rather than seeking merely to gratify the pleasure of its listeners, whose pleasure is likely to be independent of moral law 174.

It has thus been established that in Republic and Laws, Plato describes two forms of poetic mimesis: as imitation or representation and as dramatic identification.
But how do these two meanings of poetic *mimeis* that Plato uses in these dialogues compare to the manner in which it was historically used and understood in Plato’s time as determined by Koller, Else and Sorbon? Although it appears as if the meanings of *mimeis* determined by these three scholars to have existed in ancient Greece correspond with the two meanings employed by Plato, it is difficult to be certain of this, since the terminology and descriptions of *mimeis* offered by each of the antagonists—the three scholars and Plato—greatly differ. Even though all three scholars appear to refer to *mimeis* as imitation in an ethically neutral sense, and two of them concur on a later form of *mimeis*, which could be described as *mimeis* as imitation but with an ethical sense, it cannot be determined that this later form is that which is used by Plato as *mimeis* in Books III and X. Further, while Else believes that all of the three forms which he describes co-existed with Plato 175, and all three scholars refer to what seem to be the same two meanings of *mimeis* as Plato’s, it cannot be known for certain as to whether both these meanings were the ones by which *mimeis* was known and practiced in Plato’s time. Moreover, although all three agree that *mimeis* as imitation was the final meaning to emerge—its timing perhaps suggesting that this meaning was contemporaneous with Plato—only two of the three, Koller and Else, believe that this final meaning had ethical implications. Therefore, there is no consensus between the three scholars as to whether *mimeis* as imitation had ethical implications, and, if it had, whether this was contemporaneous with Plato. Thus, all that may be concluded from the comparison of these three studies with Plato’s use of *mimeis* is that it is likely that *mimeis* was thought of as imitation in his time. Further, even if an ethical form of *mimeis* as imitation did exist at this point, it may not be the same form as that used by Plato—that is, as dramatic identification. Indeed, one could argue that the care with which Plato attempts to make this particular meaning of *mimeis* clear in Republic, Book III 176 indicates that it is a new way of understanding this concept.

As has been mentioned, Keuls believes that although *mimeis* was used in musical contexts such as drama and dancing, it appears to have not been used in reference to any other literature but drama prior to Plato 177. If this is so, then Plato could be considered to be the first person to apply the concept of *mimeis* to poetry. Keuls also believes that Plato was the first to demonstrate that in their employment of *mimeis*, a commonality existed between the imitative arts, such as poetry, painting and sculpture 178. This shared feature allowed Plato to employ generalizations concerning *mimeis* in these arts in his arguments against poetry and poetic *mimeis*. This can be seen in Republic, Book X, where he discusses painting and *mimeis*, and then transfers this criticism of painting to poetry and *mimeis* 179. A similar tactic is employed in *Phaedrus* 180, where Socrates uses the characteristics of painting to criticize those very same characteristics in the written word. But since Plato does not ban painting—a mimetic art—from his ideal state, Plato’s criticism can only be directed at *mimeis* as it is used in poetry, and not at artistic *mimeis* in general 181.

Plato’s ethical usage of *mimeis* in Republic III and X and in Laws—of dramatic or imaginative identification—appears to be not unlike the manner in which not only actors and rhapsodists, but also children in school, were required to recite or read poetry 182. That is, it appears that it was considered that the manner in which one recited or read poetry was with a verve that showed that the reciter or reader identified with the
characters that the poet was describing, and so understood that character's personality and circumstances. What we do not know is the extent to which this identification was expected to take place not only in Plato, but also in the reading and reciting of the citizens of Athens at the time of Plato. Was identification with the subject matter that one was reciting or reading encouraged? Or was reciting and reading such as described in Ion and Protagoras merely recitation with a dramatic flair? Was it possible to recite or read poetry in this way without identifying with the characters and situations therein? Plato does not provide the answers to these questions. However, he does appear to believe that this identification, which was enabled by poetic mimesis, is damaging to the souls of all individuals concerned no matter what the extent to which one identified with its subject matter. Furthermore, this identification was not only damaging to the participants, the reciter/reader, but also to the observers/listeners - the audience. Although in Ion, it appears that the emotions that are generated by poetic mimesis, and felt by the poets/rhapsodists/actors as well as the audience, are enjoyed, and perhaps even encouraged. A remark that Ion makes about his audience indicates this: "I look down upon them from my platform and see them at such moments crying and turning awestruck eyes upon me and yielding to the amazement of my tale. For I must pay the closest attention to them; since if I set them crying, I shall laugh myself because of all the money that I take". Indeed, as we have learnt earlier, Ion is a rich man, successful at his job. Furthermore, dramatic performances in ancient Athens were well attended. Thus both Ion and the audience are content with this arrangement - the rhapsodist is obviously only too happy to have the audience pay him for the emotions he instills in them via poetic mimesis, and the citizens of the state, if one considers their avid attendance at the dramatic festivals, appear equally happy to pay for this privilege.

The disparity between Plato's portrayal of poetry and poetic mimesis and the manner in which the poetry-loving and theatre-going Athenian public reacted to poetry and its mimetic quality could indicate that his "ethical" meaning of mimesis, as he applies it to poetry in Republic and Laws, was a novel one. Whether or not this is true, it seems clear that Plato, in his adaptation of the concept of mimesis to poetry, intended these sections in Republic to be a warning to the Athenian citizens of the dangers that he believes poetic mimesis holds for the soul of the individual and for the welfare of the state. What Plato means by poetic mimesis will now be further examined in the relevant aspects of the two dialogues in which he discusses and criticizes this concept - in Republic and Laws.

Republic

Republic, considered by some scholars to be Plato's greatest work, can be seen as a synthesis of Socratic moral philosophy and Platonic political ideals: that is, in this dialogue, the Socratic concern for the care of the individual soul is combined with the Platonic concern for the welfare of the state. Thus in Republic, the answer to the Socratic question, "what makes a good man?" is sought alongside the answer to the Platonic question - "what makes a good state?". To Socrates, virtue is knowledge; therefore, if one knows the nature of the good, one can then act upon that knowledge and become a good man. However, as has been discussed, in the Athens of Socrates and Plato's time, the identity of the individual was considered indivisible from his role
as a citizen. Indeed, Thucydides' Pericles affirms this view. Therefore, by Socrates' standards, an individual who knows what is good is a good man, and such a man, by Athen's standards, would then be considered a good citizen. Socrates similarly expresses these Athenian sentiments in Apology, Crito and Gorgias - that is, that it is the good man, the one who cares for his soul, who is also the one who cares for the welfare of the state. These sentiments correspond with the state's view that the virtue of the individual was the same as the virtue of the citizen. As a good individual is a good citizen, and a good state can only be one composed of good citizens, the health of a state must depend not only on the physical health of the individuals with which it is composed, but also on their moral health. Therefore, as the poets were considered to be the moral teachers of society, with poetry being the vehicle by which the citizens were taught, in order for Plato to address in Republic the questions that are posed above, he must also examine that which represents the educational and moral arm of the state - poetry. Plato's treatment of poetry and mimesis in Republic, while censorious, is also, at once, an acknowledgement of the importance of the poets and their products to the moral health of the state and the individual.

But before examining Plato's treatment of poetic mimesis in Republic, the manner by which he introduces it into the discussion should first be drawn. Because in this dialogue, Plato "wants to build a model of the best-organized community and of the healthiest type of human being, founded on a system of education which enable both to exist", he must answer this question: "what do the arts contribute to these endeavours?" Therefore, by tracing the steps by which Plato introduces the subject of poetry and poetic mimesis into his discussion on the nature of justice, one can see how he addresses this question; one may then be able to determine his conception of their role in the education of the citizens of his model city and their effects on both the individual and society.

The beginning of Republic shows Socrates and his friend, Glaucion, in Piraeus to attend the inaugural festivities of the Thracian goddess, Bendis. As they make ready to leave, they are approached by a friend, Polemarchus, among others. Socrates and Glaucion accompany them to the house of Polemarchus, where more friends are gathered. Soon after their arrival and an exchange of pleasantries, a discussion, between Socrates and Cephalus, Polemarchus' aged father, ensues. This discussion, which begins not unlike a typical Socratic elenchus, and which soon includes the others, leads to the topic central to this dialogue - the nature of justice. In this discussion, Plato depicts a succession of contemporary views on justice, with Cephalus' arguments representing the belief of an ordinary citizen - that one should tell the truth and return to others anything that one has borrowed, Polemarchus' reflecting a conventional morality - that justice is "to do good to friends and evil to enemies", and Thrasyphonus' airing of the Sophistic case - that justice is to benefit the stronger. That is, that justice is dependent on the power of those who rule, be it as an individual or a collective. Taken together, these three accounts seem to indicate that justice, or virtue, may be a "purely relative conception" and not a universal moral principle. These accounts are antithetical to Socrates, who argues against all three antagonists, besting each in turn. But Glaucion and another guest, Adicimantus, are not satisfied with the almost eristic manner in which Socrates has argued against Thrasyphonus, and
challenge him once more. They ask him to prove the case that justice is beneficial in itself to those who possess it. That is, as Glaucon states, Socrates must prove to them not merely that justice is superior to injustice, but that “each inherently does to its possessor - whether he does or does not escape the eyes of gods and men - whereby the one is good and the other evil” 20. The philosopher’s response to this challenge constitutes the rest of Republic 21.

At this stage in the discussion, poetry is mentioned 22. Adeimantus declares that “no-one has adequately set forth in poetry or prose” the effect that justice and injustice have on character - “that the one is the greatest of all evils that the soul contains within itself, while justice is the greatest good” 23. That is, Adeimantus is remarking on how strange it is that the poets, who are supposed to be the moral educators of society, have not, in their works, been able to explain this most important truth. Jaeger affirms this: “every word (that) he (Adeimantus) speaks is a criticism of the traditional methods of education by the old classical poets and the renowned moral authorities” 24. Adeimantus then continues, “(f)or if you had all spoken in this way from the beginning and from youth up had sought to convince us, we should not now be guarding against one another’s injustice, but each would be his own best guardian” 25. That is, if these principles of which Adeimantus speaks were taught to men from their youth, then one could be just, as could society 26. This reflects Socrates’ belief that virtue is knowledge: thus to know justice is at the same time to be just 27. It follows then, that justice can be instilled in man and so society, by education. Plato’s later criticism of the role of poetry and of poetic mimesis in education must be seen in this context.

This is not the first time that the poets and their product are mentioned in Republic in a seemingly disparaging way. As has been noted, Socrates shows earlier in the dialogue that the definitions of justice given by Cephalus and Polemarchus, which he later proves to them are fallacious, are supported not only by Simonides but also by Homer 28. Further, when beginning his argument with Polemarchus, Socrates states, rather ambiguously, that it is not easy to disbelieve Simonides, “(f)or he (the poet) is a wise (σοφος) and inspired man (θειος και νπος)...just what he may mean by this you, Polemarchus, may know, but I do not” 29. This statement alludes to the earlier dialogues in which the poets are shown by Socrates to be inspired, but as such, are without knowledge 30. As has been discussed, this accusation ran counter to public opinion 31. It is also similar to comments that Socrates makes elsewhere in the dialogues concerning the unfathomable nature of poetic works 32. Finally, in his discussion with Socrates, Adeimantus, in a continuation of the arguments that Glaucon has just presented 33 - that people only act justly, in this life and the next, not because they value justice in itself, but for the rewards that such behaviour may accrue 34 - also casts the poets in an unfavourable light. He also uses the words of the poets to bolster his arguments that injustice is preferable to justice 35. Hesiod, Homer, Musaeus, Orpheus, Pindar and Archilochus are all poets whose works are cited by Adeimantus to these ends 36. These remarks made by Socrates, Glaucon and Adeimantus in Book I of Republic that concern the dubious and expedient morality that is to be found in the poets’ works, thus set the stage for Socrates’ later criticism and censorship of poetry and poetic mimesis in Books II and III.

So far in Republic the discussion has only pertained to justice 37 in the
individual. However, justice, as Socrates notes, can be a characteristic of either an individual or of a community (πολις) 38. Moreover, he argues, as a community is larger than an individual, viewing justice in the larger of the two would be easier to recognize and understand. Therefore, Socrates suggests that they - he, Glaucon and Adeimantus - first enquire of the nature of justice in the community, and only then proceed to the individual, in order to determine whether there is, in the smaller entity, anything that corresponds to what they have discovered in the larger entity. Socrates also recommends that their argument “observe the origin of a state”, since that will then allow them to see “the origin of justice and injustice in it” 39. This procedure - arguing from state to individual - although criticized by some 40, “casts a distant light on Plato’s definition of a state, which is destined to grow out of this ideal of justice: it is rooted in the inner depths of the personality. The soul of man is (thus) the prototype of Plato’s state” (author’s italics) 41. Socrates’ argument, from community to the individual, runs throughout Republic 42.

This method, of creating a state in order to discover justice, is not a new one. Indeed, Greek thinkers commonly employed models so as to determine a “best” state 43. While some models were designed for implementation, others were theoretical systems only 44; such as those of Hippodamus and Phaleas 45. As such, they were “not meant to be literally enacted”, but instead were designed as “model(s) for reform” 46 - “thought experiment(s) for exploring the potentialities of human nature and society” 47. Dawson divides political utopias into these two categories, terming those with practical applications “low”, and those with theoretical implications, “high”. This latter categorization is thought to be applicable to Republic 48. Other utopias also exist in Greek thought, such as “works of myth, fantasy and messianism”, such as those of Homer, Hesiod and other poets 49. Utopias such as these also feature in several of Aristophanes’ plays - The Birds, Lysistrata and The Assemblywomen 50. Thus one could argue that the utopias that feature in these poets’ works, in that they are not theoretical models - that is, “high” utopias - are not usually those concerned with moral or social reform, as is the case with Plato’s Republic. This dialogue appears as a theoretical model, which Plato hoped would achieve educational and so moral reform, and which would then lead to a rehabilitation of the political and social structure of the state. This model once again reflects not only Plato’s conception of the indivisibility of the individual and the state, but also its political reality in the Athenian polis 51.

As he had earlier recommended, Socrates, in his search for justice in the city, first examines the origins of society. He believes that societies are formed because individuals are not self-sufficient and cannot supply themselves with the basic needs of life, such as food, shelter and clothing, and so must live with others in order to satisfy these needs. He thus determines that the minimum number of individuals that a society would require to do this would be four or five - a farmer, a builder, a weaver, a cobbler and perhaps one or two others. But what is the better way to proceed? Should each individual, such as a farmer, work at one job full-time so as to provide enough food for all the individuals in the group, or should each individual work part-time at all the jobs that are necessary to fulfil only his own basic needs, and so divide his time equally among farming, building, weaving and so on? The first alternative seems more practical; it is a simpler and more efficient procedure, in that it saves the unnecessary duplication
of labour, and would also result in better quality goods and services. Socrates suggests that it may also be the more natural choice. As he states, "our several natures are not at all alike but different. One man is naturally fitted for one task, and another for another" 52. Given this, he asks, would not one do better at one task, than at many, with each individual only performing the task for which he is best suited? And, Socrates adds, is it not also better that one do that task at the right moment, rather than wait until one has the time to carry it out? With Adeimantus agreeing to these assumptions, Socrates concludes that it is better, in a society, that each man perform "one task according to his nature, at the right moment, and at leisure from other occupations" (my italics) 53. This specialization of labour is known by several names, and is the common thread linking all the books of Republic, and is relevant to Plato's criticism of poetry and poetic mimesis. It also appears in several other dialogues 54. In this thesis, it will be referred to as the "principle of specialization" 55 or the doctrine of "one man, one job" 56.

This principle, which Socrates elucidates in Republic, derives from the Greek notion of function. As has been previously discussed, the Greeks believed that the virtue (μητηρία) of an object, that is, its excellence, was defined by how well it fulfilled the function (ἐργον) for which it was designed 57. If it did this, and did it well, then the object was said to have virtue. Similarly, a man who performs the task for which he is best suited, and does it well, can also be said to have virtue with respect to that task 58. To be good at the task for which one is best suited also implies that one must have knowledge of what that task entails, of the right way to do it as well as the wrong way. Socrates believes that similarly, if one is morally good or virtuous, one has knowledge of the rights and wrongs of moral behaviour. Therefore, if one's soul (ψυχή) fulfils the function for which it was designed - to live - and does it well, one has virtue with respect to one's life, and so is a good man. Hence, the Socratic paradox: a good man, a virtuous man, is one who has knowledge 59. Since such a man lives well, the Greeks believed him to be virtuous 60 and so happy. To be happy is to be in possession of eudaimonia (εὐδαιμονία), a good daemon 61. Therefore, Socrates could argue that it is not only more natural to follow this principle of specialization and so do that for which one is best suited, but to do so is also virtuous and pleasing to one. Moreover, if one fulfils the function for which one's soul is designed, one is also attending to Socrates' oft-repeated exhortation - the care of one's soul.

Barker considers that Socrates' principle of specialization in Republic (as well as Laws) 62 was Plato's answer to what he considered were the two great problems then facing the Athenian democracy: the first being "the ubiquity of ignorance masquerading in the guise of knowledge" 63, and the second being the "political selfishness which divides every city into two hostile cities" 64. While efficiency could eliminate the "amateur incompetence" of the former problem, harmony could replace the "selfishness and civil discord" of the latter 65. The principle of specialization addresses Plato's two concerns, as well as allows for these solutions.

If everyone fulfilled the task for which they are best suited, then no-one would would be an amateur or incompetent in what they do, but would instead be qualified for the task at which they work. As Socrates states in Protagoras, if the state is faced with a building project, it sends for builders, or for shipwrights, in the case of laying down a
ship 66. However, unlike what is said by Socrates in this same dialogue with regard to governing, the state that implements the principle of specialization would not allow the man who rises to advise them be “a smith, a shoemaker, a merchant” 67, but instead, would only allow those individuals who are the most suited to advise - the “best and wisest citizens” 68; this is borne out in the ideal state of Plato’s Republic. Furthermore, in this principle of specialization, Socrates is, at the same time, advocating cooperation and not competition among men, for if everyone concentrates on the task for which they are best suited, they can only be content, and thus will have no need to interfere with another’s task 69. As he has previously noted, since individuals are not self-sufficient, they must work together toward the common good, if they are to prevail. Socrates believes that these individual differences that exist among men can only add to the cohesion of society 70, since by this division of labour, the farmer would thus contribute most of the food that he grows to society, the builder would provide the necessary shelters and the weaver and cobbler the clothing and shoes. In such a situation, Plato believes “selfishness would disappear, and unity would pervade the state” 71.

After having explained his principle of specialization, Socrates continues outfitting the city, adding extra workers to supply all the needs of the original four or so men. A smith is required to forge the farmer, builder and cobbler’s tools, shepherds and stockmen to supply hides and wool for the weaver and the cobbler, merchants to sell the products of the workers, and so on. This scene that Socrates sketches is of an idyllic society, where citizens live simply but healthily, and in peace. At this point however, Glaucon interrupts, exclaiming that the society that Socrates appears to be founding is “a city of pigs” (σωματικός) 72. Socrates bows to this criticism by raising the standard of living in this fictitious city, for he believes that they can equally consider the origin of the state and of justice and injustice in a “luxurious” city, as in the simple one that he has just been describing. Socrates now makes a curious remark, that he believes that it is the original state - Glaucon’s “city of pigs”- which is the “true” and so “healthy” one, whereas the new one to be contemplated - the “luxurious” city - will be an unhealthy or “fevered” state 73.

In order to highlight the differences between the two states and the individuals within, Socrates employs a medical analogy. This is a favourite technique of Plato’s, which he uses throughout his dialogues 74. Socrates’ reference to the first city as an “healthy” one reflects the Greek medical view that the “true” or normal condition for an individual (or a state, in this case) is one of health - mental or physical - and not of illness 75. Two ancient maxims epitomized the Greek attitude to medicine: moderation in all things 76, and an healthy mind in an healthy body 77. This also appears to be Plato’s attitude to health - both mental and physical 78. Thus an healthy individual was one who observed these maxims. Socrates’ description of life in the first state appears to employ the first maxim. It is an equitable life - one of hard work and piety, of simple fare, of few luxuries but a long and peaceful existence. That is, the individuals of such a state follow a life of moderation, and by so doing, are rewarded by good physical health. The unhealthy state, on the other hand, in that it is filled with unnecessary luxuries 79, would probably produce unhealthy individuals, in that they would be likely to ignore the doctrine of the mean. But Plato’s medical allusion also utilizes the second maxim to complete his comparison of the states and the individuals residing therein: an healthy
mind in an healthy body. Plato is thus indicating that an healthy physical state is analogous to an healthy mind (one's psyche or soul). Indeed, as has been argued, a good individual is a good citizen, and a good state can only be one composed of good citizens; therefore, the health of a state must depend on both the physical and mental health of the individuals with which it is composed. Thus Socrates' discussions in the remainder of Republic, on education, on the classes, on women and the family, as well as his creed of "one man, one job", are, like a physician's treatments and medicines, designed with regard to the bodily and psychical health of the individual and so the state. With such remedies, Socrates attempts to purge the unhealthy city, so as to return it to its pristine condition.

Although Socrates aquiesces to Glaucion's demands to outfit the city with such "customary" comforts as couches on which to recline, tables from which to dine and civilized food, he believes that the inhabitants of such a society will not be satisfied with these items alone, but will also want other goods and services. Socrates therefore proceeds to fill the city with a host of luxuries: "other furniture...relishes...myrrh...incense...girls...cakes...embroidery...gold...ivory and similar adornments". However, in order to make room for all this, Socrates queries if the state must now be enlarged, as he believes that such additions "exceed the requirements of necessity in states". These additions include "the imitators (μιμηταί), many of them occupied with figures and colours and many with music - the poets and their assistants, rhapsodists" (my italics) and so on. In this statement, it seems that Socrates is again referring to the poets in a disparaging manner, by suggesting that the poets are not only extraneous to the functioning of a state, but are also, among other things, that which distinguishes an healthy state from an unhealthy one; one can thus infer that such things are harmful to a state's well-being. Furthermore, in that they are imitators who are occupied with sights and sounds and colours, Socrates is also suggesting that as imitators, the poets do not deal with knowledge, but instead, with that which is perceived by the senses; they therefore supply little that would benefit the citizens in their lives. This criticism of poetry, however, is once again at odds with the prevailing societal view. Socrates' statement here is also a forewarning of his criticism, in Books II-III and X, of the poet's role as the educator of society and of the mimesis that he employs in his work. Socrates also adds more servants, such as tutors, nurses, cooks and barbers, to this new city. The now sumptuous circumstances of the inhabitants' lives, as compared to the ascetic climate of the first city, also prompts him to include doctors.

Socrates then realizes that by conceding to the state this hedonistic inventory of goods and services, its territory will also need to be enlarged. However, both he and Glaucion believe that this action will inevitably bring about war with adjacent city-states, whose citizenry, like the inhabitants of this second city, will similarly wish "to abandon themselves to the unlimited acquisition of wealth". Therefore, this need of men to acquire goods and services is not only that which leads to the origin of society, but also, as with "the greatest disasters, public and private" which come to states, wanton acquisitiveness is that which leads to war. The prospect of war will therefore necessitate another addition to the state: an army who is able to fight to defend the state's wealth and luxuries. Socrates does not believe that this army should arise from the citizens themselves - from men who are, at the same time, cobblers, weavers or
builders - but rather, following the principle of specialization which he had laid down earlier 90, that it be composed of men who are the most suited for this profession and this profession alone. Further, they must work at it “all ...(their) days, at leisure from other pursuits and not letting slip the right moments for doing the work well” 91. Socrates terms these soldiers “guardians” (φυλακοι) 92. He believes that since their task - the defense of the state - is the “greatest of all”, the guardians will therefore “require more leisure than any other business and the greatest science and training” 93. However, they will also need to be of a nature which is specifically adapted to this pursuit. After some consideration, Socrates and his companions determine that in order for a man to be “a good and true guardian of the state” (καλος κογαθος) 94, he must have the following characteristics as the basis of his nature: “love of wisdom (φιλοσοφος)...high spirit(s) (θυμοειδης)...quickness (τακτος) and strength (τοκυς)” 95. Further, although a guardian’s nature should be spirited, the gentlemen also decide that it is important that this characteristic be tempered with gentleness; this is to ensure that the guardians will act appropriately in their role as the watch-dog of the state - “gentle to their friends and harsh to their enemies” 96. This description implies that the guardian’s nature must be “a delicate balance of what will later in Republic be described in detail by Socrates, the three main types of impulse in the psyche, physical, “spirited” and intellectual”” 97.

Socrates and his fellow discussants now consider how the guardians should be reared and educated in order for them to achieve such a nature 98. In this context, they discuss the role of the musical arts and of gymnastics in education. They believe that this will then lead them nearer to the initial object of their inquiry - the nature of justice and injustice in the individual and in the state. As has been noted, the musical arts and gymnastics were considered to be the basis of classical Greek education 99; these musical arts were composed of poetry, music and dance. However, in Republic, only poetry, and, to a lesser extent, music, are discussed 100. In following this traditional form of education for the guardians, Socrates is at once acknowledging the didactic role of poetry and its importance to the educational process and so the state 101. However, if it is true that poetry is “so powerful, its character must (also) be of primary concern to the state” 102. Indeed, this is so: Plato’s criticism of poetry and poetic mimesis appears in this context. This criticism in Republic is thus linked to Socrates and his companions’ quest to determine the nature of justice and injustice in the individual and in the state. Thus, in order to determine the manner in which Plato defines mimesis in this dialogue, one should ask what is the contribution of poetry and poetic mimesis to justice or injustice in the individual and the state - this will be determined later; it is necessary to examine first Socrates’ discussion of the role of poetry and poetic mimesis in the education of the guardians. This discussion divides naturally into two sections: the first concerns the content of poetry - that is, the subject matter of the poetry that is used to teach children moral behaviour 103. The second section concerns the form of poetry - that is, its use of mimesis, as well as what Socrates considers are its harmful effects on the individual 104. It should be noted that although the guardians function as the warriors of the state, their educational program does not appear to include training in the art of bearing arms; however, it does concern the musical arts - that which Socrates considers
influences the soul (ψυχή) 106. As he states, “gymnastics for the body (σωματική θαυμωνική) and for the soul music (ψυχή μουσική)” 107. The gentlemen then decide that the guardians’ education should begin, as it does traditionally, in Athens, with the musical arts - that is, with poetry - rather than with gymnastics.

Socrates declares that education in the musical arts commonly begins in childhood with poetry, which is composed of tales (λόγους), which can be either true (ἀληθεῖς) or false (ψευδοί) 108. However, he considers that there is more than one sense of false. A tale can report on phenomena which are not true - that certain objects are green, when they are actually blue - or it can report on true and existing phenomena, but in a way that may be morally harmful to its listeners or readers. Therefore, the truth of the reporting in tales which employ this second sense of false “has nothing to do with its truth value in a factual sense. (Rather,) (i)t depends on whether the “lie” (fiction) is morally good and beautiful or not and whether it correctly exhibits this good and beautiful idea or not” 109. Since, as he states, the education of any creature is best begun when it is “young and tender”, because it is at this age “that it is best moulded and takes the impression that one wishes to stamp on it”, Socrates believes that it is important that children be told tales by their teachers which convey opinions which they, as the founders of this society, would find “desirable for them to hold when they grow up” 110. That is, the tales that are told to children must support the moral and civic values of the society. Socrates believes that since he and his companions are not poets, but are the founders of this society, it is not their position to compose these tales, but instead, they should decide on the appropriateness of the moral content of the poetry that is used in the education of children - on “the patterns (τύποι) on which the poets must compose their fables and from which their poems must not be allowed to deviate” 111. Once having determined the suitable subject matter of poetry, the founders will then persuade educators, beginning with mothers and nurses, to tell these acceptable tales to children so as to “shape” their “souls...rather than their bodies” 112.

These “patterns” 113 to which Socrates refers, concern the manner in which such poets as Homer and Hesiod misrepresent the true nature of the gods and heroes. Socrates cites many poems in which the gods are shown to be immoral - as quarrelsome, promiscuous, deceitful, intemperate, changeable in form, and so on. These poems depict the gods as being without justice, temperance, wisdom, piety or courage - the virtues most lauded by the Greeks 114. Such poems, Socrates believes, are false in the second sense described above. That is, they report on phenomena which are considered by many to be true - on gods and heroes - but do so in a way which may be morally harmful to the children being taught from them. As Socrates explains, poetry is often allegorical, and children are unable to distinguish between that which is allegory and that which is not. Instead, children believe what they read and hear to be true, and form beliefs accordingly. The beliefs formed at this young age prove difficult to eradicate or change 115. Therefore, it is important that the first poetic tales to which children are exposed follow the moral and civic virtues of the state. Gods must therefore be depicted in poetry as good, and not as the cause of all things, but only of all that is good. Furthermore, poetry must also show not only that the gods do not deceive, but also that they do not change form in order to do so.
Socrates also cites examples of poetry which cast aspersions on the morality of the heroes, which are depicted, variously, as indulging in unsuitable emotions such as fear of death or immoderate grief or mirth, and engaging in deceitful, drunken, glutinous or voluptuous behaviour. As with those on the gods, such poems may also encourage children to follow their characters' moral lead. The gentlemen thus decide that all poetry which does not follow the moral prescriptions of the state, as laid out in this discussion, will be banned. Indeed, the very words that Plato chooses throughout Books II and III to discuss poetry, even before this edict is made, indicate a censorious attitude towards it. This can be seen in this selection from the text: “it is certainly right to condemn”, “they ought not be thus”, “bury them in silence”, “as few as possible should have heard these tales”, “they are not to be told”, “neither must we admit at all” (my italics), and so on. Socrates now states that similar rules on the moral behaviour of men cannot be laid down at this point, since he and his companions have not as yet defined the nature of justice and injustice, and the advantages one or the other brings to its possessor, irrespective of appearances.

Plato was not the first thinker to criticize poetry’s content. As many have noted, there was a “long tradition of criticism behind him”. Plato’s criticisms of poetry in Republic, Books II and III, indicate that he did not believe that the gods should be portrayed in literature as possessing many of the weaknesses of man. According to Jaeger, this was “the first point made by Xenophanes in his satiric attack on epic poetry”. Heraclitus also discussed these matters. The Platonic criticisms concerning the battle between the gods and the titans and the various feuds between the gods, had also been previously delineated by Xenophanes. Plato’s criticism of poetry, therefore, was not the first such attack, and nor was it to be the last. Indeed, concern over that to which children are exposed in the media and in their education, has continued up until the present day, in the criticism of the amount of sex and violence contained in the books and comics, the television programmes, the movies and in the video games that children watch. Furthermore, the reason for these concerns being currently voiced over content is not dissimilar to that stated by Plato: that is, that because children are at an impressionable age, and so are not, as yet, able to differentiate properly between reality and fantasy, the exposure of certain material on their immature minds will have harmful and lasting results. In the present day, there is concern that this inability to differentiate will cause children to mimic the actions they see in the mass media - as some media critics and educators have suggested was true for the teenage shooters at the Columbine school in Colorado in 1999. Plato is concerned that this inability of children to discern what is true and good, from what is untrue and bad in the poetry that they read, listen to and mimic, will be deleterious to the development of their character. Employing the principle of specialization laid out in this dialogue, it could be argued that if harm is done to this developmental process, and so to one’s nature, it could prevent children - the future merchants and farmers, guardians and rulers of Plato’s society - from fulfilling the function in life for which they are best suited, and so be happy. Socrates would argue that this would not be attending to the care of one’s soul. Such concerns are also examined in the second section of his criticism of poetry in Book III, on the form of poetry.

Socrates begins this second phase of his criticism of poetry by introducing the
concept of *mimesis*. Although this concept is not a novel one, Socrates’ application of it does appear to differ from the manner in which it was usually understood. He discusses the three forms which poetry can take in order to tell a story - the dithyramb, tragedy and comedy, and the epic - and the extent to which each form utilizes narration and *mimesis*. This was discussed earlier in this thesis in greater detail. It appears that the degree to which *mimesis* is used in each of these forms can be correlated with the intensity of the emotional effect on those who read or recite from them and portray their action and their characters, such as is done by a schoolchild, a rhapsodist, a poet or an actor. Socrates considers that in poetic *mimesis*, that is, when one reads, recites or acts out poetry, one adopts not only the physical characteristics of the person described therein, such as his walk and voice, but also his emotional and mental characteristics - and his very desires. This can be seen in the example of the rhapsode which was discussed previously, from Plato’s *Ion*. Further, if one imitates the characteristics of those in poetry, and this continues “from youth far into life”, these characteristics then permeate one, becoming an integral part of one’s habits and so one’s nature. Sorbon terms this process “habit-formation”: “by performing a given action in a given way several times the agent will probably act in this way in the future when a similar situation occurs”. For example, if the poetry is a portrayal of cowardice in battle, Socrates believes that the individual who is reciting or acting out this part will then later exhibit such tendencies himself, when in battle, because it is a behaviour known to him intimately, from having repeatedly recited it or acted it out from youth. The end result of *mimesis* is thus a complete assimilation of oneself - what Socrates would call one’s soul - into the poetic persona.

It would follow, therefore, that poetic forms such as tragedy and comedy, which are solely mimetic, would have a greater effect on one’s habits and nature than would dithyrambs, which only employs narration, or epic poetry, which employs a combination of narration and *mimesis*. Thus Socrates believes that because *mimesis* has such a great effect on one’s nature, if the subject matter of mimetic poetry is immoral, of the type discussed by him earlier, which discredited the gods and heroes of Greek religion as well as dismissed the cardinal virtues of Greek society, one will also assimilate that immorality into one’s own thinking, feeling and behaving. As Socrates later states, “things unbecoming the free man (citizens)…should never do nor be clever at imitating,…lest from the imitation they imbibe the reality”. This is the reason for his earlier denunciation of the content of poetry, and for the proscriptions that were then made by the three men. It is also one of the reasons as to why they now consider whether to limit or ban outright the admission of mimetic poetry such as comedy and tragedy into the city that he and his companions are constructing.

But there is also another, related reason for considering the limitation or banning of mimetic poetry in the city. It is because such poetry violates the principle of specialization that was determined earlier by Socrates - the principle by which this society is being built and will run: that every man in the city should perform the task for which he is best suited. Socrates now questions his companions: “do we wish our guardians to be good mimics (μιμητικους) or not?” Although Sorbon appears confused by this, in that he questions “whether Plato meant the guardians should compose pieces of mimetic narration, perform such things, or merely look and listen to
them” 136, it appears that that to which Socrates is referring here is whether the guardians should be allowed to use mimetic poesy in their education. As has been noted previously, in Plato’s time, all contact that the Greek citizen had with poetry was mimetic— that is, as dramatic representation or imaginative identification— in either watching another act out a part, or when reciting or singing such a part oneself 137. Similarly, composing poetry could also be considered dramatic representation or imaginative identification— consider, for example, in Aristophanes’ The Poet and the Women, when the poet Agathon appears, completely attired in feminine costume, to answer the door to Euripides and Mnesilochus. Agathon explains to the pair that he is attired thusly so that he can imagine better the role of a woman in the play that he is writing: “(a) dramatic artist has to merge his whole personality into what he is describing. If he is describing a woman’s actions, he has to participate in her experience, body and soul...but what nature hasn’t provided, art can imitate (μιμησίς)” (my italics) 138. Thus no matter whether it be by composing, performing, looking at or listening to a performance, the contact that a Greek citizen would have had with poetry would have been mimetic 139. Therefore, it is reasonable to suppose that what Socrates is questioning is whether the guardians should be exposed to mimetic poetry in their education. He then continues: “(o) or is this also a consequence of what we said before, that each one could practise well only one pursuit and not many, but if he attempted the latter, dabbling in many things, he would fail in distinction in them all?” 140. That is, if they were allowed poetry, and so were able to indulge in mimesis, the guardians would be violating the principle of specialization— the rule of “one man, one job”.

But how is this so? As Socrates explains, the principle of specialization applies equally to mimesis, for just as a man is not able to follow more than one pursuit, for if he does, the division of effort that he will then have to make will cause him to fail at all of them, so too a man cannot imitate many things as well as he can one thing 141. Therefore, a man is not able to pursue his role in life and do it well, and also imitate many things. The guardians would thus not be able to fulfill their role in society— the defense of the city— if they were also allowed to imitate others as one does when one recites or acts out poetry. Poetry that caused this would transgress the principle of specialization— that is, that one should only do the task for which one is best suited. Thus for a guardian to do otherwise, and so partake in poetic mimesis, would be against his own nature— his soul. That is, if one fulfills the function for which one is best suited, one is taking care of one’s soul 142. Therefore, that which interferes with one’s function must be bad for one’s soul. In this case, the guardians are chosen for their position because they are the ones whose natures, or souls 143, are the most suitable to fulfill this role in society. Thus poetry, by preventing the guardians from fulfilling their role in society, would harm their souls if they were to attempt to indulge in the mimetic behaviour to which it gives rise 144.

Thus it would seem that Socrates and his companions will not allow the guardians to be exposed to mimetic poetry in their education unless it satisfies two, related conditions. As has been noted, Socrates believes that if the subject-matter of poetry is immoral, then one learning from such poetry will assimilate that immorality into one’s very nature 144. But the reverse must also be true: that is, if the poetry to which one is repeatedly exposed during one’s development employs positive behaviour
and positive role-models, then one will later behave in just such a positive way under similar circumstances. This is suggested by Plato in *Republic* as well as in *Laws* 146. Therefore, Socrates determines that the poetry to which the future guardians of the state should be exposed in their education should not depict “things unbecoming the free man”, but instead, it should portray men who are “brave, sober, pious, free and all things of that kind” 147. This is the first condition to be met by poetry if it is to be allowed. If the subject-matter of the poetry is such, the second condition is also met. That is, if the poetry only portrays characters who are “the kind of people they themselves are or are being trained to be” 148, it will not cause the guardians to mimic others’ roles, but instead will only reinforce their own designated roles, as the defenders of the city, and so will not violate the principle of specialization. Thus if it meets these two conditions, Socrates and his companions will deem mimetic poetry suitable for the guardians’ educational curriculum.

In alignment with these conditions, the gentlemen further determine that if a guardian does imitate, he should also not be permitted to play certain roles, such as a woman, who is either “young or old wrangling with her husband, defy ing heaven, loudly boasting...”, and still less one who “is sick, in love or in labour” 149, or slaves carrying out their offices, men who are bad and cowardly, madmen, smiths or other craftsmen 150, rowers of triremes and suchlike, or the various theatrical representations of madness such as horses neighing, bulls roaring, water rushing and thunder rolling, because these imitations could “settle down into habits and (become) (second) nature in the body, speech and thought” of the guardians via the principle of assimilation discussed above 151. Indeed, Socrates states that the guardians will be ashamed to imitate seriously any of these “inferior” examples, unless the imitation is carried out only for a short period and is done in jest. That is, if these imitations were done presumably for the purposes of ridicule, “one would not be departing from one’s “noble” character but in a way reinforcing it” 152.

The gentlemen decide that a “really good and true man” would therefore choose a certain form of literary diction and narrative of which he would not be ashamed, but willing, to imitate the words and actions described therein, whereas a man of “opposite birth and breeding” would choose a very different form of diction and narrative in order to express himself 153. Thus, while the former would make use of a literary form which combines both imitation and narrative, as does the epic, the latter, because he does not believe anything beneath him, would likely choose a literary form which includes representations of all things, and so based almost entirely on imitation rather than narrative. Similarly, the former’s choice of literary form would have uniformity in the music which accompanied it, of an appropriate mode and rhythm, whereas the latter’s choice would require the opposite - “every kind of pitch and all rhythms...since it involves manifold forms of variation” 154. Moreover, the former’s choice of literary form, that which represents the good man, would be suitable for admittance to the city, whereas the latter’s choice would not, since it would encourage one to play a multiplicity of roles, and in doing so, would be in conflict with the principle of specialization by which the state is run, where one man does one job. Therefore, Socrates and his companions conclude that they should, for the good of all souls concerned, only employ the poet whose tales imitate the diction of the good man and who uses the “patterns”
which were earlier prescribed by them for the education of the guardians 155. Further, if any other poet arrives in the city, one "capable by his cunning of assuming every kind of shape and imitating all things", although he will be treated well, with the reverence that is due to one who is holy 156, he will then be banished to another city.

Having already discussed the poetic forms of epic and drama, Socrates now determines that the next topic to be discussed with regard to the guardians' "musical" education is to be "song and tunes" or lyric poetry 157. Music in ancient Greece was considered to be an integral part of one's poetic education, for epic and dramatic poetry were almost always recited to the accompaniment of music 158 - usually that of the double flute, the aulos 159 - and lyric poetry was sung. Indeed, earlier writers referred to a lyric poem as a melos or "song" 160. Furthermore, according to Socrates, both song and poetry are composed of the same three elements - words, harmony and rhythm (λόγος...αρμονίας...ρυθμού) 161. While the words narrate, by employing either indirect speech or direct speech 162, the harmony "imitates the utterances and the accents" of the person described in the song or poem, and the rhythm, his movements. And as the song is mimetic in that it is a likeness of something or someone, these elements by which it is composed are also mimetic 163. However, this does not mean that the harmony and rhythm represent the subject-matter of a song in a literal way, but rather, that they imitate the feelings or behaviours that are expressed in the words 164. For example, if the song concerns "(a) brave man who is engaged in warfare" 165, his ethos or disposition is shown in the actor's utterances, accents and movements, "which consist of particular qualities setting them off from all other manifestations of other dispositions", and so making it obvious to the spectators that this is of a brave man 166. That is, whatever the words describe, the harmony and the rhythms correspond, by representing the same subject-matter 167.

Socrates also states that the harmonies and rhythms in songs strongly affect the soul. This sentiment is similarly expounded by Plato in Timaeus and Laws 168. Because the narrative - the words - of lyric poetry is in the form of indirect speech, where the poet speaks only as himself, there must be less of an emotional effect on the soul of the listener or spectator than when using a narrative, such as in drama, which is effected through direct speech or dramatic representation (mimeosis) 169. However, Socrates believes that the other elements of song - harmony and rhythm - "find their way to the inmost soul and take strongest hold upon it, bringing with them grace, if one is rightly trained, and otherwise the contrary" 170. It is for this reason that he later claims that education in music is "most sovereign" 171.

Socrates and his friends now discuss these elements by which song or lyric poetry is composed, and begin with the words of song. However, this question is readily dealt with by the three men, for both poetry and songs consist of words. Therefore, they determine that in order to be consistent, the rules on content and form that they have already prescribed for the words of poetry should equally apply to the words of songs. Furthermore, the men agree that harmony and rhythm should follow the words, and not the reverse 172. This rule follows Plato's belief that "(l)anguage is the direct expression of reason, and reason must be supreme" 173. However, it may also reflect the state of Greek music at this time. Until the late fifth century, words - that is, poetry - dictated the interpretation of music. However, a new form of music then arose, which set it free from
its dependence on poetry 174. But this contemporary trend in instrumental music did not appear to make any sense to Plato. As the Athenian states in Laws, it is “almost impossible to understand what is intended by this wordless rhythm and harmony (ρυθμὸν τε καὶ ἀρμονίαν), or what noteworthy original it represents (μυθηματον)” 175. That is, without words as a guide, the ethos of a song cannot be fathomed 176.

Harmonies or modes are the next element of song to be discussed 177. Socrates initiates the discussion by banning the modes which are used in dirges and lamentations (θρηνον τε καὶ ὀδυρμον) 178, the forms of poetry that he had earlier criticized for the potential effects of their content on the emotional and moral health of the guardians 179. He also does not believe that certain modes such as the Ionian and Lydian, which were used in the Greek music of the time for songs of relaxation and drinking, could be good for the guardians’ well-being, since these modes would instill in them a “drunkenness...softness and sloth (μεθην...μάλακες καὶ αργύς)” 180. Instead, Socrates states that he desires two modes, one stern and one pleasant, which would prove useful in the training of soldiers. These modes should thus be ones which would “best imitate (μιμησονται) the utterances of men failing or succeeding, the temperate (σωφρονον), the brave (ανδρετον)” 181. Glaucon determines that the Phrygian and Dorian modes would not only be suitable to train soldiers but would also fulfill Socrates’ conditions. However, to some critics, Socrates’ choice of the Phrygian mode for the guardians’ education appears to be a perplexing one, in that it was commonly associated with “religious frenzy” and so was characterized as the “enthusiastic, orgiastic” mode 182, not unlike that used in ecstatic worship by the Bacchantes and Corybantes. Plato, in various dialogues, likens the members of such groups to inspired poets 183. The Dorian mode, on the other hand, is shown elsewhere in Plato’s opus to be related to bravery 184. This notion, that modes are mimetic in that they are representative of particular moral feelings - an ethos - and so portray a specific type of character, is the Platonic extension of the Dorian theory of music, mentioned earlier in Laws 185. That it is also discussed, by both Socrates and Glaucon, in a matter-of-fact way, and without the necessity of explanation, indicates that this theory was a well-known and well-accepted one by the Greeks of that time 186.

Before continuing the discussion on the elements of song, Socrates imposes a rule for the use of musical instruments in his ideal city: that in their songs they will not require “instruments of many strings or whose compass includes all the harmonies” 187. Therefore, the city will not allow the manufacture of such instruments as triangles, harps, harpsichords and flutes, all of which have a wide harmonic range. Of the musical instruments then currently in use, only the lyre and the cithara or kithara (κιθαρες) 188 as well as the small piccolo or pipe 189 will be allowed to remain. It seems that, as with the citizens of this ideal city, who must follow the principle of specialization in order to fulfill their proper function in life and so be happy, the musical instruments that they are allowed must similarly not exhibit versatility. Therefore, rather than making music which is variable in its message or representation, the instruments which are allowed can only make music which is simple and has a clear and consistent ethical message or representation. Indeed, musical instruments were said to have a mimetic nature, in that their music was thought to be associated with specific ethical characteristics. The aulos,
or flute, for example, was believed by the Greeks to have been invented by the satyr Marsyas. In keeping with these origins, its music had “an exciting, orgiastic effect”, which roused one’s emotions. It is thus likely that the music of the aulos was thought to represent irrationality and excess. On the other hand, because the kithara was associated with Apollo, its music must have been endowed with an hieratic air, and so possibly represented rationality and moderation. Therefore, Socrates and his friends are not being innovative “in preferring the instruments of Apollo to Marsyas and his instruments”, but rather, they are merely choosing the instruments whose music best represents the virtues that they desire the city and its citizens to possess - that which is moderate, rational and ordered, and so represents the good man. It should be noted that these musical expressions of ethical character are “melodic, independent of technical nuances” such as a musician’s virtuosity. In banning certain musical instruments, Socrates is, at the same time, ridding the unhealthy state of the luxury that it acquired on Glaucon’s insistence.

The third element, rhythm - “the orderly pattern of music” - is now discussed. Socrates indicates that as with modes and musical instruments, that in their choice of rhythms they must not “pursue complexity nor great variety in the basic movements, but must observe what are the rhythms of a life that is orderly and brave”, and so are the ones most suitable for use in the musical education of the guardians. Also, as with modes, rhythms are mimetic in that “(d)ifferent rhythms are appropriate to, or are “imitations” (mimemata) of, different ways of living”. Socrates then abdicates the responsibility for choosing the correct rhythms to Glaucon and thence to Damon. This Socrates also did in their discussion on modes, by deferring to Glaucon’s greater technical expertise. But why?

Anderson believes that Socrates’ reluctance “to deal with these details is not due to genuine ignorance”, but rather, it is because “he is pretending simply as a joke not to know what he in fact knows very well, or he has some motive for avoiding the appearance of having a specialized knowledge”. With regard to the latter, Anderson believes that Socrates’ actions are due to his “unceasing distrust of professionalism”. Jaeger similarly believes that Socrates is not attending to these details himself because he “does not care to compete with specialists”, but that it is because “(a) professional must make a point of exactitude;...for an ordinary man of culture it would look pedantic and unworthy of a free-born citizen”. Anderson and Jaeger are both partly right, in that Socrates is avoiding acting as if he has technical expertise with regard to modes and rhythms. But I believe that Socrates is acting in accordance with his own principle of specialization - that everyone should perform the function for which they are best suited - which he and his friends have made mandatory for all to follow in this ideal city. As Socrates is a philosopher, and not a musician, if he attempted to follow this principle, he would leave the details of choosing the modes and rhythms of the music to be taught to the guardians to individuals who are more qualified than he. In consulting Glaucon, a musician, and Damon, a musical theorist, this is what he does. Yet Socrates is convinced in his knowledge about the ethical standards he wishes to be portrayed by these rhythms. This action conforms with what Socrates has stated earlier, to Adeimantus, with regard to the content of poetry: “we are not poets...but founders of a state. And to founders it pertains to know the patterns on which poets must compose
their fables and from which their poems must not be allowed to deviate; but the founders are not required themselves to compose fables;” 205. That is, as the founders of the state, while Socrates and his companions are responsible for the ethical content of the poetry that is to be taught to the guardians, they are not, at the same time, qualified to compose that poetry. Thus following Socrates’ principle of specialization, in the ideal state, the composition of poetry can only be done by the poets, even though this means that they need to be supervised by others.

In summing up their discussion thus far, Socrates concludes that while good character is the result of “good” poetry, bad character is the result of “bad” poetry. This being so, it is vital that poets should compose or write only that which concerns good character or not at all. Socrates is thus stating that “good” poetry, that is, beautiful poetry, can only be that which aids the development of good character. This is not an aesthetic judgement, but a moral one. Orders must therefore be issued as well to all other artists to prevent them from representing bad character – “the evil disposition, the licentious, the illiberal, the graceless” 206 - in their art, be it in painting, sculpture, architecture and even handicrafts such as weaving and embroidery, or they will similarly be forbidden to practise their art.

It is evident from this discussion concerning the guardians of the state that Socrates believes that two preconditions must be met in order for them to achieve a good education, and so a good character 207. Firstly, as has been previously noted, Socrates considers that it is important that education begin at an early age 208, for this is the time when a child “is best moulded and takes the impression that one wishes to stamp upon it” 209. However, it is also at this age that children are unable to distinguish between what is allegory and what is not. Since opinions formed at this age are “wont to prove indelible and unalterable”, it is crucial that “the first stories that they hear should be so composed as to bring the fairest lessons of virtue to their ears” 210. Therefore, although Socrates considers that this period of time is ideal for a child’s intellectual growth, he also believes that the material used by their educators over this same time should first be thoroughly vetted lest it harm the child’s growing moral and civic sensibilities. The ability of poetry and song to represent many things, both good and bad, is therefore examined by Socrates and his friends, who then eliminate from the poet’s mimetic repertoire anything that they believe could be potentially harmful to the characters - the souls - of the future guardians.

The second precondition which Socrates considers necessary for good education concerns the intellectual and moral environment in which the future guardians are raised. As he states, if children are surrounded by art containing representations of immorality, they will, “little by little and all unawares accumulate and build up a huge mass of evil in their own souls”. However, if they raised in an environment where all the works of art they see and hear are representations of morality, they will instead be influenced by the good - “to likeness, to friendship, to harmony with beautiful reason” 211. It is because of childrens’ emotional and moral assimilation to that to which they are exposed that Socrates and his friends find it necessary to examine not only the content of poetry, but also the form or style in which it is presented; in particular, the mimetic form, in which the poet speaks in the person of someone else, as he does in tragedy, and not in his own person, as he does in lyric poetry. As has been discussed previously, this former style,
poetic mimesis, is said by Socrates to occur when one reads, recites or acts out poetry. A child, in assimilating to his environment, will thus adopt not only the physical characteristics of the person described therein, such as his walk and voice, but also his emotional and mental characteristics, such as can be seen in the example of the rhapsode Ion 212. As Socrates has earlier stated, if one imitates the characteristics of those in poetry, and this continues “from youth far into life”, these characteristics then permeate one, becoming an integral part of one's habits and so one's nature 213. The end result of mimesis is thus a complete assimilation of oneself - what Socrates would call one's soul - into the poetic persona. Furthermore, this assimilation of oneself into another character is a negation of the principle of specialization that Socrates has laid out for the state. One no longer is fulfilling the role for they are best suited, as one is no longer that individual - rather, a different role has now been assumed. And by not fulfilling the role for which one's soul is designed, one is not taking care of one's soul. Therefore, in his criticism of poetic education in Republic, Book III, Socrates is demonstrating how mimesis can affect the soul of the individual in a manner not unlike poetic inspiration was earlier found to do in this thesis - in Ion, Apology, Meno, Phaedrus and Laws.

In Books II and III, poetry and mimesis are discussed within a consideration of the guardians' musical education, a topic which is broached because both Socrates and Adoniantus agree that it could advance the object of their inquiry - the nature of justice and injustice in the state and the individual 214. Although the role of poetry and mimesis in the education of the guardians, and therefore in the development of the moral character of the individual and the state, is indicated by Socrates in this examination, it is not clear as to what they have to do with justice and injustice 215. In Book X, poetry and mimesis are again discussed, but no longer in relation to the guardians' education. Socrates' criticisms of poetry and mimesis in this later book are relevant to their inquiry into justice. In Book III, since the education of the guardians is only based on true opinion, and not on knowledge, Socrates is largely dogmatic with regard to the judgements that he makes on their musical education. However, in Book X, having by now explained his theory of Ideas, poetic mimesis is discussed by Socrates on the basis of knowledge - “this higher plane”. Socrates is therefore able to explain the philosophical principles which lay behind those earlier judgements 216.

Various Platonic critics have called the resumption by Socrates of an attack on poetry in Book X “ill-timed” 217 and “sudden and unnatural” 218. As previously noted, yet others consider it to have been originally an appendix, a coda 219. Guthrie, however, disagrees. He believes that Plato “had good philosophical reasons” for resuming the discussion of poetry 220. At the end of Book III, Socrates states that the harmful effects of poetic mimesis on human character and life cannot be confirmed until they have decided “the nature of justice and the proof that it is profitable to its possessor whether he does or does not appear to be just” 221. Further, at the beginning of Book X, on assuring his companions that their organization of the state, and especially their treatment of mimetic poetry, appears to be “entirely right”, Socrates then states that this is even “more plainly apparent now that we have distinguished the several parts of the soul” 222. Given these two statements, it appears necessary that the sections of Republic - Books IV, VIII and IX - in which Socrates and his friends determine the elements that comprise the state and the individual and how the balance between these elements leads
to justice or injustice, are first reviewed before going on with Book X, so that their relevance to our understanding of his criticism of poetic *mimesis* in Book X can be made clear. Thus after an examination of Books IV, VIII and IX, an analysis of Socrates’ arguments in Book X against mimetic poetry will then follow, which will be made in the light of the results of this digression.

In Book IV, we find Socrates, after having founded the ideal state, being forced by Glaucon and Adeimantus to return to the original problem they had posed to him, whether it is the just or unjust life that is more beneficial to the individual for itself and for its consequences. In answering this challenge, Socrates continues with his comparison of the state and the individual 223, so as to determine the virtues of the state, and hence to discover the presence of justice among them. He then investigates the nature of the soul, so as to show that “the virtues of the state are merely expressions of the inward conditions of the soul” 224. Socrates then applies this result to the individual, in order to determine justice.

Socrates begins his task by suggesting that if they have founded the state properly, it will presumably be perfect, and so will be “wise, brave, sober and just”, the four cardinal virtues 225. He then proposes that if they are able to identify these first three virtues, what will remain will be justice 226. The state, he determines, is wise not just because the guardians - who make up the smallest class - are present in the state, but because they rule. For if they did not rule, the state could not be wise 227. Socrates believes that this wisdom and good judgement is solely exercised by the guardians 228 not on behalf of any particular interest, but on behalf of the city as a whole. This is unlike other individuals in the state who although may also be capable of exercising good judgement, will only do so in their own self-interest. Similarly, the state is not brave just because it has a presence of auxiliaries or soldiers, but because of the role that they play in its defence. Further, the auxiliaries can be considered brave not only because they will “preserve the conviction which the law has created by education about...what and what sort of things are to be feared” 229 - that is, by right opinion - but because they will also preserve it “both in pain and pleasures and in desires and fears”, and will not expel it from their souls 230. This quality, Socrates states, has been imbued in them and made fast because of their education “in music and exercises of the body” (ἐπαίδευσιν μουσική καὶ γυμναστική) 231. Education can thus be seen as a training in character. But as was resolved earlier by the gentlemen, the subject matter of the poetry included in such moral education cannot be that which incites fear and cowardice 232.

Socrates believes that sobriety or temperance (σωφροσύνη), the third virtue, is not the role of one class, as it is with wisdom and courage, but rather, that it is present in all three, in that it is “a concord of the naturally superior and inferior as to which ought to rule both in the state and in the individual” 233 and which ought to be ruled. Furthermore, it is an agreement between all parties that this condition is right 234. Annas terms such acceptance self-knowledge, in that it illustrates that one knows one’s position in the scheme of things. It is also an acceptance that the behaviour of the rulers is different to that of the ruled. That is, it is deference to the fact that the irrational and intemperate desires of the ruled or majority - the producing or merchant class - are controlled by the rational and temperate desires of the ruling class - the guardians 235.
These latter desires, Socrates states, will only be found in those who are “the best educated” 236. Therefore, as with courage, temperance is a product of education. However, it cannot be of the kind that is given by some poetry as was earlier examined - that which inspires in man a lack of discipline and self-control 237.

The fourth and remaining virtue, justice, Socrates now declares, has been “tumbling about our feet from the start and yet we couldn’t see it” 238. That is, justice is that which they had discussed earlier, the economic principle concerning specialization, that each person in the state should fulfill the function or job in life for which he is best suited 239. Indeed, a colloquial saying, that “to do one’s own business and not to be a busybody (πολυπροσωπονέων) is justice” supports this 240. Therefore, Socrates states, justice must be this principle. Further, since they have discovered and so eliminated the other three virtues from consideration, the virtue remaining can only be justice 241. It is that which enabled the existence, as well as preserves the continuance, of these other virtues 242. This is because like all virtues, justice is a power (δύναμις) to act 243. Thus, by allowing all to do their own job without any interference from others, justice preserves the unanimity between the rulers and the ruled, the auxiliaries’ right judgement as to what is to be feared and not feared, and the guardians’ ability to rule wisely 244. Conversely, injustice occurs in a state when one class interferes with another’s business, and one substitutes for another.

Continuing his procedure of arguing from state to individual, Socrates proposes that since a state is just when its three elements are each doing their own job, and is wise and courageous and temperate because of the respective characteristics of these elements, they can also expect that the individual has these three corresponding elements in his soul, and is affected in a similar fashion. Thus, Socrates’ inquiry into the nature of the individual soul begins by his assumption that “the same forms and qualities” 245 that characterize a state can also be found in the individuals of which it is composed. Utilizing the principle of non-contradiction or conflict, as it is variously termed 246, Socrates proceeds to demonstrate that there are three separate elements by which the individual soul is composed - reason, spirit and appetite - each of which correspond to one of the three divisions or classes of the state - the guardians, the auxiliaries and the producing or merchant class. The “irrational and appetitive” or desiring part of the soul (το επιθυμητικον), that which is most developed in the producing class, and the “rational” or reasoning part of the soul (το λογιστικον) 247, that which is most developed in the guardian class, are the first elements to be distinguished by Socrates. The third and final element, the “thumos or principle of high spirit” (το θυμοειδες) 248, that which is most developed in the auxiliaries, is then determined.

Desire is the element in the soul that contains the bodily appetites for food, drink, sex and so on, and is closely associated with pleasure and satisfaction 249. This element of the soul “is thought of as manifold and chaotic because desire can fix on objects of any kind; there is nothing that unifies all cases of desiring except that some particular thing is sought for”. The correspondence of this element of the soul to the merchant or producing class in the state can thus be seen in that individuals of this class similarly do not have “any unifying ideal”, but rather, “are each set on his or her own particular aim” 250. It is also that which loves money (φιλοχρηστον) and profit
(φιλοκερδες), since wealth is usually the best way of obtaining and so gratifying one's desires 251. This part is therefore capable of simple reasoning as to the most expedient means by which it can obtain the desires or ends it seeks 252. Desire, then, is that which bids one to fulfil one's appetites; reason, however, is that element of control in the soul which inhibits or forbids such appetites. Reason is also the element of the soul by which we understand, learn and determine action. As each part of the soul has its own desire, the reasoning element seeks its pleasure in obtaining "the knowledge of the truth of things". It is the "lover of learning (φιλομωθες) and lover of wisdom (φιλοσοφων)" 253. The knowledge that this element seeks to obtain is not only that which is confined to theoretical knowledge, but is also that which is applied to practical problems 254. Furthermore, as Socrates states, reason rules the soul because it is this element that is wise and exercises forethought on behalf of the whole soul. Thus the role of reason forms a parallel to the role of the guardians, the only class who cares for the welfare of the whole state; unlike the other classes who care only for themselves 255. However, reason alone is not always enough to rule over the entire soul and so resist an appetite that is wrong and so may be harmful. Spirit, the third element of the soul to be determined by Socrates, is that which supports reason against such an onslaught by desire 256. But if spirit is corrupted by "evil nurture" - that is, by bad education 257 - it will side with desire. Plato's conception of spirit is threefold: it is the "fighting element in man, which makes him resist aggression, and also makes him aggressive" 258. It is also that which makes man "indignant at injustice, and again leaves him a coward when he feels himself in the wrong" 259. Finally, it is also that element of the soul which is set on "predominance and victory and good repute" and is "ambitious (φιλονικον) and "covetous of honour" (φιλοτιμον) 260. As with desire and reason, the element of spirit in the soul can also be compared to a class in the state - the auxiliaries. The auxiliaries, like spirit, "repudiate aims that offend against their ideals, but they lack reasoned understanding of their way of life and its basis" 261.

Having now determined these three elements in the soul - desire, reason and spirit - Socrates concludes that these same three elements exist in the individual as they do in the state. That is, the individual is wise in the same manner and with the same part of himself as is the state, and this is also true for courage and the other virtues. Therefore, he reasons, the individual should also be just in the same manner as the state is just. And if the state is just when each of its three classes fulfil its own function without interference from the others, an individual is similarly just when each of the three elements of his soul are able to fulfil their own function without interference from the others. Furthermore, because it is able to think and act on behalf of the entire soul, reason ought to rule and spirit ought to obey and support reason. Socrates believes that this concord between these two elements of the soul can be achieved through education, "a blending of music and gymnastics", which intensifies and fosters "the one with fair words and teachings and relaxing and soothing and making gentle the other by harmony and rhythm" 262. These two elements, having been "reared and having learned and been educated to do their own work" 263, must control desire, for desire, Socrates warns, forms the greater part of man's soul and is insatiable by nature. If it is not controlled, desire will grow big and strong, infected as it is with the bodily pleasures, and then will
no longer mind its own business by performing its own function, and will also attempt
to control the other elements of the soul; this, he predicts, will result in the overturning
of "the entire life of all" 264. The final element, the temperance or sophrosyne of an
individual soul, is no different to that of a state in that it is the harmonious agreement of
all its elements to abide by the rule of reason. If these principles are followed, Socrates
maintains, then neither their just state or the equivalent in an individual - that is, one with
the appropriate breeding and education - will be likely to do any wrong. And this is
because each element of his soul is performing its proper function, whether it be the
ruler or the ruled.

Socrates now remarks how, when they were at the beginning of the founding of
their state, they were fortunate to have come upon a simple economic principle for a type
of justice. Indeed, the notion of "one man, one job" has proven to be the very image
(εἰδωλον) of justice 265. For although justice is this principle, it is not merely the
external actions involved in doing one's own thing; rather, it is the inner workings of
man's soul - "the expression of a corresponding mode within the soul" 266. That is, the
just man must not permit the elements in his soul "to do each the work of some other
and interfere and meddle with one another" 267. In disallowing this, he attains "self-
mastery", and is in "beautiful order" and harmony within himself. This because he is
now a unit, "one man instead of many, self-controlled and in unison" (my italics) 268.
Such a man will be prepared for any eventuality - whether it be of a personal, financial,
political or commercial nature. And if he calls an action just and honourable, he will
mean that these actions aid and preserve the harmonious balance of the elements of the
soul, and will call the knowledge that controls such action wisdom. Conversely, any
actions which violate this harmonious balance of the elements of the soul can be called
injustice, and the opinions behind the actions which support this violation, ignorance
(ἀγνώστος) 269.

Socrates now draws a medical analogy 270 to elucidate the nature of justice and
injustice: that justice and injustice "are in the soul what the healthful and diseaseful are
in the body; there is no difference" 271. However, in order to make this comparison,
Socrates is assuming that just as health is the greatest physical good for the body, so
similarly, justice must be the greatest good for the soul 272. For just as healthy activities
produce health and unhealthy activities produce illness, so similarly, he argues, just
actions produce justice and unjust actions, injustice. Further, just as health is produced
by establishing in the body a natural order between its elements of that which is to
control and that which is to be subordinate, and disease by the opposite process, so
similarly, justice is produced by establishing in the soul a natural order between its
elements of that which is to control and that which is to be subordinate, and injustice by
the opposite process. Therefore, justice or virtue, can be seen as the equivalent to an
healthful or good state of the soul, while injustice or vice, can be seen as the equivalent
to an unhealthy or bad state of the soul. In turn, this would suggest that justice or virtue
is produced by one's "healthy" or good activities, and injustice or vice is produced by
one's "unhealthy" or bad activities. That is, that the state of one's soul - good or bad -
is the result of one's upbringing and education. This analogy reinforces Socrates' eariler remarks that the individuals within each class in the state, and correspondingly,
the elements of one's soul, are affected thusly 273. Further, in the forthcoming analysis
of Books VIII and IX, of the timarchic, oligarchic, democratic and tyrannic individuals, it will be seen that the injustice which resides in each of their souls is directly attributable to deficits in their respective upbringing and education.

Although Socrates has now defined justice in both the state and in the individual, his task is not yet complete, since the challenge that Glaucon and Adeimantus had originally posed him was that he prove that justice is beneficial in itself and for its consequences to those who possess it. Glaucon, however, is willing to concede to Socrates since he believes that their inquiry has now reached an absurd point. As he argues, if virtue has been shown by Socrates to be a form of mental or spiritual health and vice a form of mental or spiritual disease, and men who are physically unwell do not believe that life is worth living, even though they possess “all the food and drink and wealth and power in the world” 274, why then would anyone suppose that the unjust life would be worth living, given that “the very nature and constitution of that whereby we live is disordered and corrupted” 275, and that one would be unable to rid oneself of the very thing that causes one’s diseased condition?

Despite Glaucon’s strong argument against continuing the inquiry, Socrates demurs. As he states, even though they have “won to this height” 276, they have not, as yet, achieved complete clarity on the question of justice; for while they have seen that there is only one form (εὐδοκία) of virtue or goodness (ἀρετή), the forms of vice or evil (κακωμα) are infinite, and there are several which would be particularly worthwhile for the three of them to examine. When Glaucon questions this statement, Socrates explains that there are five kinds of constitutions and five kinds of soul; indeed, one of these kinds of constitution is the one that they have so far been expounding, which can be called either a “royalty”, if there is only one ruler, or an “aristocracy”, if there are more than one 278. However, he believes that no matter whether there are one or more rulers in their state, they will not be able to alter the laws of their state so long as they preserve “the breeding and the education” 279 (my italics) that they have previously established - that of the musical arts such as poetry, that is taught to the children who have been bred and chosen to become the guardians of the state. Socrates has previously noted this - that change to their constitution will only arise if changes are made to the educational system that they have established, such as the poets introducing “a new way of song”. As he states, “a change to a new type of music is something to beware of as a hazard of all our fortunes. For the modes of music (μουσικῆς τροποῖ) are never disturbed without unsettling of the most fundamental political and social conventions” 280. That is, the educational system of the state, as created by Socrates, Glaucon and Adeimantus, is an education in morality and civics, which has been designed by them so as to produce a certain type of character or soul - in this case, a just individual. Therefore, to alter this educational system would be to alter also the type of character that is produced by that educational system 281. Further, since “the qualities of a state must also exist in the individuals that compose it” 282, any change to the educational system would not only lead to a change in the type of characters produced, but also to a change in the constitution or moral makeup of the state.

In Book III, Socrates argues that the dramatic identification or mimesis used in many forms of non-narrative poetry create a man who is “manifest”. That is, by imitating another in this way, the individual submerges his own character in order to
create the fictitious character, with the result being that he is then no longer either himself or truly the other. He is thus unable to do his own thing - the principle upon which the city was founded and continues to exist - nor another's. For while he may have assumed the physical and emotional idiosyncrasies of another by imitating them, he has not the knowledge and skills that are commonly associated with that character, and so is unable to take on that role in the state. In Book IV, it was shown that justice in the state is this very principle of specialization. Thus, if mimetic poetry is employed in the educational system, it will affect not only the character of individuals produced, but also the character of the state - in this case, its justice. As Socrates has earlier stated, mimetic poetry "is ill-suited to our polity, because there is no twofold or manifold man among us, since every man does the one thing" 283. Further, as has been discussed, as other aspects of mimetic poetry, the mode and the rhythm it employs, and even the musical instruments which are used to accompany it, also encourage such versatility in men, they too will advance the individuals involved, and so the state, to the same end. "Good" education can thus be determined to be that which creates good or just individuals, and "bad" education, the opposite 284. Similarly, as poetry is the main constituent of this educational system, "good" and "bad" poetry lead to the same respective conclusions. It would follow then, that "bad" poetry, that is, mimetic poetry, will harm both the soul of the individual and the welfare of the state. And this is what Socrates attempts to prove in Book X. However, before continuing on to Book X, this relationship between education and the type of state and individual it produces will be further explored. For as Socrates has previously stated, the examination of justice is not complete - injustice has still to be understood. This follows the tenet stated by the Athenian stranger in Laws, that a thing is not understood completely unless its opposite is also understood 285. Just as Socrates is about to begin on the examination of injustice in the state and in the individual, he is interrupted by a query from Polemarchus and Adeimantus. His reply to them forms the middle books of Republic, and ends at the beginning of Book VIII, where the examination of injustice is resumed, and is continued, until the end of Book IX.

Although the order in which Socrates presents the four best known imperfect or unjust constitutions - timarchy, oligarchy, democracy and tyranny - appears to form an historical series 286, they are actually presented, in order, according to the degree to which they differ from the ideal state. That is, in the amount of justice each state exhibits. The just state is thus taken as the norm, and so the unjust states are presented according to the degree to which they depart from that norm. Each constitution is first described by Socrates, and then, since constitutions "do not spring from the proverbial oak or rock", but from the "characters of their citizens", he follows this description with one of the type of individual that corresponds to that particular constitution 287. Just as with Socrates' examination of the just state and individual, these descriptions are also analyses of the psychological elements of which the states and individuals are composed. Indeed, "(e)ach of the constitutions of society which he describes is really an expression of the domination of a certain psychological tendency which, if unchecked, will inevitably produce certain results in society and individual life" 288. Further, although "not all individuals in each society can be of the type corresponding to it; but the traits in the individual (described) will be those admired in the society to
which he corresponds, he will be its ideal man” 290. Each individual is also depicted as
the son of the individual that corresponds to the previously described state. For example,
the timarchic individual is the “son” of the aristocratic “father”, the oligarchic
individual is the “son” of the timarchic “father”, and so on. Socrates again employs
the procedure of arguing from the state to the individual, and similarly justifies its use
on the basis of greater clarity 299.

It has been established by Socrates that “good” education is that which creates
good or just individuals, and “bad” education, the opposite 291. Therefore, an
examination of unjust states and their corresponding unjust individuals should show
that the education of such individuals must be “bad”. That this is what Socrates finds
will soon be discussed. Since, as Socrates has argued, states are but the product of the
individuals of which they are composed 292, “bad” education must not be only that
which affects the souls of individuals, but must also be that which affects the welfare of
states.

The first unjust constitution to be examined by Socrates is timocracy or timarchy
(τιμοκρατία or τιμαρχίας) 293, a rule of “the kind that is based on a property
qualification (τιμές)” 294, and which derives from the just state. As with all states,
Socrates explains, change will occur in the just state when the “helpers (auxiliaries) and
rulers (guardians) fall out and... (are) at odds with one another and themselves”
(στόχος) 295. For although the state as designed by the three gentlemen is theoretically
perfect, it suffers, as do all created things, from a limited life span, and so must also
decline and die. Indeed, even though the guardians are trained to be wise, reasoning, in
combination with sensation, will not prevent them from miscalculating the optimal
breeding period for the men and women. Because the children that result will be bred
out of season, they will not be “well-born or fortunate” 296, and while the best of these
will be appointed to office, they will not be worthy, for when they assume the positions
held by their fathers, they will pay “too little heed to music (μουσικής) and then to
gymnastics (γυμναστικής), so that... (the) young men will deteriorate in their culture”
(my italics) 297.

A mistake in the eugenics program thus leads to individuals being
inappropriately placed into positions in which they are not qualified, an action which
violates the state’s ruling principle of specialization. Unable to cope in their allotted
roles, these individuals become negligent of their duties and their education. The next
generation, having now lost the guardian’s ability to distinguish between the classes,
prove even less efficient at eugenics. The resultant intermixing of the classes leads to
“unlikeliness and an unharmonious unevenness, things that always beget war and enmity
wherever they arise” 298, and so to the establishment of a timarchy, a constitution which
lies between an aristocracy and an oligarchy. While this state shares some of the
features of an aristocracy, it does not have its respect for intelligence and the principle of
specialization, but does have an oligarchy’s passion for accruing and hoarding wealth.
As Socrates states, the activities that these features engender are because their guardians
“have not been educated by persuasion, but by force because of their neglect of the
true Muse, the companion of discussion and philosophy, and because of their
preference of gymnastics to music” (my italics) 299. Socrates thus believes that the state
is a combination of good and evil. It also features a “predominance of the high-spirited element (θυμοειδους), namely contentiousness and covetousness of honour (φιλονικαι και φιλοτιμαι)” 300.

Corresponding to the timarchic state is the timarchic individual, who shares his state’s liking for money. He is portrayed by Socrates as being “self-willed and lacking in culture” 301. Socrates considers that the presence of these flaws in the soul of this individual - the reason that his virtue is not “sincere and pure” - is because it lacks “the best guardian”...“(t)reason blended with culture (λογου μουσικη κεκραμενου)...the only indwelling preserver of virtue throughout life in the soul that possesses it” (my italics) 302. That is, education establishes and preserves justice in the soul of the individual - in other words, virtue is knowledge 303. The soul of the timarchic individual can thus be seen as one compromised. Although he is not “by nature of a bad disposition”, his soul is not ruled by reason, but instead, by “ambition and high-spirit” (φιλονικω και θυμοειδε) 304. Further, because reason is unaided by this spirited element, the desiring or appetitive element of his soul, in the form of avarice, is able to grow, unchecked.

The second unjust constitution to be discussed, oligarchy (ολιγαρχια), is a state “in which wealth is the criterion of merit and the wealthy are in control” 305. By allowing the amount of wealth that is controlled in private hands to increase, the timarchy is destroyed and the oligarchy established. Wealth in this state is now more valued than virtue. As Socrates states, these are diametrically opposed concerns, for when wealth and the wealthy are honoured, virtue and the good are not. Because of this concern for wealth in the oligarchic state, it becomes the basis on which it is run. For just as a ship’s pilot should not be chosen on the basis of wealth, but for their skill in navigation, a state’s political authority should also not be chosen by such a criterion 306. This concern for wealth also leads the state to divide into two factions - the rich and the poor - who dwell together, and continually plot against each other. This division in the state hampers its ability to wage war, for the oligarchs are too afraid to arm the masses, whom they fear worse than any enemy. But if they do not, the scarcity in their ranks will be apparent, and they will be “rulers over a few” 307. Further, penurious as they are, the oligarchs are unwilling to pay for the cost of war. Finally, the state’s neglect of the principle of specialization, with the same people being involved in several occupations, can only further fracture the society, and so contribute to its injustice. Such a state is marked by the presence of “drones”, the poor or majority of citizens who are without occupation, and so become either beggars or criminals 308. Socrates believes that the presence of this latter type is “the result of defective culture (αποιδευσιων) and bad breeding and a wrong constitution” (my italics) 309. That is, poor education.

The oligarchic individual, like its corresponding state, places overwhelming importance on wealth and its acquisition. Thus the reasoning and spirited elements of his soul are subordinate to the desiring part. As Socrates states, reason is forbidden to do anything but “to calculate and and consider nothing but the ways of making more money”, and spirit is forbidden “to admire and honour nothing but riches and rich men, and to take pride in nothing but the possession of wealth and whatever contributes to that” 310. As with the timarchic individual, Socrates considers that these flaws in the
oligarchic individual’s soul are due to his “lack of culture” (my italics) or education (ἀπαθέσθαι) 311. Although this lack of education only furthers his desires, the oligarchic individual is still able to keep them under control. However, this restraint is not achieved by reason, but fear. He is thus a divided soul: the strength of these desires, combined with his need for respectability, prevents him from possessing a soul “in unison and harmony with itself” 312, and so just.

The disintegration of the oligarchic state leads to the establishment of democracy (δημοκρατία), the third type of unjust constitution 313. Because the criterion by which one rules in an oligarchy is wealth, the oligarchs seek to preserve their power by increasing their personal fortunes. By failing to establish laws such as restricting the use of property as capital and the banning of usury which would prevent the young from being financially ruined by their own extravagance, the oligarchs instead exploit this human weakness by purchasing their property and allowing them loans, and thereby accumulate ever more wealth and influence. These actions thus result in a divide between the rich and the poor. Resentment breeds in the poor who have deprived them of their wealth and position, and they plot for the overthrow of the oligarchs and society. The oligarchs, however, intent as they are on accruing wealth, are mindless of this, and, as with their dependants - “young spoiled wantons averse to toil of body and mind (ἀνεματος καὶ μυχης)” who are “too soft to stand up against pleasure and pain” (my italics) 314 - will prove to be no match for the revolutionary zeal of the poor and disenfranchised. Therefore, as Jaeger notes, “just as the excesses of Spartan ambition has led to the replacement of timocracy by oligarchy”, so it is “the insatiable greed for money which produces democracy out of oligarchy” 315. That is, the psychological element by which each society and their corresponding individuals can be distinguished - in the case of oligarchy, the appetite or desire for wealth - is that which brings about their ruin 316. And it is education, or rather, the lack thereof, which has lead to this predominance of one element (desire) over the others (reason and spirit), and so creates this constitution and the type of individual of which it is composed 317.

Democracy originates when the poor “winning the victory, put to death some of the other party, drive out others, and grant the rest of the citizens an equal share in both citizenship and offices”, which are, for the most part, assigned by lot 318. The society thus produced is one “chock-full of liberty and freedom of speech”. Further, it is one in which “every man (has) the licence to do as he likes”. That is, everyone is able to arrange “a plan for leading his own life in a way that pleases him” 319, but this is not necessarily in a way that is appropriate to his talents. Although democracy thus viewed may seem to be a “delightful form of government, anarchic and motley” 320, by allowing its citizens such licence, it neglects the ruling principle of the just society that the three gentlemen had earlier established, that every man should do the job for which he is best suited 321. If the individuals of the democratic state do not fulfil the function for which they are best suited, not only is the society unjust, but so are those individuals, for as has been previously discussed, the same elements exist in the individual as they do in the state. Therefore, the individual should be just in the same manner as the state is just. And if the state is just when each of its three classes fulfil its own function without interference from the others, an individual is similarly just when each of the three elements of his soul are able to fulfil their own function without interference from the
others 322. Therefore, by allowing all to do as they please, democracy prevents these individuals from being just. As Socrates states, *one can only be just if one is brought up in a good environment and has good training* 323 - such as that determined by the three gentlemen in Book III - but democracy, he believes, “tramples underfoot all such ideals” 324.

The soul of the democratic individual, like that of the preceding oligarchic individual, is ruled by desire. However, unlike the oligarchic individual, whose desire is “orderly, concentrated and respectable” 325, in that it is focused only on the attainment of wealth, the democratic individual is not ruled by any one desire, but by many. In order to explain this individual, Socrates delineates the difference between “necessary” and “unnecessary” desires. Necessary desires are that which “we cannot divert or suppress”, and because their satisfaction is beneficial to us, we are compelled to attain them. An example of such a desire is that for the food required for one to remain healthy and strong. Unnecessary desires, on the other hand, are those “from which a man could free himself by discipline (μελέτω) from youth up, and whose presence in the soul does no good and in some cases harm” 326, such as the desire for a more varied and luxurious diet, which is inessential, or even deleterious, to one’s health. Therefore, while the oligarchic individual is affected by a necessary desire 327, the democratic individual is affected by a host of unnecessary desires. According to Socrates, this is because the democratic individual has had no education - “nothing to feed his reason upon, and therefore has nothing to give unity to his appetites” 328. That is, although his oligarchic aspect is given support by his father and family, which then aids the establishment of necessary desires within his soul, it is his father’s “ignorance of true education” (ἀνεπιστημοσύνη) (my italics) - a proper upbringing 329 - which allows the unnecessary desires to flourish. Because the young man’s soul is “empty” and so unoccupied “by studies and honourable pursuits and true discourses” - “the best watchmen and guardians in the minds of men” 330 - these unnecessary desires are able to take root there. Therefore, just as there is *stasis* in the soul of the timarchic individual between the spirited and the reasoning elements, and in the oligarchic individual, of the desiring element over the spirited and reasoning elements, there is also *stasis* in the soul of democratic individual. However, instead of it being between two different elements or factions of the soul, the conflict in the democratic individual is solely within the desiring element 331.

The democratic individual, drawn as he is by many desires, is therefore a versatile or “manifold man” 332: “now wine-bibbing and abandoning himself to the lascivious pleasures of the flute and again drinking only water and dieting; and at one time exercising his body, and sometimes neglecting all things and at another time seeming to occupy himself with philosophy” 333. Therefore, just as the democratic state neglects the principle of specialization in allowing all to do what they wish, this individual similarly does not work at that for which he is best suited, but rather, is a dilettante - a jack of all trades and master of none. As in the life of the state, this individual’s life also appears delightful; he is one “whom many a man and woman would count fortunate in his life as containing within himself the greatest number of patterns and qualities” 334. However, it is these features which also make both he and the state to which he gives its character, unjust, and will lead to their ruin 335. As with the timarchic and oligarchic
states and their corresponding individuals, in the democratic state and in the democratic individual it is the lack of good education that leads to this conclusion.

Tyranny (περισσότερος) 334, which arises out of democracy, is not only the fourth and final unjust constitution to be discussed by Socrates, it is also his longest and most detailed account. In being the last account, this state is thus the furthest removed from the ideal state and justice. Socrates believes that the fall of democracy is brought about by an excessive desire for freedom - freedom being “its definition and criterion of good” 337. As he has earlier noted, because desire forms the greater part of one’s soul, and is the “most insatiate”, it will grow big and strong and not keep to its own work but instead enslave the entire soul if it is not restrained by the reasoning and spirited elements 338. Because these three elements of the soul are mirrored in the state 339, one would expect that the expression of desire in the state would similarly become extravagant unless checked. Indeed, when freedom in the democratic state is allowed to rage unabated, it dissolves into anarchy 340, a condition which then permeates all aspects of life 341. This process causes the souls of the citizens to become “so sensitive that they chafe at the slightest suggestion of servitude and will not endure it” 342. Socrates believes that this extreme form of democracy is the root from which tyranny grows, for “any excess is wont to bring about a corresponding reaction to the opposite”, and this is true for the weather, and for plants and animals as well as polities 343. Therefore, the excessive freedom that exists in a democracy should be replaced by excessive subjection. And, as Socrates explains, this is exactly what occurs.

As in an oligarchic state, a class of “drones” also exist in a democracy 344. However, they exist in a larger number than in the oligarchic state because of the licence which exists in a democracy. Two other classes also exist: a “capitalistic” class, and the largest and most potent class, the “people” or the masses, who earn their own living and are without property. It is the conflict between these three classes that brings about the downfall of the democratic state. Because they are rich, the drones attempt to plunder the capitalistic class, as do the leaders of the people, who then keep most for themselves and then distribute the remainder to the masses. However, because the capitalists are then forced to defend themselves in the Assembly and elsewhere, they are branded as oligarchs even though they have no revolutionary designs. In the struggle that ensues, the people appoint a popular leader to stand up for them, and it is he who leads this class war against the capitalists. Inevitably, blood is spilt between the classes. When the popular leader demands a personal bodyguard to ensure his safety so that he can continue fighting for the people’s cause, the people readily agree; this enables him to overthrow all opposition and consolidate his position of power, as tyrant.

At the beginning of his reign, the tyrant appears lenient, making promises to all, freeing debtors and redistributing land. But once he has disposed of his exiled enemies, this changes: he continues to make trouble abroad, firstly, so that the people may see that they have need of a strong leader, and secondly, so as to justify the high war taxes he imposes on his people which reduce them to poverty, and so force them to devote all their energies to the task of earning a living rather than plotting against him. He then purges the state of all who speak against him - the reverse of the manner in which a purgative is employed in medicine. For while the doctor removes the worst and leaves the best, the tyrant does the opposite. Because of his declining popularity, he is forced to
increase the size of his bodyguard, which he recruits from abroad and from the ranks of the slaves. The tyrant, the master of the state, is now dependent on the mercy of his slaves for his survival. Finally, by using violence not only on the people who had formerly supported him, and now oppose him, but also on the man who fathered him, the tyrant plumbs the depths of wickedness. In his account of tyranny, Socrates also makes several gratuitous remarks concerning the poets, which seem to be a presage of his criticism of them and their mimetic products in Book X 345.

As with all the individuals discussed thus far - the timarchic, oligarchic and democratic - the psychological and moral development of the tyrannical individual is greatly affected by his upbringing and education. As a youth he is drawn to his democratic father's licentiousness, which is cloaked, by his seducers, in the guise of complete freedom. These seducers or "kingmakers" 346, in a desperate effort to control the youth by reining in his vast array of desires, implant in his soul "a ruling passion" 347. Despite this action, the youth is affected by still more desires, which only succeed in magnifying and nurturing this ruling passion. In turn, it disinhibits his remaining moral safeguards, and "infects him with a frenzy (μανια)" 348. By this process, the youth has become a tyrant, which is, as Socrates suggests, "when either by nature or by habits or by both he has become even as the drunken, the erotic, the maniacal" 349 - since when in all three conditions, man can be seen to act tyrannically 350. Socrates refers to these desires which control the tyrant as "immoral". As he has previously explained, desires can be divided into those which are necessary and those which are unnecessary 351. Immoral desires are a further subdivision of unnecessary desires, and are of the kind that

"are awakened in our sleep when the rest of the soul, the rational, gentle and dominant part slumbers, but the beastly and savage part...repelling sleep, endeavours to sally forth and satisfy its own instincts...and there is nothing that it will not venture to undertake as being released from all sense of shame and reason" 352.

Although such desires can be found in all men, they can be either controlled or eradicated in those who are both sound and disciplined "by the laws and the better desires in alliance with reason" 353. Indeed, Socrates delineates a "sleep-education" 354 which achieves this end by recreating the control that a just man, when awake, has over the desiring element of his soul when his reasoning element is in alliance with his spirited element. However, because "the tyrannical type does not even try to train and discipline these lusts" 355, his waking actions take on the same evil qualities that can be found in his dreams. But as Socrates has suggested elsewhere, such behaviour only indicates that the tyrant cannot be acting with complete freedom 356 - for the tyrant, the master of the state, is a slave, completely dominated by these immoral desires 357, and so cannot be just. Therefore, to be just - where each of the three elements of one's soul do not trespass on each other's functions and hence do not interfere with each other 358 - is to be completely free.

These four unjust societies and their corresponding individuals are now ranked by Socrates in order of happiness. By a series of arguments, he compares the completely unjust man, the tyrant, with the completely just man, the philosopher-ruler, to prove that the life of the just man is happier - 729 times more happy 359 than the unjust man,
thereby answering the challenge put to him by Glaucou and Adeimantus in Book II after they had rejected his more cursory answer to Thrasymachus 360. The three arguments used here by Socrates are said by many to have flaws 361; however, for the purposes of this thesis, it is this end result - that the just man is happier than the unjust man - that is relevant, and how it relates to the effect that mimetic poetry has on the individual and society, and not the details of these arguments and the criticisms that have been made against them. However, by Socrates having finally answered this challenge, there is now no longer any reason for them to continue with their discussion. As Annas notes, since “Book 9 ends the main argument of the Republic, and ends it on a rhetorical and apparently decisive note”, it would thus seem to be the logical place for Republic to end, but instead “there is another book added on” 362. However, that Book X is placed after the discussion in Book IV concerning the elements which comprise the state and soul, and after that of Books VIII and IX on the lives of unjust states and their corresponding individuals, is no coincidence, for as Socrates states, this knowledge is important to his arguments against mimetic poetry 363. Thus these discussions were carried out not only so that Socrates could answer the challenge put to him earlier by Glaucou and Adeimantus, but they were also designed so as to provide a necessary philosophical and psychological background to his criticism of mimetic poetry in Book X. Therefore, by employing the arguments of these earlier books, Book X is not merely a repository for “extra material” 364, but rather, is an integral part of the dialogue, the logical end to these philosophical means 365.

Socrates makes four arguments in Book X against mimetic poetry, which can be linked in two pairs 366. While the first pair is epistemological - that the poets are without knowledge - the second pair is psychological - that mimetic poetry harms the soul of the individual, be he performer or spectator. As has been previously mentioned, there appears to be a shift in Plato’s definition of mimesis in Republic, from Books III to X. This apparent manoeuvre has been much commented upon by critics 367. Furthermore, unlike Book III, in Book X, in the first pair of arguments (epistemological), Socrates seems to employ the more common usage of mimesis, as imitation, but then, in the two subsequent arguments (psychological), it appears that he reverts to his Book III usage, as dramatic identification - and so another shift in the manner in which he defines mimesis!

However, there is an explanation for these seeming shifts in Plato’s use of mimesis from Book III to X, and in Book X from the first pair of arguments to the second pair. I have previously suggested that in these books he is respectively outlining, in the order in which they act, a two-step process in which the poet, by his use of mimesis as imitation or representation, psychologically affects the actor/reader/audience, who then assimilate his words in a mimetic fashion - by dramatic identification. That is, for Plato, mimesis is not imitation or dramatic identification - it is both. That this is so, can be seen in Books II–III, where Socrates first criticizes the content of contemporary poetry and then the form of poetry. The first section, in Books II–III, on the content of poetry, is a discussion of the manner in which Socrates believes the poets misrepresent the true nature of the gods and heroes and their exploits, by showing them to be immoral 368. That is, the actions of the gods and heroes are depicted by the poets who use representation or imitation to do so, the first step of the mimetic process in poetry 369.
The second section, in Book III, on the form of poetry, shows the next step of the mimetic process: dramatic identification 370. In Book X, the transition from the first pair of arguments to the second pair is the same as in Books II-III: imitation to dramatic identification. Therefore, Plato does not discuss two different types of poetic mimesis in Republic, but rather, he outlines, first in Books II-III and then in Book X, the two parts of the mimetic process. These two parts are not in conflict, but work synergistically, to form the powerful effect that mimetic poetry has not only on the souls of those who perform such works, but also on the souls of those who read it, watch it and listen to it.

Socrates warns that unless one possesses an “antidote” (φαρμακόν) 371 against the charm of mimetic poetry by knowing its real nature, it can corrupt the mind of all listeners 372. Because “the qualities of a state exist in the individuals that compose it” 373, if the souls of the citizens are affected adversely by mimetic poetry, it follows that the welfare of the state will also be compromised. Therefore, for the good of the state and its citizens, Socrates believes that despite the “love and reverence” with which he regards Homer, he must speak out against this individual who stands for all mimetic poets. As he states, “we must not honour a man above truth” 374.

Following this statement are the two epistemological arguments that Socrates makes against the poets. As both arguments have been previously discussed 375, they shall not be pursued here in detail. In the first argument, Socrates indicates that because the poets do not describe the essential nature of phenomena - which is apprehended by the mind - but only their appearance - that which is perceived by the senses, such as a thing’s size, colour or shape - they cannot have knowledge, for true knowledge is based on an understanding of a thing’s function or need. And, as Socrates states in the second argument, since the poet does not have experience of that which he describes, but only imitates the products of those who have this knowledge or right opinion, it follows that that which he produces, his poetry, must be far removed from the truth 376. These imitations of reality are not harmless, for they can deceive those with even less experience of such things, such as children and fools, into believing that the poet has knowledge of that which he portrays in his works 377. As Socrates states, this is because people are inclined to believe that a good poet, “if he is to poetize things rightly, must...create with knowledge or else be unable to create”. Moreover, if the poets, with their use of mimesis, are able to convince their audiences that they are masters of the skills they describe, such as navigation or medicine, they can similarly convince them that they also know “all things human pertaining to virtue and vice and all things divine” 378 - that is, that the morality they espouse in their works can act as a true guide to what can make an individual or a state better or worse. As Janaway notes, “a familiar analogy” is at work here: “having ethical knowledge is analogous with possessing a techne and so making poetic characters who appear to possess ethical knowledge is analogous with making characters who appear to be exponents of a techne” 379. In an attempt to prove his case, that the poets do not have knowledge “about which the multitudes fancy they speak well” 380, Socrates presents the following evidence.

Firstly, Socrates argues, if one were able to produce both the original as well as an imitation of it, why would anyone devote themselves to the imitation instead of the original “and set this in the forefront of his life as the best thing he had” 381, for as he continues, if one truly had knowledge, surely it would be preferable for one to be
known for one's great actions, rather than for praising the actions of others? Indeed, as Glaucon affirms, the honours that one would gain would be greater if the former were pursued. Although it may be true that poetic mimesis, the imitation of reality, is not a worthwhile activity, Socrates' argument here does not prove that this is so 382, and so he cannot assume that the poets are without knowledge for having chosen to produce imitations and not originals.

Secondly, Socrates argues, in their works, poets such as Homer depict individuals engaging in medicine, warfare, politics and education - all of which require skill and knowledge. But if it were true that Homer had knowledge of that which he composed, would there not be evidence of him having these abilities, such as would exist if he had established a school of medicine, or conducted a war, or governed a state, or educated men? And would he not have also left behind some sort of legacy in the way of a certain life-style, or devoted disciples or useful inventions? Further, if Homer were such a man, who was able to make men better, would it not be likely that the community to which he belonged would have tried to prevent him from leaving them rather than allowing him to lead the peripatetic life of a poet? Since there is no evidence that Homer was such a man, Socrates concludes that "all the poetic tribe, beginning with Homer, are imitators of excellence and of the other things that they "create" and do not lay a hold on truth" 383. That is, because poets are able to create stories whose characters demonstrate certain skills and knowledge, they can dupe their audience into believing that they also have knowledge of such things when they in fact do not. This "spell" (κηλησυν) 384 that the poet's words have over people to persuade them that he knows that which he does not, is aided by his use of rhythm, metre and harmony 385. As Socrates suggests, if poetry were stripped of such "adornments" and reduced to plain prose, it would have less impact 386.

Because the poet was revered as the "the educator of Hellas" 387, Socrates' stance in these first two epistemological arguments, that the poets do not have knowledge of that which they compose, is at odds with the public opinion of his time. In these arguments, he attempts to prove that because of their use of mimesis, that what the poets portray in their works is but a mere semblance of reality, and so is not based on truth. Their works, therefore, should not be considered to be reliable sources of information. And since these works teach not only technical matters, such as ship-building, navigation, and so on, but also ethical matters - the manner in which one should conduct one's personal and public life 388 - if the poets' knowledge is, as Socrates argues, nothing but a sham, it follows that the information which their works disperse would have a powerful and dangerous impact not only on the individuals who are taught by their works, but also on the state itself. This position could also be extrapolated from Socrates' arguments in Meno 389. Thus the poets, by their use of mimesis, risk harming both the individual and the state, a conclusion which was also drawn in the examinations of the dialogues which dealt with inspiration.

In this pair of arguments, Socrates has discussed the first part of the mimetic process, mimesis as imitation or representation. In the next pair of arguments, he presents the second part of the mimetic process, mimesis as dramatic identification. In doing so, he will expand on the objections he raised to the content of poetry in Books II-III 390. Thus having examined the nature of poetic mimesis - "this business (which) is
concerned with the third remove from truth” - Socrates now attempts to determine the element in man’s soul to which the “function and potency” of mimesis are related. That is, to what part of man’s soul does poetic mimesis appeal and how does it achieve this? This second pair of arguments incorporates aspects of Socrates’ earlier discussion on psychology, in Book IV.

To introduce this pair of arguments, Socrates employs yet another analogy between painting and poetry. He begins by noting that if one views the same sized object from different distances, they do not appear to be the same size. Another optical illusion occurs when a stick is placed halfway in water, and is then removed, it will first appear bent and then straight. Similarly, the same surface can alternately appear concave and convex due to distortions of light. Socrates believes that these illusions are the product of the confusion which exists in our souls, and that mimetic art such as scene-painting (σκηνογραφία) deceives us by capitalizing upon this inherent weakness in man. However, at the same time we are being deceived, measurement, a function (εργον) of the part of the soul that “reasons and calculates”, prevents our souls from being dominated by this confusion. In applying the same logical procedure that he had employed earlier - that the same part of the soul cannot hold different opinions about the same thing at the same time - Socrates determines that that which “opines in contradiction of measurement could not be the same with that which conforms to it.” Therefore, the part of the soul which relies on measurement and reckoning must be a superior part - “the best part of the soul” - whereas the part of the soul that contradicts it, must be inferior. As he states, this is the conclusion which he had had in mind when he had said that “poetry, and in general the mimetic (μιμητική) art, produces a product that is far removed from truth in the accomplishment of its task, and associates with the part of us that is remote from intelligence, and is its companion and friend for no sound and true purpose.” However, because he is unwilling to rely solely on this conclusion drawn from the analogy with painting, Socrates states that he must now consider the part of the mind to which mimetic poetry (ποιητικός μιμητική) appeals, in order to determine if it applies only to mimetic arts which are visual such as painting, or if it is equally true for that which appeals to hearing such as poetry.

Socrates notes that mimetic poetry represents “human beings acting under compulsion or voluntarily, and as a result of their actions supposing themselves to have fared well or ill and in all this feeling either grief or joy”. But in such circumstances, Socrates believes, man does not remain in “one mind with himself” for just as contradiction exists in man in the realm of vision - in that he holds conflicting opinions about the same thing at the same time - contradiction similarly exists in man in the realm of action. Indeed, consider the example that was discussed earlier by Socrates, of a man grieving over the loss of his son; while he is likely to resist grieving in public because of the presence of his peers, it is also likely that he will permit himself to be less restrained in his private grieving. That is, in private, he will be “measured” in his grief. While it is “reason and law that exhorts him to resist,...that which urges him to give way to his grief is the bare feeling itself.” Therefore, as there exists within this man two conflicting impulses concerning the same thing at the same time, they cannot be from the same part of his soul - rather, two parts of the soul must exist. That is, while
the part of the soul that follows reason and the law is that which counsels patience, fortitude and temperance, and so is the best part, the other part, in that it allows us to indulge ourselves by dwelling on our misfortunes, is “the irrational and idle part of us, the associate of cowardice” 407. Therefore, the part of the soul which is susceptible to optical illusions is also the part which is confused by grief, and is distant from reason 408, whereas that part which is reflective and measured in its response, and so can “see” beyond the confusion, must be a different part of the soul, which is not only able to determine the true nature of visual phenomena, but can also calculate the appropriate action for a man to take in his private or public life. As Ferrari notes, this “correspondence between the merely visual and the fully ethical types of psychological conflict is clear enough” 409.

Socrates suggests that while the “fretful” part of the soul presents “many and varied occasions for imitation (μιμησια)”, the “intelligent and temperate” part of the soul, in that it is constant, “is neither easy to imitate (μιμησασθαι) nor to be understood when imitated (μιμουμειον)”, especially by the masses who attend the theatre, for they have no experience of this type 410. It can be assumed then, that as the masses have no experience of this rational part of the soul, they would not wish to see it represented in the plays they attend. Moreover, as Socrates states, the poets will only “imitate the thing that appears beautiful to the ignorant multitude” 411 - that is, in order to maintain their popularity, the poets will depict that which the public find pleasurable, rather than that which will make them better individuals and citizens 412, and so will acquiesce to their public’s demands by not featuring this “intelligent and temperate” part of the soul in their works. Socrates considers that by doing this, the poets’ works, like that of the painters 1, only present a semblance of the truth, and appeal to the inferior part of the public’s souls - although neither of these conclusions are warranted by Socrates’ argument 413. He also assumes that because the public is subjected only to poetic representations of the inferior part of the soul, these works will encourage and strengthen in them the development of this part of their souls 414. Socrates argues that by doing this, mimetic poetry will tend to destroy the superior and rational part of its audience’s souls. This effect on man, he states, is not unlike that which occurs “when in a state one puts bad men in power and turns the city over to them and ruins the better sort” 415.

The second argument of the pair on the psychological effects of mimetic poetry on man is what Socrates calls his “chief accusation” (μεγιστον κατηγορηκομεν) against poetry. In the preceding argument, Socrates has determined that mimetic poetry appeals to an irrational part of the soul, one which is inferior to its reasoning and calculating part. Since, in the second argument, he attempts to demonstrate the moral consequences to man of this appeal, it can thus be considered as a continuation of the first argument. Socrates begins by charging such works with a terrible power, one which is able to corrupt “even the better sort” of man 416. As he states, when we hear Homer or some other mimetic poet “imitating (μιμουμειον) one of the heroes who is in grief, and is delivering a long tirade in his lamentations or chanting and beating his breast, (we) feel pleasure, and abandon ourselves and accompany the representation with sympathy and eagerness”. We then consider this poet, who has affected us in this manner,
“excellent” 417. This phenomenon was noted by Socrates earlier in Republic, when he stated that the stronger or “better” the emotional effect that poetry has on one, the more one considers it to be “poetic and pleasing” - that is, “good”. Socrates then undermines this seemingly complimentary remark, when he adds that if the effect of poetry is such, the less suited it would be “to the ears of boys and men” 418. However, this overtly emotional reaction to mimetic poetry greatly differs from how we would hope to handle such a situation in real life, since we pride ourselves “on our ability to remain calm and endure, in the belief that this is the conduct of a man” 419. Indeed, as Socrates has stated earlier, it is the “good man” who makes “the least lament and bears it most moderately when any such misfortune overtakes him” 420. Why then do we admire the behaviour of the character on the stage who is acting in such an emotional manner, rather than feel disgust at his performance which so violates the societal mores concerning grief? It is clear that is not the grief to which Socrates is taking exception, but rather, the magnitude of that grief 421.

Thus far, Socrates has demonstrated that mimetic poetry appeals to the inferior and irrational part of the soul. This part of the soul, to which Socrates has earlier referred as the “appetitive” or desiring part, “forms the greater part of each man’s make-up and is naturally insatiable”. Therefore, the more that it feeds on the pleasures associated with the body, the more it will want, and the more it will grow, eventually assuming the roles of the other parts of the soul - that of reason and spirit 422. Socrates has also noted that the poet, in subjecting the public to representations of this inferior part of the soul - such as that of a man’s public and excessive grieving for his son as opposed to a more measured public grief - encourages and strengthens in them the development of this same part of their souls. Together, these earlier findings explain Socrates’ observation, that even when poetry represents someone acting in a manner that is contrary to our moral sensibilities, we are nevertheless attracted to this representation. As Socrates explains, when we watch mimetic poetry, we presume that because it is someone else’s sufferings that we are watching, and “there is no shame to praise and pity another who, claiming to be a good man, abandons himself to excess in his grief” 423, we can then relax our control over our own irrational and emotional part, and enjoy the spectacle, and in doing so, do not place our soul in any jeopardy. However, what we do not realize is that “what we enjoy in others will inevitably react upon ourselves” 424. That is, having now fed on these pleasures, the irrational and emotional part of the soul, which is normally denied them by the rational part of the soul, will then want more, and will gain them by nurturing parts of our soul which we usually have under control - that “which hungers to lament over our private sorrows” 425. Conceivably, this irrational and emotional part of the soul could then continue to grow, unchecked 426, until we were completely dominated by our desires, as is the tyrant. As Socrates states, our desires would then be our “rulers”, instead of that which should be “ruled” 427. Ferrari notes that

“(t)he implication of Socrates’ conclusion (that poetic imitation brings about in our souls the rule of the lowest, appetitive part and so corrupts us and makes us wretched, 6064d4-7) is that we thereby start on the degeneration towards the tyrannical personality, in whom the rule of the lowest part has become unshakeable and whose life is the most wretched
possible (9.578b). Socrates' assertion here is not warranted by the argumentation of Book X but rather that of Books VIII and IX” 428. And, since the qualities of a state are only a reflection of the qualities of the individuals of which it is composed 429, if poetic mimesis aids in the degeneration of the soul, it must also aid in the degeneration of the state. Poetic mimesis thus corresponds, in its effects, to poetic inspiration, as was seen earlier in the analyses of the dialogues Ion, Apology, Meno, Phaedrus and Laws.

The above reading of the second pair of arguments assumes that the psychology employed by Socrates in Book X of Republic to explain the harm that poetic mimesis can do to the individual soul and the state, parallels his usage elsewhere in the dialogue. That is, the parts of the soul to which he refers in Book X are the same as those that he delineates in Book IV and then employs in Books VIII and IX to explain unjust souls and their corresponding unjust states. However, some critics have argued that the psychology of Books IV and X are not the same 430. Rubidge, on the other hand, considers that the tripartite psychology of Book IV is also that which informs the attack on mimetic poetry in Book X 431. He demonstrates this by using a method of analysis by which the relevant passages in Books IV, VIII, IX and X can be "linked by pointing out their shared terminology and common concepts” 432. This method is explained by Rubidge thus:

"In the initial presentation of the tripartite psychology in book four, and in the passages where the tripartite psychology is invoked to discuss non-psychological issues, Socrates assigns certain emotions, traits, and impulses to the different parts of the soul. Distinctive terms and images are also associated with the parts, and the emotions of each element are attributed to certain kinds of people. In book ten we can tell which part of the soul is in question, first by observing which character traits and people are mentioned and what terms and images are used to describe the emotional effects of poetry, and then by recalling the part of the soul that is responsible for these traits, dominant in these people, and described in these terms” 433.

Rubidge’s analysis reveals that Socrates rejects mimetic poetry because “it stimulates the inclinations of the epithumetic soul” - the “desiring” part 434. However, at the same time, the thumoeidic part of the soul - the “spirited” part - is debilitated. As has been discussed, the spirited part of the soul is the ally of reason 435, in that it aids reason in fighting to curb the desiring part of the soul. If the spirited part of the soul is weakened, the desiring part of the soul has a greater chance of growing, and so taking over the control of the entire soul 436. If this were to occur, the harmony of the soul, said by Socrates to be when each of the three elements of one’s soul do not trespass on each other’s functions and hence do not interfere with each other, would be violated. Therefore, in such a situation, the soul cannot be just, nor can it be happy 437. Furthermore, a state composed of such individuals would also be unjust and unhappy. Thus the conclusions that I had drawn earlier concerning the harmful effects of mimetic poetry on the individual soul and the state, are supported by Rubidge’s analysis.

This second pair of arguments in Republic, Book X, both present mimesis as dramatic identification, as in Book III. However, unlike Book III, in which Socrates
discusses the danger that poetic mimesis can pose for the soul of the actor or reader of poetry, in Book X, he discusses how it can also affect the soul of the audience who is watching or listening to a performance of poetry. However, the effect of mimetic poetry on the individual is the same in both situations - whether as a reader or actor, or as a member of an audience, one experiences the same pleasure in assuming the character of another and in assimilating their emotions and experiences. Because poetic mimesis acts in a manner not unlike that in which poetic inspiration is said to act in Ion - as a Megarian stone - the effects of those emotions can be transmitted by the poet to the actor and thence to the audience. The ethical consequences on the individual soul of this exposure can be positive or negative, depending on the nature of the character being imitated. Since, in Republic, Socrates is discussing what he considers to be the morally deficient poetry of his time, the ethical consequences of dramatic identification on the soul are negative. These consequences have been discussed in some detail throughout the analysis of this dialogue. However, in Laws, where the mimetic poetry discussed is that which has been designed to meet the moral and social requirements of the second-best state, the ethical consequences of dramatic identification on the individual's soul are positive.

The dramatic identification that results from mimetic poetry, also violates the principle of specialization, the "one man, one job" rule by which the state is organized; this violation has repercussions both for the individual soul and for the state. As has been previously discussed, the principle of specialization supports cooperation among men, rather than competition, for if everyone concentrated on the task for which they were best suited, they could only be content, and so would have no need to interfere with another's task. And because individuals are not self-sufficient, they must work together toward the common good, if both they, and the society, are to prevail. Therefore, these individual differences that exist among men can only add to the cohesion of society, since by this division of labour, the farmer would thus contribute most of the food that he grows to society, the builder would provide the necessary shelters and the weaver and cobbler the clothing and shoes. In such a situation, Plato believes "selfishness would disappear, and unity would pervade the state." Thus a state which follows the principle of specialization is a just state, and so a happy state. It would then follow that a state which did not follow this principle, would be unjust and unhappy. The affect on the individual who violates this principle, has also been discussed. If one fulfills the function for which one is best suited, one is caring for one's soul, but if one does not, one can only be harming one's soul. Therefore, the effects of mimetic poetry on the individual and the state, in that it leads to dramatic identification, are the same as that which has been described above, as well as for the other dialogues previously analyzed.

To conclude his analysis of poetic mimesis, Socrates determines that because of the harm that it can do, both to the state and to the individual, the only solution is to ban such poetry from the state.

Laws

In the earlier analysis of poetic inspiration in Laws, the role of poetry was examined in relation to the system of education constructed by the Athenian and his two Dorian companions for their "second-best" state, Magnesia. Because this examination
is also necessary to understand what Plato means by poetic *mimesis* in this dialogue, it is also used as the foundation of this discussion.

At the beginning of *Laws*, the Athenian had noted that it appeared that the constitutions of the two Dorian states discussed were based on war and discord. However, if a constitution were instead based on laws that promoted peace and harmony among men, would this not result in a state that was good and so happy? If laws were so devised, they would train the citizens to virtue, and aim at resolving the conflict that exists at an individual and at a state level, in order to create harmony in both. The Athenian argues that while it may not appear to benefit the state to train any one individual in such a manner, if citizens were trained thusly, it would be of great benefit to the state, for this would make them good men, and it is such men that enable a state to succeed. Therefore, the training of the individual soul would aid the welfare of the state. Conversely, that which prevents the individual from caring for his soul would harm the welfare of the state.

However, in order for these laws to be fully effective, it is also necessary for the citizens to be educated, for as the Athenian observes, if one has the correct education, one, as a rule, will become good. Moreover, he determines that this education should begin at an early age, prior to the establishment of reason in the soul. This is to allow the feelings of "pleasure and love, and pain and hatred" which well up in the child's soul, to be channelled appropriately before he is able to comprehend why. Once reason is established in his soul, his reason and his emotions will then agree. The child is thus educated or trained with regard to pleasure and pain: hating what ought to be hated, and loving what ought to be loved, according to the moral and civic dictates of society. The Athenian proposes choristry as the method by which the children of the state can be educated to virtue. The psychological constructs upon which the Athenian bases his choice of choral training as an education to virtue, and the intended aims of such training, have been previously discussed in some detail.

Song and dance, the components of choristry, are mimetic in character, and are employed by the Athenian to serve the interests of the state in the creation of peace and harmony. Poets composed the lyrics to the songs sung by the choruses, and, at one time, had even composed their own music to fit these songs. As this is an analysis of poetic *mimesis* in *Laws*, only the song component of choristry will be addressed. Because, as Socrates states in *Republic*, the elements by which song and dance are composed have a powerful influence on men's souls, the poet, by his use of poetic *mimesis*, is thus able to influence the souls of men. The passages in *Laws* in which the Athenian and his companions discuss poetic *mimesis* can mainly be divided into three categories: those which describe its nature, those which determine the standards by which the choruses should be judged, and those which demonstrate why the poet cannot act as such a judge. Several of these passages in *Laws* can be placed in more than one category.

The first category, which describes the nature of poetic *mimesis*, can be summarized by the Athenian as "representations of character (μιμητικά τρόπων), exhibited in actions and circumstances of every kind". That is, unlike painting which can only depict how objects and people statically appear in various contexts, poetry can give a dynamic picture of people and how they behave. As has been previously discussed, Plato shared a belief, widespread in his time, that in song, not only the
physical characteristics of a person could be portrayed, but also their moral characteristics - in the words employed by the poet, the diction and manner subsequently adopted by the actor, and in the harmonies, rhythms and tunes of the song. As the Athenian states, the poet, by his use of mimesis, is able to represent these characteristics by “voice or gesture” 12, “with his fine and choice language” 13, “his rhythms” 14, and “his harmonies and tunes” 15. In dance, both physical and moral characteristics are represented by movements and postures 16. Because song and dance are mimetic, these features of which they are composed are also mimetic 17. And, as choristry is song and dance, the goodness or badness of an individual is shown by varying the combinations of these features.

A poetic performance - such as in choristry - “engages its participants in the whole “feel” of the human action it portrays”. This is because “emotions and ethical actions are a crucial part of that action”. Thus, by allowing ourselves to imitate and thus identify with what is depicted, “we come in some sense to reproduce those emotions and attitudes, that “feel” within ourselves” 18. This is termed mimesis or “dramatic representation”. If this process of imitation and identification is then continued, these emotions and attitudes become our own 19. As the mechanism by which this habit-formation occurs - the process of mimesis or “dramatic identification” - was discussed earlier in some detail, further elaboration here is unnecessary. However, it should also be noted that poetic mimesis, in the form of dramatic identification, has been shown to affect not only the individual - the poet/actor/rhapsode/reader/chorister - as in Ion and Republic, Books III 20, but also the audience - as in Ion and Republic, Book X 21.

Because the effect of poetic mimesis or dramatic identification on the individual soul can vary, depending on whether the poet’s compositions represent good or bad moral characters, it is appropriate that the second category of passages on poetic mimesis are those in which the three gentlemen discuss the standards by which the choruses, and so poetic mimesis, should be judged. As has been determined, education can be defined as the correct disciplining of a child’s feelings of pleasure and pain. It has also been determined that this can be achieved by children, as well as adults, by their participation in choruses. Thus an uneducated man is one who has not been trained to take part in a chorus, and an educated man is one who has been so trained. As choristry is song and dance, it could therefore be supposed that an educated man is one who sings and dances well - or is this true only if he “sings good tunes and dances good dances”? 22. In a comparison that he gives of two choristers with differing abilities, the Athenian demonstrates that to be “educated” does not depend on one’s technical proficiency in the mimetic elements of song and dance, nor in one’s ability to form an intellectual conception of what is good, but rather, one’s educational status is based on one’s capacity “to keep right in...one’s) feelings of pain and pleasure, welcoming everything good and abhorring everything not good” 23. That is, through the proper training of his habits, in that he now loves what ought to be loved, and hates what ought to be hated 24, an educated man is one who can distinguish between what is good and what is bad. But as the Athenian remarks, if they were only able to grasp what goodness is in choristry - that is, what songs and dances would be appropriate to train the citizens of Magnesia to virtue - they would then have a set standard for education.

As has been noted, songs and dances are composed of postures or movements
and tunes, which represent the moral characteristics of individuals. However, as the Athenian suggests, if a "manly" or brave soul and a "cowardly" soul were exposed to the same set of circumstances, they would behave differently, and this would be seen in the different movements and utterances that they make. Representations of their characters would also reflect these differences. As the Athenian concludes, it could be said then, that "the postures and tunes which attach to goodness of the soul or body or to some image thereof, are universally good, while those which attach to badness are exactly the reverse" 25. However, this proposition does not establish a criterion for good.

The Athenian now suggests that they examine whether pleasure could be the criterion for good. That is, if that which is pleasurable is also that which is good, then that should be the standard by which choruses, and so poetic mimesis, should be judged. According to the Athenian, this is a commonly held belief. However, despite this popularity, the Athenian declares this belief to be unacceptable, for it is based on the heretical assumption that there are some people - such as the tyrant whom Socrates describes in Republic 26 - who find pleasure in depravity.

Because the roles which one enacts in a chorus are partly based on the expression of one's own character, and are partly based on the imitation of others' characters, the Athenian believes that the pleasure that one obtains from a performance is the result of the familiarity that one feels when there is a correspondence between the character that one is imitating and one's nature or habits. This causes one to declare the performance good. Conversely, when there is no correspondence between the role that one is performing and one's nature or habits, one feels no familiarity, and so obtains from it no pleasure, and declares the performance bad. However, because one does "not always confess...(one's) true feelings" 27, there are also cases where one's nature and one's habits do not correspond. In these circumstances, such individuals will find that the character that one is performing may correspond to one's nature, but not to one's habits, or to one's habits, and not to one's nature.

These individuals will convey "the opposite of their real sentiments" if asked whether they appreciate their performance, by saying that it is "pleasant but depraved", because while they are ashamed to sing such songs and dance such dances "before men whose wisdom they respect" 28, in private, they enjoy doing so. Therefore, in the educational system in Laws, Plato demonstrates that "(i) it is not enough to order or force people to certain views and actions of behaviour; it is necessary to form their natural dispositions in such a way that the citizens act in a good and virtuous way from inner instinct, not from a will to conform or from outward force" 29. The system of education which the Athenian delineates, which allows moral learning to occur through the pleasure afforded by play (παιδία) - in this case, choral training - is designed to mould the citizens' natural dispositions in just this fashion 30.

As the three gentlemen have already determined, "good" postures and tunes are those attached to goodness of the soul or body or some image thereof, and "bad" postures and tunes, the opposite 31. Clearly, some people do obtain pleasure from "bad postures and tunes", although they may deny their interest 32. As the Athenian inquires of Clinias, if one does obtain pleasure from such things, does it cause one harm? Furthermore, if one obtains pleasure in the opposite, does it gain one any benefit? Clinias' halting reply elicits an answer from the Athenian to his own question. As he
states, taking pleasure in “bad” postures and tunes must be harmful, and so akin to one
“living amongst the bad habits of wicked men”, for one invariably assimilates to those
habits, good or bad, which one enjoys. The Athenian terms this assimilation of one’s
caracter, respectively, a great “blessing” or a great “curse” 33. However, it should be
noted that that in which the audience or choral performers take pleasure and so
assimilate, via the process of poetic mimesis or dramatic identification, depends on that
which is represented by the poets in their songs. Therefore, in Laws, it is the poet’s
mimetic products, just as it was in Republic, which can be either a great “blessing” or
great “curse” to the educational system and so to the individual and the state 34.

In continuing his examination of pleasure, the Athenian notes that with regard to
music and play, whenever we think we are prospering, we rejoice. The reverse is also
ture: that is, whenever we rejoice, we think we are prospering. Further, when we are in
such a state, we are unable to keep still, not unlike in dancing. Therefore, in proposing
that the citizens should be educated to virtue by singing and dancing in choruses, the
three gentlemen are hoping that it will train the citizens to associate these activities
“good” postures and tunes – with feelings of rejoicing and thoughts of prosperity.
Education would thus be considered pleasurable by the individuals who not only
participate in these choruses, but also to those who observe them. Similarly coloured by
these joyful feelings will be the moral standards represented in the songs of the poets
and in the dances which will then be assimilated by the citizens into their characters.
Given this, the Athenian observes that there is some justification to the commonly held
belief of merrymakers that it is he who gives us “joy and pleasure (who) should be
counted the most skillful and awarded the prize” 35. But as he further argues, if pleasure
is determined to be the criterion by which to judge choruses and the representations of
which they are composed, whose pleasure should it be, for it seems that what is
perceived as pleasurable may vary according to the predilections of the individual and/or
his respective age-group.

To prove this point, the Athenian poses an hypothetical competition, where
pleasure is the sole criterion by which one can enter, and with the winner being the one
who succeeds in giving the audience the most pleasure. Given such an entry requirement,
all would be able to compete, by using as their entry that which gives them the most
pleasure. It is likely, however, that these entries would be diverse, with one competitor
offering Homer, another rhapsody, another tragedy, and so on. Who then, would best be
able to judge such a competition? As the Athenian has suggested, the perception of
pleasure may not be a unitary measure. For example, if children were to judge the
competition, they would possibly choose a puppeteer. Older children would choose
comedies, and educated women and young men tragedies. However, older men, such as
they - the Athenian, Clinias and Megillus - would likely choose as the winner a
rhapsode’s rendition of Homer or Hesiod’s epic works. As all differ in their estimations
of what is the most pleasurable, who then could be chosen as the winner? As the
Athenian states, given their bias, the three of them would choose as the winner of the
competition the performer of epic poetry, as this would be the performer whom their
contemporaries would also judge as the most pleasurable. The Athenian thus concludes
that it is indeed pleasure that should be the criterion by which music and its
representations should be judged - but it cannot be based on the pleasure of just anyone.
Rather, it is, “that music which pleases the best men and the highly educated as about the best, and as quite the best if it pleases the one man who excels all others in virtue and education” 36.

According to the Athenian, it is necessary for those who judge choruses to have these high standards of virtue and education, “for...they need to possess not only wisdom (φρονησις) in general, but especially courage (ανδρια)” 37, so that they will not, in a cowardly and spiritless manner, succumb to the pressure of the audience’s demands and render a false verdict, rather than declare that which they believe to be true. Such an action would not only corrupt the office and violate the oath taken by judges 38, but would also have a disastrous effect on both the poet and the audience, for it would cause the poets to pander to the “poor standard of pleasure” of the judges. Because the audience’s taste would dictate to the poets what should be composed, the masses would, in effect, become the educators of the poets. In turn, the audience, rather than being elevated by these teachings - by “improving on their standard of pleasure by listening to characters greater than their own” 39 - would suffer the opposite effect, in that lower standards of pleasure, and so moral standards, would result. This outcome would have dire consequences for the moral health of the state 40. Therefore, in order to prevent this from happening, the criteria on which the imitative arts such as choriography are judged must be based on certain moral standards. Indeed, the second category of passages in Laws in which the Athenian and his colleagues discuss poetic mimesis, consider this very point.

As the Athenian has stated, the individuals who judge the choruses should be “the best men” - those who excel “all others in virtue and education” 41. In a timely fashion, he introduces the “third” or “Dionysian” chorus, whose members appear appropriate for this task 42. This chorus will consist of men “between thirty and sixty”, whose role, as with the other two choruses 43, will be to “enchant” 44 the souls of the children, while they are “still young and tender”, with all the “noble things” that he and his colleagues have discussed thus far, with the “sum” of all of them being that “the best life does in fact bring the most pleasure” 45. That is, the role of the choruses will be to influence the children into a willing acceptance of the doctrine that the “good” life - that which is based on good moral principles - is the one that is the most pleasurable and just for man to lead 46. Because of their age, the members of this third chorus may no longer be able to sing and dance effectively, and so will instead “handle the same moral themes in stories (μυθολογιας) and by oracular speech (θεους φημις)” 47. Furthermore, so that they will be able to perform these moral themes enthusiastically, and without any embarrassment, they should moderately partake of wine before their performances. This should aid in mellowing the temper of their souls, so that they will then be less ashamed of their imperfect choral skills. Despite these minor problems, the Athenian believes that because the members of this third chorus are “by age and judgement” the “best element in the state” 48, they will be the most convincing of the three choruses, and will be eager to participate in “that music which is the noblest” 49. These, then, are the men who could competently judge the choruses. But if not pleasure, what are the criteria by which they can be judged?

With regard to the standards by which one should judge the musical arts, the Athenian argues that if something is valued, it is because it possesses “charm” (χορις),
"or some form of correctness (ορθοτητα), or, thirdly, utility (ωφεληων)" 59. For example, food, when eaten, has a charm, which can be called pleasure. The utility of food is in its wholesomeness, and the correctness of food is in the qualities it possesses which give it that wholesomeness. The imitative arts (τεχναι εικοστικαι) produce likenesses. Although we respond to such a likeness with pleasure 51, which we can call charm, the success of that likeness is based on its correctness and utility - on its fidelity to the original. Therefore, charm or pleasure can only be a criterion by which a thing can be judged if it first possesses correctness and utility. That is, it cannot be judged solely by its pleasure. It follows then, that since all music, such as songs, is "representative (εικοστικην) and imitative (μμητικην)" 52, it cannot be judged by the pleasure it imparts, but by its correctness and utility. Thus the members of the third chorus, who wish to participate in the best music 53, must seek not that which is pleasant, but that which is correct. However, in order to judge music, one cannot judge its correctness and utility unless one first knows of what it is a representation. That is, if one does not first understand the essence or nature (ονσιαν) of a thing 54, one cannot know if the author - the poet - has succeeded or failed in producing a likeness 55. Further, if the poet does not understand the correctness of the composition, then neither can he understand its "goodness or badness" 56. However, as Sorbon notes, "even if an artistic representation happens to be correct this does not imply that it is also morally good and beautiful. Thus yet another qualification is required of the competent judge; he must have the ability of moral discrimination" 57. Therefore, in order to judge properly any mimetic art, not only those which comprise a chorus, the Athenian determines that a judge must be able to discern three features: "first, a knowledge of the nature of the original; next, a knowledge of the correctness of the copy; and thirdly, a knowledge of the excellence with which the copy is executed" 58. As the Athenian states, the necessity for these criteria for judging illustrates the moral problems associated with music, for "more than any other form of representation, it needs more caution than any. The man who blunders in this art will do himself the greatest harm by welcoming base morals" 59.

The first criterion, the knowledge of the nature of the original, has already been discussed. That is, a judge must know the subject matter of that which is being represented, and how this subject matter is manifested in human behaviour 60. One must therefore know the essence of a thing 61. If this is achieved, then the second criterion, the knowledge of the correctness of a copy, is also achievable, for the judge is then able to determine if the artist has correctly represented the subject matter in song or dance. Finally, the third criterion, a knowledge of the excellence with which the copy is executed, means that the judges must also know if the manner in which the subject matter is represented is appropriate. That is, the judge must possess the technical knowledge to be able to determine if "the language, tunes and rhythms" and so on, employed by the mimetic artist, accurately capture the moral value of the subject matter 62. For example, an artist cannot "assign a feminine tune and gesture framed for free men, or conversely, after constructing the rhythms and gestures of free men, to assign to the rhythms a tune or verses of an opposite style" 63. The point is also discussed by Socrates in Republic, Book III, in some detail 64. The Athenian does not believe that the
audience could be successful in carrying out this criterion for judging choral works, since they have only been “drilled” to sing or dance, and so do not have true knowledge of that which is harmonious and rhythmical” 65. That is, the audience’s ability to sing and dance, using the appropriate harmonies and rhythms for that subject matter, is based on rote learning - what the Athenian terms “ignorance” 66 - and not on knowledge of the mimetic elements of which the songs and dances are composed.

The third category of passages in Laws in which the Athenian and his companions discuss mimesis are those which demonstrate why the poet, even though he is the artist who composes the choral songs, cannot act as the judge of his own works. These passages have previously been discussed, with regard to inspiration 67. The first passage in this category illustrates what the Athenian has already stated: that the poet, in mixing “dirges with hymns and paens with dithyrambs, and (having) imitated (μιμούμενοι) flute-tunes with harp-tunes” 68, does not have a knowledge of the excellence with which the copy is executed. That is, because he is unable to judge if the manner in which the subject matter is represented is appropriate - such as by its rhythms, harmonies and words - he is also unable to capture accurately the moral value of the subject matter 69. Indeed, as the Athenian states, because the poet is without knowledge (ανωτάτως) 70, he can only judge music by the pleasure it gives the performer or the auditor, rather than by any standard of correctness. And by not knowing the standard of correctness - being ignorant of what is “just and lawful in music” 71 - the poet cannot then gauge the goodness or badness of his music 72. But the poet’s works are those which are used to educate the citizens of Magnesia. Therefore, if the poet is indeed ignorant of what is “just and lawful in music”, he may then transmit this ignorance, in his works, to the people who perform or listen to them. The Athenian’s earlier statement, that more than any other form of representation, the musical arts need more caution than any, for the man who blunders in this art will do himself the greatest harm by welcoming base morals 73, can now be extended to note that such a man is also capable of doing others the greatest harm. That is, although poetic mimesis, as dramatic representation, can give great pleasure, it can also cause great moral damage, for by not knowing whether that which he represents is good or bad, the poet can “unwittingly” (ανωτάτως) 74 transmit, to his actors and to his audience, a moral message which may be in conflict with the moral and civic standards of the state 75. Clearly, the poet cannot function as a judge of his own works. The poet’s creativity, in terms of the content and style of his works, must therefore be rigidly supervised in Magnesia 76 no less than it is in Republic.

Once again, the Athenian’s argument, concerning the education of the individual and the state can be invoked and turned on its head: that is, even though it may not appear to harm the state if the poet’s work affects any one individual soul adversely, when citizens are affected adversely, it is of great harm to the state - for the poet’s work can make them bad men, and it is bad men that can bring down the state 77. This was also argued by Socrates in Republic, with regard to unjust states and their corresponding individuals 78. Therefore, it could be concluded from this passage that mimetic poetry, in that it prevents the care of the individual soul, is also that which harms the welfare of the state.

The second passage to be discussed in this category concerning why the poets are not qualified to judge their own works, is, as has been previously noted, the only
instance in all of Plato's dialogues in which poetic inspiration and poetic mimesis are mentioned in the same passage 79. However, because of this, it is difficult to separate the two poetic concepts, in order to explain the poet's behaviour. It could be argued that according to the Athenian - as well as to Plato in all of his dialogues that deal with poetic inspiration - because the poet is both inspired and possessed by the god, he is but a passive recipient of the Muse's divinity - a vessel which the Muse fills - no different to "a fountain which gives free course to the upward rush of water". In such a state, he is "not in his senses" and so is without knowledge 80. Without knowledge, the poet is unable to fulfil the first criterion necessary for one to judge a choral work and its representations: knowledge of the subject matter of that which is being represented, and knowledge of how this subject matter is manifest in human behaviour 81. The mindlessness of his inspired state will then prevent the poet from carrying out the second criterion, to be able to determine the correctness of a copy, in terms of how well the copy represents the subject matter in song. In the case of the third criterion, a knowledge of the excellence with which the copy is executed, a judge must know if the manner in which the subject matter is represented is appropriate. That is, whether "the language, tunes and rhythms" employed by the mimetic artist accurately capture the moral value of the subject matter 82. Once again, if the poet is without knowledge, he would also be unable to choose correctly the elements with which to represent the required subject matter in song. But if the poet does create "characters of contradictory moods", and "knows not of which of these contradictory utterances is true" 83, then he is just as likely to represent something which is in conflict with the moral and civic standards of the state, as he is to represent something which is in agreement with those standards 84. Therefore, it can be seen that in this passage concerning poetic mimesis, Plato shows the poet as unable to fulfil any of the three criteria which the Athenian and his friends have established as necessary for judging choral works and their representations.

Furthermore, the actors and the audiences, the recipients of the poet's works, are equally as mindless as the poet in that their knowledge of "the language, tunes and rhythms" is based on rote learning and not on a knowledge of the mimetic elements of which the songs and dances are composed. They would thus be unable to discriminate, if something were novel, between a poetic work which represents goodness and one which represents badness. It would follow, then, that they would be just as likely to assimilate into their souls, via mimesis or dramatic identification, that which represents goodness as that which represents badness. Therefore, because the poet's works, via the system of choral training, form the foundation for the education of the masses in Laws, if the poets were not rigidly supervised as to the content and style of their works, and were instead allowed to compose freely, the effects on the soul of the individual and on the welfare of the state, for the reasons as stated above, would be the same as in the first passage discussed in this third category. These effects, in Laws, of poetic mimesis on the individual soul and on the state, would thus be the same as for all the dialogues discussed in this thesis that deal with poetic inspiration and with poetic mimesis.
CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSION/CONCLUSION

Plato criticizes poetry in several of his dialogues. These dialogues cover many decades, and range from his first dialogue, Apology, to his last, Laws. Moreover, a fifth of his most important work, Republic, deals with poetic criticism. It is thus a topic to which Plato devotes some effort. The manner in which he deals with poetry is neatly bifurcated: Plato criticizes poetry either for being divinely inspired, or for being mimetic or imitative of reality. Indeed, Plato only brings poetic inspiration and poetic mimesis together once, in a brief passage in Laws, and nowhere in his works does he discuss their relationship. In this study, I have attempted, in an examination of the literature and the relevant dialogues, five of which discuss inspiration and two of which discuss mimesis, to determine whether a relationship exists between these two poetical elements. I posited that whether or not it were determined a relationship existed, the result would nonetheless shed light on the degree of consistency in Plato’s criticism of poetry, and on its wider relevance to his philosophical and political concerns.

Because of their obvious importance in this issue to him, inspiration and mimesis were chosen as the focus of this study of Plato’s criticism of poetry. I have suggested that Plato chose these elements, rather than others, such as meter, rhythm or harmony, to be the ones with which he would criticize poetry for two reasons: firstly, because they were the most readily identifiable elements of poetry to the Greeks of his time, in that both were known to be commonplaces - that is, it was popularly believed that the poets were divinely inspired, and that they used mimesis to convey their tales - and secondly, because they were also the elements by which poetry was made enjoyable to its audience. The ability of poetry to cause one pleasure, by engendering emotion, and the psychological effect of this on man, is a recurring theme in Plato’s criticism of poetry.

The manner in which Plato defines and uses inspiration and mimesis in the dialogues in which he criticizes poetry subtly differs from the manner in which these poetic elements were commonly understood and used during his time. While the divine origin of the poets’ inspiration was seen as a positive attribute, in that it gave the poets not only their creative abilities, but also their knowledge and skill, Plato instead portrays the poets in a negative fashion, as lacking in both knowledge and skill, and, in that they were possessed, as out of their minds and passive in their receipt of the divinity. Their works, therefore, are not seen by him to be didactic, but emotional. The poetic mimesis of Plato’s time has been shown by modern scholars to be of two forms: it was considered to be imitation or dramatic representation. Both of these forms are used by Plato. However, I suggest that mimesis is neither imitation nor dramatic representation, but is both - two parts of the same mimetic process. This is also the manner in which I believe it can be understood in Republic, Books III and X. But while it is indecisive as to whether mimesis was popularly seen as something ethical or ethically neutral, Plato showed that it can only be judged in an ethical fashion - as good if it demonstrated that which would appeal to a morally good man, and bad, if it demonstrated that which would appeal to a morally bad man. In Republic and Laws, Plato’s states control the poets’ use of mimesis by bringing it under the supervision of the philosophers-rulers/lawgivers.
The poets are thus obliged to use mimēsis in a manner which reflects the moral and civic standards of the state. Given the topics covered in the works of such poets as Euripides and Aristophanes - both of whom were popular throughout the classical period - the Athenian state's moral and civic guidelines for poets appears somewhat less rigid than that of Plato's. Furthermore, because the enjoyment afforded by these two poetic elements was seen by the populace of Plato's time as pleasurable and so good, it is seen by Plato to be bad, for it demonstrates the opposite of what it should ideally be: that which is good should be that which is pleasurable.

With these subtle adjustments to their definitions and use, Plato is attempting to replace the manner in which inspiration and mimēsis were commonly understood with a new view: that because the products of the poets are made without knowledge or skill, they can often be dangerous to both the individual and the state's moral well-being, and hence they should be supervised and regulated. Thus, by using these two elements, both of which were inextricably linked to poetry in the public's imagination, Plato is not only rendering his arguments more accessible to them, but he is also artfully adjusting the manner in which these elements, and so the poets and their poetry, are viewed by the public.

In Plato's time, the view of the poets was that their divinely inspired gift gave them knowledge of all things, through all time. Indeed, as Socrates states, the public believes that this must be so, for as they argue, if it were true that the poets were without knowledge, they would be unable to create. Therefore, the poet, as the archetypal wise man, was seen in ancient Greece as an educator. In ancient Greece, the reading, reciting and memorizing of poetry formed a large part of one's education, and was expected to reinforce the religious beliefs and practices of the society as well as imbue the populace with its prevailing moral and civic standards. Therefore, the poets, by teaching one how to be a good individual, were, at the same time, teaching one how to be a good citizen. This corresponds with the dual manner in which one was seen in the Athenian state. In turn, being a good citizen involved an obligation to care for the welfare of the state. Therefore, in that poetry was considered the means by which the state educated its citizens to religious, moral and civic virtue, when Plato criticizes the poets, he is not only criticizing the educational system, he is also criticizing the state.

As has been previously discussed, in his Epistle VII, Plato determines that the evils which have been perpetrated by the restored democratic state will not end until the lawgivers of the state are philosophical in design and intention. This conclusion can also be drawn from statements made throughout his dialogues. Moreover, in Ion, Socrates suggests that it is the public man - the politician - who "must pretend to wisdom", whereas it is the private man - the philosopher - who truly is able to say what he thinks. Therefore, as he states in Gorgias, while the politician is nothing but a panderer, saying and doing what is necessary in order to gratify the desires of the citizens, the philosopher's words and deeds do not aim "at gratification, but at what is best instead of what is pleasant". Thus only philosophers can be the true lawgivers. However, Plato is unwilling to achieve this position through political means, and instead seeks to achieve it from within the state, through education. But if one is to rehabilitate the state and so the educational system, one must also rehabilitate the individuals who compose that state.
Although in *Statesman*, and then later, in *Laws*, Plato renounces his position on the rule by philosophers, and determines instead that a rule by law is more likely achievable, he maintains his stance on the necessity of change in the educational system. Thus, poetry, as the didactic tool of the state, must be rehabilitated along philosophical guidelines if it is to educate the citizens to moral and civic virtue. *Republic* shows this rehabilitation in progress. By *Laws*, poetry has become the instrument of the lawgivers, and acts as the handmaiden of philosophy. Therefore, in this criticism of poetry, Plato is demonstrating that the educational system as it stood in his day, runs counter to what is best for the state and for the individuals of which it is composed. Poetry, then, is unable to fulfill its mandate to educate the citizens to moral and civic virtue. It would thus appear that Plato is attempting, in his criticism of inspiration and *mimesis* in poetry, to replace the poets, in the public’s estimation, with philosophers, as the true educators of all Hellas.

I have proposed in this thesis that Plato, in his dialogues, demonstrates that these elements by which poetry works its magic are harmful to the souls of the citizens who compose the state, and thus to the state, and that this is the relationship which exists between inspiration and *mimesis*. However, it must first be examined why the other alternatives which exist in the secondary literature are, by themselves, incomplete.

In my examination of the relevant dialogues, I have attempted to show that both inspiration and *mimesis* are consistently portrayed by Plato in a negative fashion in his criticism of poetry. Therefore, it could be said that these two poetic elements are related, at least in the sense that both are being criticized. However, some commentators who have argued against a relationship between them, have done so on the basis that inspiration and *mimesis* are differently portrayed in the dialogues. Both Hackforth and Tigerstedt believe that while *mimesis* is always shown in the Platonic dialogues in a negative light, inspiration in *Phaedrus* is depicted positively. However, in my analyses of the passages in this dialogue in which poetic inspiration is discussed, I have argued against this interpretation. It could also be posited that since in *Laws* Plato is utilizing the poets’ mimetic abilities to educate the citizens to virtue, *mimesis* is being condemned. However, in this dialogue, the poets and their products are under the strict supervision of the lawgivers. As the Athenian states, if not controlled, the poets’ compositions, and thus their mimetic abilities, would be harmful to the moral health of citizens, for the poets do not know what statements of theirs “might be contrary to the laws and injurious to the state.” Therefore, as this stance is no different to his treatment of *mimesis* in *Republic*, the manner in which Plato depicts *mimesis* in the dialogues in which he criticizes poetry, can be seen as consistent.

The earlier review of the secondary literature in this thesis revealed that those who concede a relationship between these two poetic elements can be divided into three groups: those who believe that inspiration and *mimesis* are related with regard to epistemology, those who see the relationship in terms of role playing or impersonation, and those who see that inspiration and *mimesis* in some way work together as communication. My analyses of the dialogues provide support for all three of these proposals. However, my analyses also suggest that there is a more profound affiliation between inspiration and *mimesis* in Plato’s criticism of poetry. That all three relationships are supported by my examinations of the dialogues will first be discussed.
I will then argue that these three relationships can be seen to be but a part of a larger relationship between inspiration and *mimesis* in Plato.

Murray, Rosen and Yates argue that in all the Platonic dialogues which criticize poetry on the basis of it being inspired or mimetic, the relationship that can be deduced to exist between these two elements concerns the poet's lack of knowledge. That is, the poet, in being either inspired or mimetic, is shown by Plato in these dialogues to lack knowledge. In this study, I have shown that this is indeed true for all the dialogues which deal with both inspiration and *mimesis*. In *Ion*, even though the rhapsode is able to speak well on Homer and is obviously successful at what he does, Socrates is able to prove to him that it cannot be by skill or knowledge that he does what he does, for Ion is unable to generalize his knowledge and speak on other poets as well as he does on Homer, even though the topics of Homer's poetry are also common to these other poets. Socrates determines that Ion must achieve his success by some other means, and posits divine inspiration as the explanation. Socrates suggests that this must also be true for poets, for as he demonstrates later, they are similarly limited in their abilities, in that they are only able to compose in one genre. And, in that they are inspired, Socrates asserts that the poets and the rhapsodes must also be possessed - not unlike ecstatic worshippers - and so out of their minds. This association further reinforces his argument that the poets must be operating without knowledge.

The format of Socrates' argument against the poets in *Apology* follows that of *Ion*. Socrates seeks the poets out to question them, for they have a reputation for wisdom. However, when he asks the poets about their works and their meaning, he finds that they are unable to explain them. And, as with Ion, Socrates determines that as it cannot be wisdom that enables the poets to write as they do, it must be because they are inspired. Furthermore, Socrates, in using a comparison of the poets to seers and prophets, suggests, as he did in *Ion*, that the poets are similarly possessed and so out of their minds, which, as before, reinforces his argument that the poets are without knowledge. In *Meno*, Socrates argues that as virtue cannot be taught, it cannot be knowledge, and if this is so, then knowledge cannot be used as a guide to right action. It follows then, that those who act as the moral and civic arbiters of the state, such as statesmen, cannot be using knowledge to do so, and so they must be doing what they do by some other means. In using divine inspiration to explain this phenomenon, Socrates links the statesmen with soothsayers, prophets and "all of the poetic turn" (οι ποιητικοί); all of whom he claims are not only inspired, but are also possessed and so out of their minds. Therefore, as the poets, soothsayers and seers cannot be acting with knowledge, Socrates is suggesting then neither can the statesmen.

Finally, as in *Ion*, *Apology* and *Meno*, in *Phaedrus* and *Laws*, Socrates and the Athenian respectively paint the poets as not only inspired by the Muses, but also possessed, and so out of their minds. In this state, therefore, they must be devoid of knowledge. Other passages in *Phaedrus* support this reading. In *Laws*, this is also the reason why the Athenian states that the poets, with the aid of the Muses, "often grasp the truth of history" - for if the poets were truly operating with knowledge, they would always be correct. Similarly, because the poets are inspired and possessed and so out of their minds, their resultant "senselessness" is that which prevents them from knowing "what is lawful and just in music", and thus they mix and jumble up together.
the various genres of music 29.

As in all the dialogues in which Plato criticizes poets as lacking in knowledge because they are inspired, he also maintains, in the dialogues in which he criticizes poetry on the basis of it being mimetic, that the poets, in their use of *mimesis*, are lacking in knowledge. In *Republic*, Socrates posits that the poets are without knowledge in the first two arguments of Book X 30. In the first argument, Socrates indicates that the poets, by their use of *mimesis*, do not describe the essential nature of phenomena - that which is apprehended by the mind - but only their appearance - that which is perceived by the senses 31. As true knowledge is based on an understanding of a thing's function or need, the poets, in only producing the appearance of phenomena by means of their mimetic abilities, thus demonstrate their lack of knowledge. In the second argument, it is because the poets do not have experience of that which they describe, but instead, only imitate the products of those who have this knowledge or right opinion, that they demonstrate their lack of knowledge.

In *Laws*, the two passages which discuss the poet's use of *mimesis* also demonstrate his concomitant lack of knowledge 32. However, as both of these passages refer to the poet as being inspired as well as to his use of *mimesis*, it cannot be determined with certainty as to which of these poetic elements Plato is attributing the poet's lack of knowledge - while it could be one element or the other, it could also be that both elements contribute to his lack of knowledge. In the first passage, the Athenian declares that the poet had not only mixed together various musical genres, but he had also “imitated (μιμούμενοι) flute-tunes with harp-tunes, and blended every kind of music with every other”. As the Athenian then states, these actions indicate that the poet “bore false witness against music, as a thing without any standard of correctness” 33. That is, the poet has indicated, by his actions, that he did not understand the true nature of his subject matter. That is, its essence 34. Because of this ignorance, he is then unable to determine whether the product that he has created via *mimesis*, is an accurate one, and so whether it represents that which is morally good or that which is morally bad. And if this criterion is not known, the poet cannot then know whether the “language, tunes and rhythms” 35 - the mimetic elements that he employs - capture the moral value of that subject matter.

Furthermore, in that he is unable to judge his mimetic creation by its moral correctness, the poet can then only assess it by the pleasure that it gives the performer or auditor. Therefore, in this passage, the poet has shown himself to be lacking in knowledge of the subject matter that he represents in his art. In the second passage, the Athenian indicates that it is because the poet's art consists in imitation (τέχνης...μιμήσεως), that he is compelled often to create characters of contradictory moods". However, as he then states, in doing so, the poet is not able to determine which of these “contradictory utterances” is true 36. As in the previous example from *Laws*, this passage demonstrates the poet's lack of knowledge concerning the three criteria by which the musical arts should be judged: of the subject matter that is being represented, of its correctness or moral value and of the manner in which it should be represented 37.

Other authors, such as Menza, Ferrari and Guthrie, consider that the relationship between the two poetic elements, inspiration and *mimesis*, is in terms of role playing or impersonation 38. That is, inspiration and *mimesis* are linked in that both enable one or
cause one to take on the role of someone else. As in the relationship previously posed as existing between inspiration and *mimesis*, this relationship, on the basis of role playing, is also evident in all the dialogues that I have examined.

The manner in which Plato considers that *mimesis*, as it is used in poetry, can be equated with role-playing, has been discussed throughout this thesis. In order to describe vividly the characters and actions of a poem to his audience, the poet, the rhapsode or actor - or even the schoolchild - employ *mimesis* in the form of role-playing. By adopting not only the physical characteristics of that poetic persona, such as his voice or dialect, his manner of walking and gesturing, but also his emotional and mental characteristics, the reader/reciter of poetry is then able to construct, for himself, and for his audience, the emotional makeup of that person. As can be seen in *Ion*, the thoroughness of such a portrayal induces in the reader/reciter a strong identification with that character. The reader/reciter then imparts the intensity of that identification, in the form of emotion, to his audience, who, in turn, similarly identify with the character being portrayed. This ability to empathize emotionally with the character is a pleasurable experience for both the reader/reciter and the audience. And as Socrates states in *Republic*, “the greater the poetry’s pleasure-giving potential, the more pronounced effect on one’s character is likely to be.” That is, the reader/reciter, in striving to produce an accurate portrayal of the poetic character and his situation, generates a depth of emotion which induces a pleasurable response in both himself and his audience. In turn, these feelings of pleasure further intensifies his and his audience’s ability to identify with the character, and with whatever moral and civic lessons that that character may embody.

As has been noted throughout this thesis, poetry was considered by the ancient Greeks to be the primary method by which the moral and civic standards of the state were taught. Education in poetry began for citizens in childhood, when children were commonly told tales of the characters and deeds of the gods and heroes. These stories were well-known by all, and provided not only the young, but also the citizens of the state, with moral examples that they could admire and emulate. Thus *mimesis*, in the form of role playing or dramatic identification, provided a means by which this could be achieved, in that it allowed the moral and civic lessons embedded in the poetry to be disseminated - from a reader/reciter to his listeners or from a poet/rhapsode/actor to his audience. However, while in both *Republic* and *Laws*, Plato demonstrates that citizens may benefit from such dramatic identification or *mimesis* if the poetic characters with whom they identify are appropriate to the roles that they carry out in the state, he also makes it patently clear in both of these dialogues that poetic *mimesis* can also cause them and the state great harm if the characters and situations with whom they identify are inappropriate.

In the Platonic dialogues, poetic inspiration can also be regarded as form of role-playing or dramatic identification. As has been noted, in Plato’s time, it was commonly believed that the poet was inspired by the Muse. In all five of his dialogues which criticize poetry on the basis of it being inspired - *Ion*, *Apology*, *Meno*, *Phaedrus* and *Laws* - Plato utilizes this traditional belief to criticize the poet’s abilities and his work. That is, because he does not believe the poet to have knowledge of that which he composes, Plato argues that it must be inspiration which allows him to do so. He also portrays the divinely inspired poet as suffering from madness and frenzy, and it is in this
state that the poet is able to compose. As the poet, when inspired, cannot be in his right mind, Plato suggests, in all these dialogues, that the poet must instead be possessed or "full of the god" \( \delta \nu \theta \varepsilon \tau \omicron \) \textsuperscript{49}. However, in being possessed and so mad, the poet, in his composing, cannot be acting of his own volition, but rather, must be carrying out another's bidding - that of the Muse - and, as such, is acting out the role of another. But since the poet is out of his wits, he cannot be utilizing his rational faculties to do so, but must be employing his emotions. Therefore, the manner in which he conveys his poetry to others must also be achieved in this fashion. Poetry, therefore, is a transmission of emotions, from the poet to others \textsuperscript{51}.

In \textit{Ion}, Plato explains, using the metaphor of the Megarian stone, the manner in which poetic inspiration allows the transmission of emotions from one individual to another \textsuperscript{52}. He argues that in the transmission of these emotions, the recipient of the poet's works - be it the rhapsode, the actor or the audience - is similarly inspired. However, in being inspired, this recipient must also be possessed and so out of his wits. Like the poet, who when composing, cannot be said to be acting of his own volition, the recipient's reactions to the poet's works cannot be said to be his own, and so it must be that he is also acting out the role of another. That is, when the poet's works are conveyed to others, the emotions by which they are composed are also conveyed. Thus, the recipient, in taking on another's emotions in a mindless fashion, is also assuming another's role.

Sorbon, Welton and Schaper maintain that the two poetic elements, inspiration and \textit{mimesis}, both function as a form of communication \textsuperscript{53}. Once again, this relationship between inspiration and \textit{mimesis}, as with the other two relationships already proposed, is also evident from my examinations of the relevant dialogues. This relationship - that the two poetic elements are linked in that both function as a form of communication - appears intimately connected to the one previously described: that the relationship between inspiration and \textit{mimesis} is that both enable one, or cause one, to take on the role of someone else.

The Megarian stone metaphor employed by Socrates in \textit{Ion} to explain the rhapsode's prowess and success in reciting Homer, despite his lack of skill and knowledge, can be seen as a form of communication. The Muse inspires the poet, who then inspires the rhapsode or actor. In turn, the rhapsode/actor, inspires the audience. They are all then linked - from the poet to the audience - as are the rings to the magnet in Plato's metaphor, to the Muses' divine authority. However, as well as poetic inspiration, its concomitant features of madness and frenzy are also transmitted or communicated, from one to the other. Therefore, just as Plato explains the poet's abilities, despite his lack of skill and knowledge, by the notion that the poet is inspired by the Muse, so too, in employing inspiration as a form of communication, can he explain that \textit{Ion} is an accomplished rhapsode despite his lack of skill and knowledge. That Plato proposes this explanation in his earliest dialogue concerning poetic inspiration, and never retracts it, in the other four dialogues in which he criticizes poetry on the basis of inspiration, suggests that Plato was consistent in his view that the composition of poetry by the poet, its interpretation by the actor/rhapsode, and its appreciation by the audience, can be explained as a form of communication, from one to the other, of something that is other than rational - that which is related to the inferior part of the soul, the emotions. Indeed,
in Republic, Book X, Plato argues that in poetry, it is the communication of emotions - and their resultant appeal - from the poet or actor to the audience, that is harmful to the harmony of man’s soul and so to the welfare of the state 54. Finally, in the transfer of inspiration, from one individual to another, it could be said that each link in the chain is then taking on the previous individual’s role - their emotional state.

In poetry, the communication of emotions is achieved by mimesis, and this can be seen in both Republic and Laws. That is, emotions are communicated by the poet’s compositions, by the actor/rhapsode’s interpretations of those compositions, and by the audience’s appreciation of them. All these steps in the communication process are mimetic in nature, as can be seen in an example from Republic. As Socrates states in Book X, when we hear Homer or some other mimetic poet “imitating one of the heroes who is in grief, and is delivering a long tirade in his lamentations or chanting and beating his breast, (we) feel pleasure, and abandon ourselves and accompany the representation with sympathy and eagerness” 55. Thus the poet, in imitating the character of the hero and his situation, is at once representing that character’s emotions. The actor/rhapsode, on hearing, reading or reciting this composition, feels pleasure from the poetic representation of these emotions, and so “abandons” himself to these emotions by assimilating them - via the process of mimesis or dramatic identification - into his own character. In turn, the actor/rhapsode then communicates these emotions, by imitation as representation, to the audience in his performance of the poem. The audience, as did the actor/rhapsode, similarly assimilates these emotions - via the process of mimesis or dramatic identification - into their own characters.

This illustrates the two parts of the mimetic process, which was proposed earlier in this thesis to account for the discrepancy in the seeming shifts in Plato’s discussion of mimesis in Republic, from Book III to X 56. The character and actions of the hero, and so his emotions, are imitated by the poet. These emotions are then later imitated again by the actor/rhapsode, who imitates the poet’s representation of the hero’s emotions. This is the first part of the mimetic process, mimesis as imitation or representation. The second part of the mimetic process is by dramatic identification. This is employed firstly by the actor/rhapsode, and then secondly, by the audience, when they assimilate the emotions of the poetic persona into their own characters. In doing so, it is as if one has taken on another’s role. Thus inspiration and mimesis are related not only in that both function as a form of communication, but also in that both are concerned with role-playing. The psychological process by which an individual abandons himself to these emotions and then assimilates them into his own character, is examined by Socrates in the fourth argument of Republic, Book X. This argument has also been previously discussed 57. To conclude, if, as has been suggested above, the poetically inspired state can be seen as the transfer of emotions, from the poet to the actor/rhapsode and thence to the audience 58, then if one imitates the emotions of the poetic persona, one could also be said to be imitating the power of divine inspiration. If that were so, then not only are inspiration and mimesis related, in that both are a form of communication, but as Sorbon, Welton and Schaper suggest, they also work together in this capacity, in a step-wise fashion 59.

Therefore, according to my analyses of the relevant dialogues, inspiration and mimesis, in Plato’s criticism of poetry, are related, in that they both demonstrate the
poet's lack of knowledge, enable or cause one to take on another's role, and act as a form of communication. But does a commonality exist between all three? I suggest that all three relationships are but a part of a larger relationship - a meta-relationship between inspiration and mimesis in Plato's criticism of poetry. That is, all three of these relationships that have been posed in the literature to exist between inspiration and mimesis in Plato's criticism of poetry are linked in that they all relate to two important Socratic-Platonic concerns - the care of the soul and the welfare of the state. It will now be determined if these three relationships all participate in this meta-relationship. If this is achievable, then this means that the relationship between inspiration and mimesis can be explained by the meta-relationship. That is, these two poetic elements are related in that both adversely affect the soul and the state.

Although the effects of inspiration and mimesis on the soul and on the state have already been described in the examinations of all the dialogues, they will now be considered within the broader context of this meta-relationship. I believe that these effects of inspiration and mimesis as they are used in poetry, are achieved by disrupting the function of the individual's soul, and that this, in turn, disrupts the functioning of the state. The process by which this occurs is suggested in Republic, Book IX, in Plato's descriptions of the four unjust individuals and the states to which they correspond. To conclude this study, I will determine the consistency with which Plato, throughout his works, criticizes poetry on the basis of inspiration and mimesis, and the extent to which this criticism addresses his philosophical and political concerns.

As has been shown, in all the dialogues in which Plato criticizes poetry on the basis of inspiration and mimesis, he depicts the poet as being without knowledge. However, it has also been shown that such a portrayal runs counter to the beliefs commonly held at the time, that is, that the poet was wise. That the poets were considered to be the recipients of a divine gift appeared to do nothing to tarnish their reputation. Indeed, the myth of poetic inspiration may have had the opposite effect, and enhanced it, as it was thought, at the time, that the gods, being omnipresent and omniscient, were able to supply the poet with that which he lacked - knowledge of all things, through all time. Thus this association of the poet's works with inspiration may have given them more credence, rather than less, as Plato suggests. Plato also alleges that other characteristics can be attributed to the poet's divine nature, such as madness, frenzied behaviour and passivity. He appears to associate these characteristics with inspiration in an effort to further his argument that the poet is lacking in knowledge. However, as they were not part of the traditional beliefs held at that time concerning the poet's inspired nature, Plato's accusations likely did little to discourage the poets' stature in Athenian society as learned men.

There similarly appears to be no indication, in the studies in which the origins of words in the mimeisthai-group and its pre-Platonic usage are investigated, that it was thought, in Plato's time, that the poets' use of mimesis showed that they lacked knowledge. As was suggested earlier, the disparity between Plato's portrayal of poetry and poetic mimesis, and the manner in which the poetry-loving and theatre-going Athenian public reacted to poetry and its mimetic nature, could indicate that his portrait of mimesis in Republic and Laws was a novel one. Further, the detailed explanation with which Plato introduces mimesis as dramatic identification, in Republic, Book III, could
indicate this. Thus Plato’s application of both inspiration and *mimesis* to poetry may be unique.

However, it does appear certain that Plato, in his application of these concepts to poetry, is warning, in these six dialogues, of the dangers that he believes poetry holds. As poetry featured largely in the education of Athenian citizens at the time of Plato, it was thus expected that one had an easy familiarity with poetry and music 66. That this was so, can be gauged from the frequency with which literary references occur in the works of the time, including Plato’s 67. Therefore, it could be argued that if poetry did present the danger of which Plato seems to be warning, it would therefore harm all those who were educated in the traditional manner, with poetry. As this number would comprise most of the citizens, poetry would thus harm the state 68. Similarly, it could be argued that since in Athens, the identity of the individual was considered indivisible from his role as a citizen 69, and that the poet’s works were supposed to reflect the moral and civic standards of the state, then if poetry did present a danger to individuals, who are the citizens of the state, it would also harm the state.

It appears clear, then, that Plato’s criticism of the poets as lacking in knowledge in the dialogues in which he criticizes poetry on the basis of inspiration and *mimesis*, went against the prevailing beliefs of his age. However, in *Apology*, Socrates determines that the poet, because he is inspired, is not only lacking in knowledge, but that he is also one who thinks himself wise in areas which in actuality he is not. That is, the poet is ignorant of the extent of his ignorance. Indeed, Socrates believes that any ability or expertise that the poets may possess is undermined by this attitude 70. Similarly, in *Ion*, the inspired rhapsode also believes that he knows that which he does not, and so he believes that he can speak well “on all without a single exception” 71. Socrates indicates that the poet is not unlike the rhapsode 72, in that he too attempts to persuade, but by his inspired poetry, that he also has knowledge in areas in which he has no expertise. The poets’ lack of knowledge to which Plato refers in all six of these dialogues in which he criticizes poetry on the basis of inspiration and *mimesis*, may be this knowledge - of one’s own ignorance, and so of one’s own self.

In *Apology*, Socrates finds that the poets, because of their poetry, not only thought themselves wise in other areas as well, but that their arrogance also led them to believe that they were “wise in the other most important matters” 73. To Socrates, these “most important matters” refer to the necessity of caring for one’s soul 74 - his constant exhortation to the citizens of Athens 75. However, this care can only be achieved with a certain knowledge - self-knowledge. Therefore, Socrates is claiming that the poets do not have the self-knowledge to care for their souls. Socrates discusses this issue in *Alcibiades* I 76, and concludes that in order to have success in life, and so be happy and lead a good life, one must “take pains” 77 over oneself - that is, care for oneself in the sense of making oneself better. However, in order to care for something, one must first know its nature. Therefore, to care for oneself - one’s soul - means that one must first know one’s own nature.

But “to know the nature of anything, is (also) to know its function” 78. The Greek notion of function has been previously discussed 79. Briefly, an object’s function is to fulfil the purpose for which it was designed. If it does this well, it can be said to have excellence or virtue (*arete*). However, if one is to be good at anything, one must
first have knowledge. Virtue is thus knowledge. But if the poets lack self-knowledge, which is necessary to care for one’s soul, then they cannot be fulfilling the purpose for which their souls were designed. In _Alcibiades I_, Socrates argues that the function of the soul is to rule the body. That is, that reason must rule over one’s bodily desires and emotions. In _Republic_, Socrates similarly determines that reason should rule over the soul - over the desires and the spirit - and that when each of these elements of the soul is performing its own function, one can be considered just or virtuous. The poets, therefore, being without self-knowledge, cannot be fulfilling the purpose for which their souls were designed, and so cannot be virtuous.

However, if the poets do not know what virtue is, then they cannot teach others to be virtuous, and so care for their souls. But as Socrates states in _Republic_, poets such as Homer are considered to be the educators of Hellas. But if that is so, then their role is to teach men the best manner in which they should lead their lives. But as the poets are unable to teach others to care for their souls, they cannot then show them how to become good men. They would also fail to teach them how to be good citizens, and thus the state would suffer as a result. This conclusion corresponds with the findings concerning poetic inspiration and poetic _mimesis_ that have been made in this thesis in the examinations of all six dialogues.

This conclusion is also supported in several of Plato’s dialogues, where Socrates is shown arguing that it is the good man, the just and virtuous man - and so the man who cares for his soul - who also considers the welfare of the state. In _Apology_, for example, Socrates argues to the court that in caring and taking thought for wisdom and truth and the perfection of his soul, and in exhorting the citizens of Athens to do the same, he is following the god’s command, who “fastened” him upon the city in this capacity. Socrates considers that in his service to the god, “no greater good ever came to pass in the city.” Thus to care for one’s soul is also to aid the state. This message is also borne out in his later statement, that “from virtue comes money and all good things to man, both to the individual and the state”.

In _Crito_, Socrates is in his prison cell. It is after the trial portrayed in _Apology_, and his sentence has been passed. Crito, his friend, has urged him to escape the prison. Socrates is explaining to Crito why he will not leave Athens, but is instead choosing to stay and face his execution. Socrates argues that in running away without official permission, he would violate the agreement that the state has with every citizen. To do this, he believes, would destroy the laws, and so the state. Further, if he did run away, Socrates believes that he would also be violating his own beliefs, on what is right and wrong, and that this would do damage to his soul. Therefore, Socrates is arguing that if he cast aside his beliefs by running away, he would harm his soul. In turn, his action, in that it broke the law, would harm the state. Once again, Plato is showing, in this tableau of Socrates’ life, that in not caring for one’s soul by being a good man and so a good citizen, he harms the state.

Finally, throughout the dialogue _Gorgias_, Socrates argues that the life of the just man - that is, the one who cares for his soul - is infinitely preferable to the life of the unjust man. Socrates, as a just man, believes that he is one of the few individuals who studies the art of statesmanship, because unlike the orators and the poets, who just pander to the citizens’ desires, he truly considers what is best for the people and so the
state. Thus, in Gorgias, as in the other two dialogues, it is the man who cares for his soul, who cares for the state.

Inspiration and mimesis, as they are used in poetry, both demonstrate the poet’s lack of knowledge. This is shown in all the dialogues in which Plato criticizes poetry on the basis of these two elements. But as we have seen, without knowledge, one cannot care for one’s soul. The poets, in that they lack this knowledge, cannot teach others to care for their souls. And, as is shown in Apology, Crito and Gorgias, if one does not care for one’s soul, one can harm the state of which one is a citizen.

As has been shown, inspiration and mimesis are also related in other ways: both enable or cause one to take on another’s role and both function as a form of communication 91. In all six of the dialogues examined in this thesis in which Plato criticizes poetry on the basis of inspiration or mimesis, these two relationships were shown. It must now be determined if these two relationships, which I believe interact, also participate in the meta-relationship previously posed. That is, whether poetry, in that it enables or causes role playing, and in that it acts as a form of communication, affects the soul and the state.

When mimesis is first described in Republic, Book III, it is as role-playing or dramatic identification 92. However, while in Book III, the dramatic identification can be seen in the performer’s emotional response to the poetry he is performing, in Book X, it is in the audience’s emotional response to the poetry as it is acted out by another person or persons 93. Both of these variants are also demonstrated in Ion 94 and in Laws 95. In that the emotions of the poetry are transmitted, via dramatic identification, from the poet to the performer and thence to the audience, also indicates a form of communication 96. Thus, these two relationships which have been posed in the literature to describe the relationship between inspiration and mimesis are, in themselves, related 97. But can either of these relationships - in the form of dramatic identification or as communication - be shown to affect the soul and the state adversely, as posed by the meta-relationship?

In Republic, dramatic identification is shown to be harmful to the soul in that it violates the principle upon which the ideal state was founded and is maintained, the principle of specialization. As has been previously discussed, this is the principle of “one man, one job”, by which each individual in the state does the job for which he is best suited 98. This principle of specialization can be equated with the Socratic exhortation of caring for the soul, for in both, one’s nature, and so one’s function, is described 99. Thus, the function of one as discussed in the “Socratic” dialogues 100 - the purpose for which an object (or person) is designed - has, in Republic, become the job for which one is best suited. Thus, if an individual were to follow the principle of specialization, he would also be caring for his soul 101.

The manner in which role playing, in the form of dramatic identification, violates the principle of specialization, and so harms the soul, was discussed earlier 102. According to the principle of specialization, a man should not pursue more than one job, for as Socrates explains in Republic, if he does, the division of effort that he will then have to make will cause him to fail at all of them 103. However, poetry, be it inspired or mimetic, enables or causes one to take on the role of another. Therefore, just as with a job, a man cannot identify with more than one role, but only with the role for which he is best suited, otherwise he risks failure in that role - his job. For example, in Republic, the
role of the auxiliaries is to defend the city. However, if an auxiliary were allowed to imitate another by dramatically identifying with that person’s role, as one does when one performs poetry by acting, reading or reciting, or even when listening to or watching poetry, that auxiliary, by Socrates’ argument, would be less able to do the job for which he is best suited. Further, in dramatically identifying with poetry, the auxiliary would not be caring for his soul, so he would be going against his own nature, and thus not fulfilling the function for which he was designed in doing the job for which he is best suited. In consequence, the aspect of the state’s system for which he is responsible, its defence, would be placed in jeopardy. Similarly, if one is exposed to poetry which depicts characters acting in immoral ways, one, by imitating or identifying with it, risks assimilating that behaviour into one’s own nature, and so into one’s job. From one’s job, the evil ways depicted in the poetry may enter society and so damage the state. Therefore, according to Socrates, it is reasonable to mandate that citizens in the ideal state should only be exposed to poetry that portrays characters who are “the kind of people they themselves are or are trained to be” 104. This is akin to the decision made in Laws by the Athenian and his colleagues - to allow into Magnesia only poetry that represents the goodness of its citizens 105.

In Republic, Book X, Socrates elaborates on the process by which poetry, via dramatic identification, harms the soul. However, this process is dependent on an understanding of the structure of the soul. In Book VII, Socrates determines that the human soul is composed of three elements - reason, spirit and desire 106 - each of which correspond to one of the three classes in the state - the rulers, the auxiliaries and the producing or merchant class. Having already determined that the state is just or virtuous when each of its three classes fulfil its own function without interference from the others, Socrates reasons that an individual is similarly just or virtuous 107 when each of the three elements of which his soul is composed is able to fulfil its own function without interference from the others. Because reason is able to think and act on behalf of the entire soul - just as the rulers are able to think and act on behalf of the entire state - reason ought to rule 108 and spirit ought to support reason. Furthermore, he cautions, reason and spirit must also control desire, for desire forms the greater part of an individual’s soul and will grow big and strong if it is not controlled. If this is not done, desire would attempt to control the other two elements, and this would result in the overturning of “the entire life of all” 109.

In the second pair of arguments in Republic, Book X, Socrates discusses the process by which poetry, as dramatic identification, harms the soul 110. Socrates argues that poetry appeals to the irrational part of the soul - the desiring part - and in doing so, encourages and strengthens its development. This tends to destroy the superior part of the soul - the reasoning part. Thus by this process, dramatic identification renders the soul unjust, for no longer is each element of the soul fulfilling its own function, and reason is no longer ruling. Furthermore, because desire is naturally insatiable, it will continue to grow, until one is completely dominated by one’s desires, as is the tyrant 111.

As he determines in Alcibiades I, in Republic, Socrates argues that reason is the natural ruler over one’s soul, and so over one’s bodily desires. This is the function of the soul 112. Thus, once again, poetry, as dramatic identification, in that it strengthens one’s bodily desires, and weakens the rule of reason, can be seen to harm an
individual’s soul by disrupting its function. Finally, because the emotions generated by poetry as dramatic identification are communicated from the poet to the performer and thence to the audience, the souls of a great many of the state’s citizens can be affected by this process. This is not only because poetry formed the greater part of the educational process in ancient Athens, but also because the performances of poetry were well attended, and that most of the male citizenry, at one time or another, would have participated in these performances. Therefore, poetry, as dramatic identification, not only harms the individual soul, but in doing so, harms the state. Indeed, as Socrates argues in Republic, the state is only the sum of the individuals of which it is composed, because “the same forms and qualities” that characterize the state can also be found in those individuals.

The manner in which poetry, as dramatic identification, harms the welfare of the state can also be illustrated using Socrates’ theory in Republic on the origins of society. In Book II, Socrates advances a theory that states are formed because no one man is self-sufficient, and is not able to supply himself with all the basic requirements of life, such as food, clothing and shelter, he must live with others in order to satisfy those needs. As no two men are born exactly alike, and so one man is more naturally fitted for one task than another, one man will be found to be best able to supply the food, another the clothing, another the shelter. However, in order for this state of affairs to be maintained, everyone must cooperate by continuing to carry out the task for which he is best suited. This reasoning underlies the Ideal State in the form of the principle of specialization. Thus, in the Ideal State, just as in the original state, all must continue to do what they are best at doing, or the state will break down. Thus, the rulers must rule, the auxiliaries defend and the producing or merchant class must produce. However, as has been shown, since poetry, as dramatic identification, violates the principle of specialization, and so prevents one from carrying out the job for which one is best suited, it not only disrupts the function of the individual’s soul, but also disrupts the functioning of the state. This process is suggested in Republic, Books VIII and IX, where Socrates describes the four unjust states and their corresponding individuals.

In each state that Socrates describes in these Books, the lack of proper education is evident. In the timarchy, the young men—the ones who will become the leaders of the state—“pay too little heed to music,” prefer “gymnastics,” and so are “lacking in culture.” In the oligarchy, both the “drones”—the poor and the majority of the citizens in this type of state—and the oligarchic individuals are also said to lack culture. In the democracy, Socrates suggests that the young men cannot have had a good education because they are not just. The tyrannical individual is also affected by his bad upbringing and lack of education. In all the individuals that he describes as corresponding to these unjust societies, their souls are inharmonious. That is, the three elements of which the soul is composed, are, in these individuals, in conflict. For example, the timarchic individual is shown to suffer from an excess of spirit. Because reason is unaided by spirit in this individual, the desiring part of the soul is able to grow unchecked. In the oligarchic individual, both reason and spirit are subordinate to desire. This is also true for the democratic and the tyrannical individuals. Finally, individuals in all four of these societies violate the principle of specialization. In the timarchic state, a mistake in the eugenics program leads to individuals being inappropriately placed in
positions in which they are not qualified; in the oligarchic state, individuals are chosen for their positions in the state on the basis of wealth, and not on knowledge or skill; in the democracy, all individuals are allowed to do as they wish; and in the tyranny, in that all are oppressed, it is unlikely that individuals are able to work at the job for which they are best suited.

In all four of the unjust societies, it is suggested that the lack of good education led the individuals of which those states are composed to violate the principle of specialization. In doing so, they neglected the care of their souls, which in turn contributed to the decline of their states into injustice and misery. Thus, in his description of unjust societies and their individuals, Socrates is demonstrating the importance of education on the soul of the individual and on the state.

Poetry, the backbone of the Athenian educational system, has been shown, in both its inspired and mimetic forms, to harm the individual's soul, as well as the state. Thus, in his tale of the unjust states, Socrates is suggesting that if poetry is left as it is to influence the Ideal State it will produce the same result: an unjust and miserable state and an equally unjust and miserable citizenry. As has been previously noted, that Book X is placed after the discussion in Books VIII and IX on the lives of the unjust states and their corresponding individuals, is therefore no coincidence, for as Socrates states, this knowledge is important to his arguments against poetry.

In summary, some critics have posed that the relationship that exists between inspiration and mimesis in Plato's criticism of poetry is that both demonstrate a lack of knowledge. Others believe that the relationship between these two poetic elements is based on role-playing. Still others consider that both act as a form of communication. Indeed, all of these suggested relationships have been shown, in this Discussion, to exist in the six dialogues in which Plato criticizes poetry on the basis of inspiration and mimesis. Thus, it can be argued that inspiration and mimesis in Plato's criticism of poetry are related in all of these ways. I have suggested that a commonality exists between these three relationships. That is, that these three relationships are but a part of a larger relationship - a meta-relationship - between inspiration and mimesis, in that all adversely affect the care of the soul and the welfare of the state. As all three relationships have been shown to do this, my contention, that inspiration and mimesis in Plato's criticism of poetry are related, in that they both harm the soul and the state, is supported.

To conclude, if my thesis is correct, that poetic inspiration and poetic mimesis are related in that both threaten the care of soul and the welfare of the state, then Plato's criticism of poetry in these six dialogues can be seen as consistent. These dialogues span Plato's entire career - from his first work, Apology, to his last and unfinished work, Laws. Thus, Plato, throughout his long life, did not cease in proselytizing in his dialogues the argument that poetry, as the didactic tool of the state, if left as it is, is harmful to the individual and so to the state.

Further, in these six dialogues, Plato's criticism of poetry on the basis of inspiration and mimesis employs the same arguments and themes as elsewhere in his works - in Iolaos, it is a discussion of the nature of knowledge and skill, which utilizes the craft analogy; in Apology, it is Socratic ignorance, self-knowledge and the care of the soul; in Meno, the nature of virtue; in Phaedrus, the nature of the soul, and that of
knowledge and skill; in *Republic*, education is the main theme, but knowledge versus opinion, the Forms, virtue, the soul, the relationship of the individual and the state, are all taken into account in his discussions of education and the content and style of poetry. In *Laws*, poetry in education is once again important, as well as the use of pleasure in the educational process. Many of the topics already mentioned are also used in *Laws* by Plato in the service of his discussions of poetry. Throughout my examinations of these six dialogues, I have referred to the occurrence of these arguments elsewhere in Plato's works. These concerns can be seen to represent both Socratic moral beliefs and Platonic political theory. Thus, it would appear that in these dialogues in which he criticizes poetry on the basis of inspiration or *mimesis*, Plato is addressing his main philosophical and political concerns.
ENDNOTES

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1. Apology was considered to have been written shortly after Socrates' death in 399 B.C.E., when Plato was still a young man.

2. Plato died circa 348-347 B.C.E.


4. These studies will be further discussed later in the Introduction in a review of the secondary literature on the relationship between inspiration and mimesis in Plato's criticism of poetry.


9. In the following discussion of "Greek" poetry in its historical context, it should be noted that this specifically refers to Athenian history, culture and education, unless otherwise stated.


11. The Muses were believed to be the daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne, the goddess of memory, and were identified as the guardians of poetry. A. Sperdu, The divine nature of poetry in antiquity, Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association, 81, 1950, pp. 209-12, M. Detienne, (Trans. J. Lloyd), The Masters of Truth in Archaic Greece, Zone Books, New York, NY, 1996, p. 41. The poets would therefore call on the Muses to aid them in their recollection of events, as in Homer's Catalogue of Ships: "Sing to me now, you Muses...You are goddesses, you are everywhere and you know all things - all we hear is the distant ring of glory, we know nothing". In: Homer, (Trans. R. Fagles) Iliad, Viking Penguin, New York, NY, 1990 (II. 484ff).


19. Plato (Trans. W. R. M. Lamb) *Protagoras*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1990 (325e-26a). Protagoras continues, stating that the children's souls, in learning the works of the lyric poets, will gain in gentleness; this, he believes, will give them an efficiency in speech and action, "for the whole of men's lives requires the graces of rhythm and harmony" (326b).
26. See, for example, *Republic* (466c, 468c, 469a, 501b). Plato (Trans. P. Shorey) *Republic*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1994 (2 vols.). See also C. L. Brownson, *Plato's Studies and Criticisms of the Poets*. The Gorham Press, Boston, MA, 1920, for tables which list the extensive use that Plato made of poetry in his dialogues (Tables I [Quotations from Homer], II [References to Homeric passages] and III [Quotations from poets other than Homer]).
27. G. Klosko, *The Development of Plato's Political Theory*, Methuen, London, 1986, p. 121. When one considers the contest depicted in *Frogs* between Aeschylus and Euripides on specific details of their respective works and literary style, it can be safely assumed that the Athenian audiences were more conversant with the poetry cited, and were thus able to learn the "lessons" therein. This is also true for the manner in which the poets, their works, as well as their personal characteristics (this is especially true for the works of Euripides), are discussed in Aristophanes' *The Poet and the Women* (*Theognarchia*-*sa*). Castle sees comedy as also having a didactic purpose, in that it cleansed the *polis*, and yet preserved "all that was good in the old traditions" (p. 39).
do with Dionysos? Athenian Drama in its Social Context, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 1990, as well as the works of Seaford, Pelling, Cerri, Croalby and others who are cited in Griffin’s article) that that which the Athenians experienced in the theatre was “primarily or by definition political, democratic, and ideologically motivated by the conscious desire to maximize social cohesion” - although he does concede that some plays “raised moral and political issues”. Rather, Griffin believes that what tragedy mainly provided the audience was an emotional experience, “a uniquely vivid and piercingly pleasurable enactment of human suffering”, “a pleasure that combined debate with reportage, rhetoric with divine revelation, lamentation and hymns with reasoned argument, all seasoned with pathos and music and the dance”. J. Griffin, The social function of Attic tragedy, Classical Quarterly, 48, 1998, p. 60. M. Heath, in The Poetics of Greek Tragedy, Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1987, argues this same case, that the function of tragedy was not to provide moral and civic instruction, but that “the tragedian aims primarily to invoke an emotional response from his audience, while the audience for their part value his work because of the pleasure that accompanies such emotional excitation under the controlled conditions of theatrical conditions” (p. 11). An article recently published in a response to Griffin’s view. R. Seaford, The social function of Attic tragedy: A response to Jasper Griffin, Classical Quarterly, 50, 2000, pp. 30-44. However, Plato, in his criticism of poetry, appears to agree with Griffin’s thesis (see Griffin, pp. 42n.10, 55, as well as Heath, pp. 8, 9, 12, 25, 34, 41-2, 47, 49, 80). That this is so, is discussed throughout this thesis.


31. E. A. Havelock, Preface to Plato, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1963, p. 27. Havelock’s thesis is that the oral transmission of this “tribal encyclopaedia” depended on the power of poetic mimesis, which allowed the student or audience to identify completely, “almost pathologically, and certainly sympathetically”, with the poetry and its message. This radical identification enabled the listener to memorize a vast amount of information which could then be transmitted to others in the form of songs or prose. However, as Havelock argues, Plato’s criticism of poetry and the poetic process which involved mimesis was because this empathic response to poetry was purchased at the cost of one’s objectivity, and in doing so, encouraged an uncritical acceptance of the traditional values (pp. 45-9).

32. Xenophon, The dinner-party (IV. 6). See n. 20, above. Note that Plato’s Ion makes a similar claim: that he, as a rhapsode, knows what is appropriate for members of various professions to say, because of his vast knowledge of Homer. That is, that the technical knowledge gleaned from Homer would enable him to function in those capacities. Plato (Trans. W. R. M. Lamb) Ion, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1995. In Frogs (1030-5), Aristophanes also discusses the poets as teachers of “useful” lessons, in that he has Aeschylus state that the poets teach “that it was wrong to kill...how to cure diseases and...about agriculture and the seasons for ploughing and harvest (and)...valuable military instruction.” This latter instruction, in particular, is criticized by Plato in Republic (594d-e). He argues that Homer’s discussion of such things is pointless, since he has neither knowledge nor personal expertise in such an area.

33. Plato, Republic (598e, 599c-e, 606c).


36. Aristophanes, Frogs (1009). So too, in Plato’s Protagoras, does the Sophist claim to be able to make an individual a “better man” (318a). This will, in turn, make him a good citizen, by “showing
(him) how best to order his own home; and in the affairs of his city” (318c-19a).

37. Aristophanes, Frogs (1054).

38. See Castle, pp. 38-40, Coul, pp. 8-9 and Gregory, p. 185. See also n.18, above.


40. A. Nehamas, Plato and the mass media, Monist, 71, 1988, pp. 214, 215, 216, 222, 227. See also n.115, below.

41. That poetry is regarded by Plato as a threat to both the care of the individual soul and the welfare of the state is the basis of this study’s thesis, and will be discussed later in the Introduction.

42. Guthrie, 1995b, p. 452n.1.

43. Nehamas argues that since government subsidies covered the price of admission to poetry performances, and so allowed access to the poor as well as the rich, such performances in Plato’s time were attended by thousands of people at a time. Poetry could thus be considered a “popular” entertainment, in that it catered to a representative cross section of the Athenian population (p. 223). See also A. Nehamas, Plato on imitation and poetry in Republic 10. In: J. Moravesik and P. Temko (eds.) Plato on Beauty, Wisdom and the Arts, Rowman and Littlefield, Totowa, NJ, 1982, pp. 50-1 and Janaway, p. 81.


45. Janaway, p. 81. Consider these recent examples from science, art and literature, respectively: in 1999, the Kansas Board of Education ruled that Darwin’s theory of evolution is no longer required teaching in the state’s high school science curriculum. Such teaching violate the fundamentalist Christian beliefs of many of the state’s citizens. Also, in 1999, the Mayor of New York, Rudolph Giuliani, halted payments to the Brooklyn Museum of Art, a state funded art institute, because he considered one of the paintings at a current exhibit, a black Madonna surrounded by (authentic) elephant dung, to be a vilification of Catholic doctrine. Finally, in 1999, religious fundamentalists in the United States called for the banning of J. K. Rowling’s hugely popular children’s books, on Harry Potter, on the basis that they encouraged in children an unnatural interest in black magic and superstition.

46. W. J. Verdenius, Platon et la poésie, Mnemosyne, 12, 1945, p. 123, and S. Halliwell. Plato: Republic 10, Aris & Phillips, Warminster, 1988, pp. 3, 107. For references in Plato’s dialogues which could indicate his love of poetry, see Apology (41a), Lysis (213a-14a), Meno (81b), Phaedo (94d-5a), Phaedrus (245a). As well as the ones mentioned below (see nn.50, 51 below), there are other such references in Republic (387b, 391a, 398a).

47. Nehamas, 1988, p. 228. As Janaway states, even though Plato may know of the dangers of poetry, he is still aware that the human spirit will always be drawn to its beauty. One must therefore use a “charm” - logical arguments - to counteract its potential harm (p. 7). See Plato, Republic (608a).

48. Diogenes Laertius (III. 5) (and others) report that Plato burnt his poetry and then wrote no more after he first heard Socrates speak. Cited in Guthrie, 1995b, pp. 12-13.

49. Halliwell, p. 3.

50. Plato, Republic (605c-d).

51. Plato, Republic (607c-8a).

52. Plato, Republic (595c).

53. Murray sees inspiration as “one of the most basic and persistent Greek notions about poetry” (1981, p. 87). Sperduti confirms this view: “that the poet was divinely inspired and that his calling received its
mandate from heaven were ideas, on the whole, highly cherished throughout antiquity" (p. 238).


55. Sperduti, p. 224.

56. As Detienne notes, from the earliest times, poetry was inseparable from "two complimentary concepts: the Muse (i.e., inspiration) and memory" (p. 39).


58. From Theocritus, Idylls (XVI. 2). Cited in Detienne, p. 43.


60. F. M. Cornford, Mysticism and science in the Pythagorean tradition, Classical Quarterly, 16, 1922, p. 143; G. F. Else, "Imitation" in the fifth century, Classical Philology, 53, 1958, p. 73, and A. C. Sukla, The Concept of Imitation in Greek and Indian Aesthetics, Rupa & Co., Calcutta, 1977, pp. 35-8. While all authors agree there are Pythagorean connections to the poetic term mimesis, which predates Plato's use, there is less consensus on the exact nature of that relationship to Plato.

61. Sorbon summarizes both Koller and Else's studies which investigate the pre-Platonic origins of the word group (mimesishtat) to which the term mimesis belongs (pp. 11-23, 37-8). See also Else, 1958, pp. 73-90 and J. J. Pollitt, The Ancient View of Greek Art. Criticism, History and Terminology, Yale University Press, New Haven, CT, 1974, pp. 37-8.

62. T. B. L. Webster, Greek theories of art and literature down to 400 B.C., Classical Quarterly, 33, 1939, pp. 167-9. For example, in The Poet and the Women (Thesmophoriazusae), the poet Agathon tells Mnisiolochus, a relation of Euripides, that what the poet does not know, he can obtain with the aid of mimesis: "If he's writing about a man, he's got all the bits and pieces already, as it were; but what nature hasn't provided, art can imitate" (my italics). In: Aristophanes (Trans. D. Barrett) The Wasps/The Poet and the Women/The Frogs, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1964 (156). Webster suggests that this use of mimesis in Aristophanes is not unlike its use in Plato: "the poet has no knowledge, but imposes on the audience by an adroit use of technical terms" (p. 167).

63. Plato, Ion (535e).

64. Plato, Ion (533d-c, 536a).

65. Plato, Republic (605a).

66. Plato, Ion (535e).

67. Plato, Republic (607c).

68. Plato, Ion (534b). Janaway sees the "sweet" (myrrh is a sweet unguent or oil) imagery of Republic (398a) recalling that of Ion (534b) (p. 101).

69. Sperduti, pp. 221-2 and Harriott, p. 84.

70. Indeed, the enjoyment that the mimetic elements of poetry (as well as in dance and music) engender is an important aspect of the educational system in Laws, Books II and VII. As play in children is pleasurable, mimetic activity in play is also encouraged for educational purposes (643b). The function of mimetic poetry as educational in Laws greatly differs from Plato's attitude to mimesis in poetry in
Republic. Book III. where the use of poetry as an educational tool is either sharply curtailed or banned outright. See the analysis of the respective mimetic dialogues as well as the Discussion for more detail. See also R. G. Bury, Theory of education in Plato's Laws. Revue des Études Grecques, 50, 1937, pp. 307, 309 on the use of mimesis. See also n. 143, below.

71. In Republic, Socrates declares that poetry can be allowed into the ideal state if it can be demonstrated that it is not only pleasurable, but also useful (607d).

72. Hackforth contrasts the "severely critical attitude" towards poetry in Republic (607), with what he considers to be the praise of poetry in Phaedrus (245a) (p. 61).

73. As with Hackforth, Tigerstedt believes Plato's account of inspiration in Phaedrus to be one of praise (p. 66), and rejects suggestions that Plato's discussions of inspiration could be a sarcastic or ironic rendering of the traditional view of the poet. He states: "That Plato takes two different, mutually incompatible attitudes towards poetry is a fact which the interpreter should loyally accept, however unpalatable to him it may be. Plato's criticism of poetry is too outspoken, too detailed, too frequent, not to express his sincere opinion. We should take him at his word" (my italics) (p. 66).


76. Pöhlmann, p. 206.

77. Pöhlmann, p. 206.

78. Pöhlmann, p. 192.

79. W. Tatarkiewicz, Art and poetry. A contribution to the history of ancient aesthetics, Studia Philosophica (Commentarii Societatis Philosophicae Polonorum), 2, 1937, p. 397. See also Plato, Phaedrus (245a) and Republic (601b, 603b, 605a).

80. Tatarkiewicz, p. 379.

81. Tatarkiewicz, p. 399.


84. The references to censorship of poetry in Plato's Laws are numerous. See (660a, 700a-1b, 719b, 797a-8e, 800a, 801c-d, 816a-b).


86. Else, p. 63.

87. Plato, Laws (719c).

88. Else, p. 63.

89. Hesiod (Trans. D. Wender) Theogony. In: Hesiod and Theog尼斯, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1986 (22ff). The Muses state to Hesiod, "You rustic shepherds, shame: bellies you are, not men! We know enough to make up lies (my italics) which are convincing, but we also have the skill when we've a mind, to speak the truth".

90. In Plato's Republic (381e), Socrates insists that the gods do not lie. However, as many critics have noted, if the gods do not lie, why then does Plato reject the poet, who speaks his words? See for example, E. E. Sikes, The Greek View of Poetry, Methuen, London, 1969, p. 69 and T. J. Saunders, Introduction to Ion. In: Early Socratic Dialogues, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1987, pp. 45-6n.4. See also n. 84, below.

91. This view is confirmed by Sikes. If one accepts that the gods do not lie, then the message that results, via the medium of the poets, could be true, since it is possible that the poets may not have "corrupted" the message in transmission (p. 69). As the Athenian stranger states in Laws, the poetic tribe, "with the aid of Graces and Muses, often grasps the truth of history" (my italics) (682a). Plato
might then argue that even if the poets did accidentally transmit the message of the gods correctly, they could do no more than “remind” the philosopher. Even so, as Guthrie (1993a, p. 241) and Sikes (p. 69) both note, it would still allow Plato occasionally to use the poets’ words to confirm his own findings.
92. Verdenius, 1972, p. 5.
93. Tigerstedt, p. 65.
94. Plato (Trans. R. G. Bury) Timaeus, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1989 (19d). In Webster’s historical study of ancient Greek theories of art and literature, he states that in the mimesis theory of art, by the artist portraying that which he knows, a realistic copy is able to be made. This corresponds to Verdenius’ argument (and the Timaeus statement) that the poet is only able to represent well that with which he is familiar. According to Webster, in the inspiration theory of art, because the poet is not present at the events and/or does not know the people he is describing, he invokes the Muses in order to rectify his lack of knowledge. Verdenius’ addendum to this is that because the poet is then unable to translate the Muses’ ethereal gift - that which is “something more than the facts of life in their everyday expression” (1972, p. 12) - into his mundane terms, it thus prevents him from transmitting the inspired communication accurately. Webster, pp. 166-8 (on mimesis), 173-6 (on inspiration).
95. Rosen, p. 143.
100. Rosen, p. 144. That Plato was not denying the poets’ creative abilities can be seen in Socrates’ statement in Republic, on the censorship of certain passages in Homer and the other poets: “it is not that they are not poetic and pleasing to most hearers” (387b). See also Republic (595b, 607c).
101. See pp. 2-4 of this thesis and nn.14, 18-21, 28, 30, 36, 8, above.
104. Yates, pp. iii, 48, 81-2, 84, 117, 178. See also n.135, below.
105. On the philosopher as inspired, see, for example, Plato, Phaedrus (234d, 238c, 241e, 242c).
106. On the philosopher as an imitator, see, for example, Republic (472e, 500e-01b, 592b) and Laws (817a-b).
108. Menza, p. 49.
110. Plato, Ion (536a). But is Ion mad and possessed or is he simply impersonating a role? At (535b).
Socrates asks Ion, whether, when acting in a part, he is actually in his senses, "or are you carried out of yourself, and does your soul in an ecstasy suppose herself to be among the scenes you are describing?" Ion's awareness of the public's reactions to his performance at (535c) seems to indicate that he is not mad, but merely acting.

111. Plato, Ion (541e).
112. Plato, Republic (394e, 395a-b).
113. Ferrari, p. 98.
114. Plato, Ion (533d-e). See also p. 7 of this thesis and n.64, above.
115. Ferrari, p. 98. See also n.40, above.
119. See p. 6 of this thesis and n.64, above.
121. Guthrie, 1995a, p. 231.
122. In Plato's Republic (393c), Socrates defines mimesis as "likening one's self to another in speech or bodily bearing".
125. "Music" or mousike (μουσική) in ancient Greece "denoted a performance of words sung to the accompaniment of some instrument and sometimes also with dramatic acting and dance. Plato sometimes used the word in even a wider sense to denote "cultural education"" (Sorbom, p. 107n.6). The term thus includes acting, dancing, singing and poetry. See also p. 2.
127. Plato, Ion (533d-e, 536a-b).
128. Sorbom, p. 109. See also Plato, Laws (719c).
131. Plato, Ion (533d-e, 536b).
132. Welton, p. 78.
133. Schaper, p. 42.
134. See p. 3 of this thesis and nn.40-1, 115, above.
135. The article is by Pöhlmann and the thesis is by Yates, and are the two studies in this literature review which devote the most effort on the relationship between inspiration and mimesis in Plato's criticism of poetry. However, a caveat should be noted for each of these studies. Although the title of Pöhlmann's study suggests that it is on inspiration and mimesis, it is primarily a study of inspiration in Ion, with a brief excursus into the other Platonic dialogues which discuss inspiration. It secondarily deals with the relationship between inspiration and mimesis. Yates's thesis examines "the metaphors Plato uses to describe poetry and the poet, and to compare them with his metaphors for philosophy and the philosopher" (p. iii). Inspiration and mimesis are but two of several such "metaphors", and both are used to deny the poet has knowledge (p. 14). Therefore, the relationship between the two features,
which is only addressed occasionally (see n. 104, above), is not the focus of the study. Rather, it is on
the difference in the manner in which Plato respectively treats the poet and the philosopher in his
dialogues, using inspiration and mimesis to do so.
136. The methodological issues involved in this study, such as the chronology of the Platonic dialogues
and the Socratic question, will be addressed at the end of this Introduction. See pp. 16-21 of this thesis.
137. As Grube states, there are two methods by which to study Plato: by the study of individual
dialogues and by the philosophical subject - they are not mutually exclusive, but rather, they
supplement each other. Both methods are utilized in this thesis. In: G. M. A. Grube, Plato’s Thought,
138. This is also noted by Janaway, pp. 1-2. As has been discussed earlier, poets and poetry played a key
role in Greek education and society. Indeed, poets “had for centuries moulded the religious beliefs of
Greece and...men still turned to them for guidance and support as arbiters of conduct of truth”. As Grube
remarks, given this, “(i)t was inevitable that Plato should deal repeatedly with poetry, and nearly always
in connexion with education” (my italics) (p. 179).
the life of the just man, and hence one who cares for his soul is argued throughout this dialogue. That
the man who cares for his soul, such as Socrates, is also the man who cares for the state, rather than the
orators or poets, who pander to the citizenry and their tastes, is discussed at (521e).
142. The Platonic “care of the soul” can be seen as continuous with the Socratic “care of the soul”, in
that both consider the function of the soul.
143. The references to “one man, one job”, or the principle of specialization in Republic are numerous.
See (369b, 369c-70c, 374b-c, 379d-c, 406c, 406c-7a, 412a, 420d-21c, 423d, 432a, 433a, 434a-d, 435b,
441d-e, 442a, 443a, 443c-e, 453b, 586e). It is also referred to in Laws (846d-e, 903b-c) and Timaeus
(72a) as well as other dialogues, but with less relevance to the topic at hand.
144. On the concord between reason and the emotions, see Plato, Laws (653b-d, 689a-c).
145. See Bury, pp. 307, 309n 70. In the educational system outlined in Laws, mimesis as it is employed
in education in poetry, music and dance, aids in the teaching of the correct response to pleasure and
pain. In aiding reason to rule over the emotions (653b-d, 659e), mimesis thus promotes concord in the
individual by enabling him to care for his soul, and by aiding in teaching the citizen how both to rule
and be ruled rightfully (643e), it contributes to the welfare, and so concord, of the state.
Klosko, p. 15.
148. Guthrie discusses not only how the stylistic methods are employed, but also how literary
criticism, philosophical considerations, external evidence and cross-references are all used to determine
the chronology of the Platonic dialogues (1955b, pp. 42-54).
149. Klosko, p. 15.
150. Thomas sees the transition as being from the Socratic elenchus, “to an activity that comes
closer to Platonic dialectic”. J. E. Thomas, Musings on the Meno, Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1980,
p. 23. See also pp. 10-16. Other critics who see this dialogue as transitional are: R. G. Hoerber, Plato’s


154. Grube, p. xiii. However, Guthrie, while acknowledging the differences between Plato and Xenophon's accounts of Socrates, does believe that "at many points they coincide". Some critics argue, most uncritically, that this does not prove Xenophon's account to be true, but only that he copied Plato! (W. K. C. Guthrie, *Socrates*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1971a, p. 10).

155. In *Metaphysics* (1078b17-32), Aristotle delineates the metaphysical positions of the historical Socrates and Plato, and in doing so, credits the theory of Ideas to the latter, but not the former (cited in Klosko, p. 18).

156. As De Vogel states: "For us Socrates and the Ἵμηρα Ἀνέκδοτοι (Sokratikoi logos) are one. The "real" Socrates we have not: what we have is a set of interpretations each of which represents a "theoretically possible" Socrates". C. J. De Vogel, The present state of the Socratic problem, *Phronesis*, 1, 1955, p. 18.


162. Klosko, p. 18.

163. The transition in *Meno* from Socratic to Platonic thought is said to take place at (81a). Guthrie, 1986, pp. 24-5.


166. Tredennick outlines Plato’s possible reasoning as to how his theory of Ideas arose from Socrates’ beliefs “in such a way as to seem no more than a logical extension of them” (p. 14). See also Guthrie, 1986, p. 24 and 1971a, p. 33.


170. As Shorey notes, Plato is not only a thinker, but also “a dramatic artist and an impassioned moral and religious teacher”. However, in his dialogues, Plato “often seems more concerned to edify and entertain than to demonstrate and conclude” (p. 5).

171. Guthrie, 1995b, p. 46.

172. Guthrie, for example, chronicles several changes of “emphasis in subject matter” and in methods in Plato’s works (1995b, pp. 46-8).


176. An "esoteric" philosophy is one which is "intelligible to only those with special knowledge" (p. 894). An "exoteric" philosophy, on the other hand, is one which pertains "to the outside, (i.e) external" (p. 927). That is, it is a philosophy which is accessible to a wider audience, such as all philosophers - not just ones who are students of certain philosopher or school of philosophy - or even to the general public. *The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary*, Vol. I, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1971.
178. Other philosophers, such as Speusippus, Plato's nephew and successor as the head of the Academy, and Xenocrates, who was also to become the head of the Academy, were also in attendance (Guthrie, 1995b, p. 21).
179. Tigerstedt, 1977, p. 64.
180. Plato, *Phaedrus* (275c-6a, 277c-8b). See also n.186, below.
182. Tigerstedt, 1977, p. 70.
183. Plato, *Phaedrus* (275d-e). In *Protagoras*, Socrates argues that this is also true for orators such as Pericles - that when asked a question, "they are just like books (i.e., the written word) incapable of either answering you or putting a question of their own" (329a). That is, they do not reciprocate, as in a dialogue - either written or spoken. See also pp. 74-5 of this thesis and nn.158-74 of *Phaedrus* on this passage.
184. Tigerstedt, 1977, p. 70.
CHAPTER TWO

INSPIRATION IN PLATO’S CRITICISM OF POETRY

Introduction

1. Plato, Apology (22a-e).
5. Plato, Laws (719c).
6. See pp. 2, 6 of this thesis and nn. 11-14, 53-4 of the Introduction.
7. See pp. 2-4 of this thesis and nn. 19-28 of the Introduction. Jaeger states that Homer can be seen as the “noblest example, as it were the classic instance of that general conception”. W. Jaeger (Trans. G. Hight) Paideia. The Ideals of Greek Culture, Vol. I, Archaic Greece. The Mind of Athens, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1973, p. 35. See also p. 427n.3.
10. In Republic, Plato also states that the encomiasts of Homer believe that for “the conduct and refinement of human life he (Homer) is worthy of our study and devotion, and that we should order our entire lives by the guidance of this poet” (606e). If this were the standard of knowledge of the poet, it would thus be deemed suitable by the public for teaching purposes.
14. Sperduti, p. 212 and A. Schachter, Muses. In: S. Hornblower and A. Spawforth (eds.) The Oxford Classical Dictionary, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1996, p. 1002. Although performed in an ironic manner, in both Euthydemus (275d) and Phaedrus (237a), Socrates appeals to the Muses before beginning a narrative. That Plato includes such invocations may indicate that the practice was not unusual, but instead, traditional - even among philosophers. The statesman Solon also prays to the Muses - for wisdom and the success wisdom will bring. Allen argues that the Muses are invoked in this case because they represent wisdom. A. W. Allen, Solon’s prayer to the Muses, Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association, 80, 1949, pp. 50-65.
17. According to Dodds, the invocations in Homer’s Iliad, “fall on the side of content and not form. Always he asks the Muses what he is to say, never how to say it; and the matter he asks for is always factual”. In: E. R. Dodds, The Greeks and the Irrational, University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, 1951, p. 80. This is affirmed by Phemius’ statement in Odyssey: “I taught myself the craft (ἀνυμόδοικτος), but a god has planted deep in my spirit all the paths of the song”. Homer (Trans. R. Fagles) Odyssey, Viking Penguin, New York, NY, 1996 (XXII. 347-8). See also n. 15, above.
18. See p. 2 and nn. 12, 13 of the Introduction. Indeed, as Minton states, the Muses appear “very like the
embodiment of the traditional knowledge of the past in all its factual precision and circumstantial detail, transmitted through generations of singers" (1962, pp. 189-90).


20. Snell, p. 137. See also Harriott, p. 44.

21. Murray, 1981, p. 92. Minton also notes that "the Muses, and with them the earliest Greek poetry, are somehow associated with information" (1962, p. 188).

22. Dodds, p. 81.

23. After hearing Demodocus sing a tale of Troy that was so "true to life" it was as if the poet himself had been present or had "heard from one who was", Odysseus determines that it must have been a Muse, or Apollo, who "taught" it to him. Homer, *Odyssey* (VIII. 488-91).

24. From Plato's *Republic*: "We shall affirm that the Muses answer": "They must needs", I said, "since they are the Muses" (547b). Earlier in this dialogue, Socrates insists that as the gods do not lie, any poetry which implies that they do, cannot be allowed into their city (381e).


26. See Homer, *Iliad* (II. 594ff), on the withdrawal of the Muses' gifts to Thamyris, the minstrel, who had boasted that he could outshine them.

27. Dodds, p. 81.

28. Guthrie, 1993a, p. 241. Murray also discusses Pindar and Empedocles' belief that the truth of their work was guaranteed by its divine origins (1981, p. 92).


30. Liddell and Scott, p. 804. Jaeger, in relation to its use by Plato in *Gorgias*, states that *techne* is "the practice of a vocation or profession based not merely on routine experience but on general rules and fixed knowledge; and so it is not far from theory...On the other hand, *techne* differs from *theoria* (pure knowledge) by being always connected to practice" (1986, p. 130). See also M. Nussbaum, *The Fragility of Goodness. Luck and Ethics in Greek Tragedy and Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press, 1986, pp. 94-9, for a discussion on the historical employment of the concept of *techne* as well as its use in Plato.

31. See p. 12 of this thesis and n. 102 of the Introduction.

32. Menza, p. 3. Menza believes that what he terms the "*techne* theory" or "theory of crafts" is the basis for understanding Plato’s criticism of poetry, especially with regard to *Ion* and *Republic* (pp. 3-4).

33. Homer, *Odyssey* (XXII. 347-8). See also n. 17, above.


35. Although Murray lists other examples from Homer which may acknowledge a skill element in poetry, they appear contentious (1981, p. 98).

36. Harriott, p. 93. See, for example, in Homer, *Odyssey* (XI. 368), when Alcinous congratulates Odysseus on his narrative abilities: "You have told your story with all a singer's skill (ἐπιστημωνῆς)". *Sophos* (σοφος), which originally referred to "one who understands his craft". was also used at this time to describe craftsmen, including poets (Murray, 1981, pp. 98-9). See also Jaeger's definition of *techne* in n. 30, above.


40. Plato, *Phaedrus* (245a). Later in this dialogue, when discussing rhetoric, it seems as if Socrates, in a
comparison of the tragic poets Sophocles and Euripides with a tyras attributes to them, because of their ability to construct dialogue, an element of skill or techne (268c-d).

41. A. Avni, Inspiration in Plato and the Hebrew prophets, Comparative Literature, 20, 1968, p. 58.

42. Harriott, p. 96. See also Aristophanes' The Poet and the Women (49-57).

43. Plato, Timaeus (71e-2a).

44. There appears to be a problem of nomenclature here. In the Harvard University Press (Loeb Classical Library) editions of these dialogues, μαντεὺς (or ὑμαντεὺς) is variously translated as "prophets" as well as "seers", and χρησμοδόοι as "soothsayers" and "givers of oracles". Liddell and Scott also translate manis as a seer or a prophet (p. 487) and words which relate to chresmos are oracular or prophetic (pp. 894-5). In the secondary literature, manis is the term used solely for a seer (Tigerstedt, 1970, p. 164 and W. Burkert, Greek Religion, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1985, p. 112), and chresmos is the function, or "service" given by a god, via an intermediary, or oracle (Burkert, p. 114). To confuse matters, the place where this took place was called a chresterion or a manteion by the Greeks and an oraculum by the Romans (Burkert, p. 114)! However, manteis and chresmos, the terms used by Plato in his dialogues on poetic inspiration, will be respectively referred to in this study as seers and prophets, as according to Burkert, a seer is one who makes utterances from an abnormal state, and a prophet is one who interprets those utterances (p. 112) - that is, one who performs the "service" or chresmos.

45. Plato, Ion (534c-d).

46. Plato, Apology (22c).

47. Plato, Meno (99d).

48. Plato, Laws (719c). According to Harriott, comparisons of poetic fluency to flowing water, such as a river (or a fountain as in Laws) were frequently made in Greek poetry, and extended back as far as Homer (pp. 88-9, nn.1, 2). See, for example, from Homer's Iliad: "sweeter than honey from his tongue the voice flowed on and on" (I. 249).


50. Plato, Phaedrus (244c-e).

51. See pp. 36-7.


53. Burkert, p. 112. See n.44, above.

54. Liddell and Scott, p. 704. Teiresias is mentioned by Plato in Meno (100a) and (indirectly by an Homeric quote) in Republic (386c). Pindar also claimed to be "a prophet of the Muses" (fr. 90) (quoted in Sikes, p. 20).

55. Burkert, p. 112.


57. Sperduuti, p. 214.


60. That poetry was considered by the ancient Greeks to be a gift of the gods has been discussed
elsewhere in this study (see pp. 2, 6 of this thesis and nn. 11-14, 54 of the Introduction). On the educational value of poetry, see pp. 2-5 of this thesis and associated nn. of the Introduction. If what the Athenian states in Laws, that "education owes its origin to Apollo and the Muses" (653c), was an accepted belief in Greek society, then as poetry was endowed to the poets by the same gods, it must have been considered educational by that society.

61. On the poet's knowledge of the past, see p. 2 of this thesis and nn. 11-12 of the Introduction. See also Dodds, p. 81 n. 117. However, in Hesiod's Theogony, the Muses' gift of inspiration to the poet also allows him to know the future (32). Tigerstedt, 1970, p. 171 and Nagy, p. 56.

62. Dodds, p. 81 n. 118. According to Dodds, in several Indo-European languages there is a common term for both "poet" and "seer". Further, as he quotes Chadwick and Chadwick, "(i)t is clear that throughout the ancient languages of Northern Europe the ideas of poetry, eloquence, information and prophecy are intimately connected" (n. 118). See also Sperduti, pp. 213, 218 and Nagy, pp. 56-64. Nagy argues for exactly what Dodds had earlier posited: that is, that the distinction between the two professions "was preceded by an earlier stage where the poet and prophet were as yet undifferentiated" (p. 56). Minton also notes that early oral poetry was associated with the activities of the "poet-seer" (1962, p. 189 and n. 3).


64. For Tigerstedt's definition of the behaviour of the seer or prophet, see p. 26 of this thesis and n. 32.

65. Plato, Ion (534b, c-d, e). Using the metaphor of the Heraclean lodestone, Socrates also accuses the rhapsode of being possessed by the Muses, via Homer (Ομηρο γαρ κατέχοντα) (536b-c, d). According to Maurizio, "Katecho (κατέχω), in the passive sense, literally means "held" or "owned" and therefore is most akin to the English word "possessed"". L. Maurizio, Anthropology and spirit possession: A reconsideration of the Pythia's role at Delphi, Journal of Hellenic Studies, 115, 1995, p. 76. See also Liddell and Scott: "In Pass., of persons, to be possessed, inspired, Xen., Plat." (p. 422).

66. Plato, Apology (22c). Socrates states that "what they (the poets) composed they composed not by wisdom (σοφία) but by nature (φύσει) and because they were inspired (ευθεσκουστοντες) like the prophets and givers of oracles". Euthyoeos (ευθεος) is to be "full of the god...possessed". See n. 109 of the Introduction.

67. Plato, Meno (99d).

68. Plato, Laws (719c).

69. Plato, Phaedrus (245a). See also n. 64, above, on katecho (κατέχω).

70. Although sketchily depicted in the extant classical literature, the Corybantes are mentioned several times in the works of Plato (as well as Ion 534a; see also, Euthydemus 277d and Laws 790d-1a). They are believed to have been the priestesses of Cybele, the mother of Zeus and other gods, and named after her son, Corybas. They are depicted as celebrating the goddess with shouting, wild music and frenzied dancing. The madness of their actions was thought to be the result of divine possession, which they were powerless to control. Their behaviour was thus believed to have been not unlike that of the Dionysian revelers in Euripides' Bacchanales (Bacchae). Euripides (Trans. A. S. Way) Bacchanales, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1988. See I. M. Linforth, The Corybantic rites in Plato, University of California Publications in Classical Philology, 13, 1945, pp. 121-3 and J. Lempière, Classical Dictionary, Bracken Books, London, 1994, p. 200.

73. Tigerstedt, 1970, p. 169. See also Dodds, pp. 67, 82.
74. Sikes, p. 20. As Tigerstedt states, "no Greek writer before Plato ever described poetic inspiration in this way. The poets called themselves inspired but not possessed" (1969, p. 26).
76. Dodds, pp. 81-2.
79. Dodds, p. 82.
80. Tigerstedt, 1970, p. 178. As has been previously mentioned (p. 36), Plato calls the possession and consequent madness of the inspired poet an "an ancient saying" (παλικτος μυθος) in *Laws* (719c).
81. Dodds, p. 82. But see also Tigerstedt (1970, p. 176), who believes that Dodd's "guess" concerning the influence of the Dionysian movement on the notion of Plato's "frenzied poet" is perhaps being charitable to the philosopher.
83. Sikes, p. 68.
84. Harriott, p. 82.
85. On the affinities between the poets and the seers and prophets in ancient Greece, and that the comparison which Plato draws between the two groups is thus not without foundation, see pp. 26-7 and nn.52, 54, 60-3, above.
86. Maurizio, p. 77.
87. Harriott, p. 83.
91. Guthrie suggests that Plato employs myth in two ways. Firstly, Plato may use a myth, not necessarily of his own making, to support his own conclusions and deductions. Secondly, Plato may use his own myths, which do not necessarily support the dialogue, but make their own points separately, to discuss aspects of philosophy which cannot be done by dialectic alone. As Guthrie notes, "there are certain truths which it is beyond the powers of human reason to demonstrate scientifically" (1993a, p. 239).
94. Avni, p. 56.
95. Plato, *Phaedrus* (245a). That it is impossible for a poet to produce "verses of such beauty and wisdom" without "a divine and superhuman nature" (i.e., inspiration), was a belief also attributed to the philosopher, Democritus, by, among others, Dio Chrysostom, a Greek orator and philosopher of the first century A.C.E. Dio Chrysostom (Trans. H. L. Crosby) On Homer. In: *Discourses* 37 - 60, Vol. IV, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1962 (LIII. 1). On the possible relationship between Plato and Democritus' ideas of poetic inspiration, see Tigerstedt, 1969, pp. 72-6 and 1970, p. 163. Tigerstedt argues that we do not possess enough of Democritus' writings to form a clear idea of his views on poetic inspiration. Therefore, such a comparison between the two philosophers cannot be conclusive. However, as Guthrie notes, even if Plato did adopt Democritus' idea of poetic inspiration,
"it is certain that he (Plato) transformed them into something peculiarly his own" (1995b, p. 207). See also Yates, pp. 4-5.
96. Plato, Ion (534d).
97. Plato, Apology (22c).
98. Plato, Meno (99d).
100. Plato, Timaeus (71e-2b).
101. Plato, Apology (22b-c).
102. Plato, Ion (540d-42b). Plato makes a similar remark in Republic: Homer's authority should be queried, when he speaks of such things as military strategy (599d), since he neither commanded a war, nor was one fought by his counsel (600a). This passage also indicates a questioning of Homer's knowledge and skill; in this case, not because he is inspired, but because he employs mimesis.

**Ion**

4. Saunders, pp. 39-40 and Plato, Ion (530b-d). However, according to Guthrie, there is no evidence outside Ion that these commentators were ever called rhapsodists, which indicates that Plato's Ion, in performing exposition as well as recitation, is unique (1995b, p. 201).
5. Plato, Ion (530a). Aside from winning contest, Ion is also materially successful: he is splendidly attired (530b, 535d) and he recites in front of an audience of more than twenty thousand (535d) from whom he makes money by his ability to arouse their emotions (535e).
7. Schaper, p. 23.
10. As Bloom notes, Ion is a self-satisfied man, who knows himself to be successful and so important. He thus feels little self-doubt, and no need to explain himself. Therefore, "(t)he order to engage Ion and induce him to reveal himself, Socrates must attract him and become respectable for him. Ion is vain, and he is first attracted by flattery". A. Bloom, An interpretation of Plato's Ion, Interpretation, 1, 1970, p. 43.
13. Plato, Ion (532c).
14. For an earlier discussion of techne, see p. 24 of this thesis and nn.30-2 of chapter two, Introduction.
15. As for n.14, above. See also Nussbaum, p. 94.
16. Schaper, p. 26. As she notes, "(t)hat knowledge deals with the individual only in so far as it can be taken to exemplify general features, is a specifically Socratic contribution to philosophy" (p. 26).
17. Similarly, Aristotle relates that a "art (i.e., τεχνη) arises when from many notions gained by experience one universal judgement about a class of objects is produced". Aristotle (Trans. W. D. Ross)

Cited in Nussbaum, p. 96.

18. Nussbaum, p. 95.
20. Plato, Ion (532c).
22. See n.11, above.
23. Menza, p. 36.
25. Plato, Apology (31e-2a, 32a-33a). See also Republic (496b-e).
27. Plato, Apology (20d-4b) and Ion (532d). Although Ion, in praising Socrates, refers to him as as one of the “wise men”, Socrates, characteristically modest, declines this description and instead, after having just declared Ion to be lacking in skill and knowledge (532c), ironically attributes wisdom to the rhapsodes, actors and the poets (532d). See also Tigerstedt, 1970, p. 25 (on Ion’s praise) and Guthrie, 1995b, p. 202 (on Socrates’ retort).
28. Bloom, p. 49. In order to satisfy his own material needs, the rhapsode must observe and cater to the public’s taste (535e). As Bloom states, “He (Ion) may think himself superior to the people, laugh at them, thinking he is duping them; but he is their flatterer and their creature; his self-esteem depends on their prizes; he does what he does at their bidding” (p. 53). See also Plato, Ion (530c, d).
29. In Plato’s Ion, Socrates, as a “simple layman”, is able to “speak but the plain truth” (532d). Similarly, in Apology, Socrates’ argument concerning the difference between private and public life implies that if he had been a public man, it would have prevented him from telling the truth. Further, any man who “prevents many unjust and illegal things from happening in the state”, and “really fights for the right” must be a private citizen, not a public man, if he wishes to stay alive (31e-2a). Therefore, only a private man can tell the truth.
30. Plato, Gorgias (502c).
31. Plato, Gorgias (521d).
32. Plato, Apology (31e-2a). See also n.39, above.
33. Plato, Gorgias (522d-e).
34. Bloom, p. 49.
35. Plato, Apology (29d-c).
36. Bloom, p. 50.
37. Plato, Ion (533c-4e).
38. Plato, Ion (533d).
40. Whether Ion merely recites Homer or critically interprets the poet, is arguable. There are those who argue that Ion’s ability is to critically interpret Homer, and so Socrates’ criticism of the rhapsode is one of critical interpretation. See, for example, C. La Drière, The problem of Plato’s Ion, Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism, 10, 1951, p. 29 and J. Ranta, The drama of Plato’s Ion, Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism, 26, 1967, p. 219. While at the beginning of the dialogue, Socrates suggests that rhapsodes critically interpret the works they perform (530b-c), this comment may only be an ironic one, made in order to induce Ion to stay and talk (see n.10, above). Further, Outhrie argues that rhapsodes did not perform exposition as well as recitation (see n.4, above). However, whether Ion does one or the other or both, is of little relevance to the argument that Socrates makes against Ion having.
skill and knowledge. Even if Ion did provide critical interpretation of Homer, he would still be not be able to speak on poets other than Homer (see nn.12-22, above). Therefore, Socrates would still make the same argument, with the same conclusion: that Ion’s ability to speak on Homer alone is based on inspiration and is not done by skill and knowledge.

41. Plato, Ion (535a).
42. Schaper, p. 31.
43. Schaper, p. 30.
44. Schaper, p. 30.
45. As has previously been discussed, possession and madness were not commonly associated with poetic inspiration in Plato’s time.
46. On the Corybantes, see n.30 of chapter two, Introduction.
47. Harriott, p. 83.
48. For my earlier remarks on this, as well as those by Maurizio and Harriott, see p. 29 and nn.86-7 of chapter two, Introduction.
50. Plato, Ion (534b).
51. Plato, Ion (534a).
52. Plato, Ion (534b).
53. See pp. 7-8 of this thesis and nn.67-9 of the Introduction.
54. Plato, Republic (607c).
55. Plato, Republic (607a).
56. Plato, Republic (398a). See also Laws (802c).
57. Pindar (Pythian X. 53-4). Cited in Harriott, p. 84n.4.
58. Harriott, p. 85.
60. Plato, Phaedrus (246d-e). The imagery concerning wings abounds in Phaedrus. It should be noted, however, that in this dialogue, unlike Ion, Socrates declares that “the region above the heaven was never worthily sung by any earthly poet, nor will it ever be” (247c). Only the philosopher who possesses the wings of the soul is able to soar to the upper regions, where the gods dwell. See also Fisher, pp. 165, 166, 168, 169.
61. Harriott also considers other possibilities, which may indicate the poet’s divine nature. In some Greek poets, such as Pindar and Bacchylides, their use of the imagery of wings and flying could symbolize a poet’s supremacy, in that they are able to soar above their rivals. However, in Aristophanes, the image of flying “conveys not only the poet’s sense of superiority but also the kinship of poetry and air” (p. 86). In Archarnians, Euripides’ servant is uncertain as to whether the poet is or is not available to an enquiring visitor: (in answer to the enquiry, the servant replies) “Within, he is without ... His mind is outside... while he himself is inside, feet up, composing tragedies” (translator’s italics) (395-400). Aristophanes (Trans. D. Parker) The Archarnians. In: Four Comedies, The University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, MI. 1994 (395-400). Similarly, in Frogs, Euripides prays to his own special gods, one of whom is the air: “Hail! Ether” (889-94). However, it should also be noted that throughout Clouds, Aristophanes also has Socrates continually calling on “Ozone”, as if one of the gods! Aristophanes (Trans. W. Arrowsmith) The Clouds. In: Three Comedies, University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, MI, 1993. Perhaps the kinship to be had here is really between thinkers and air - when Socrates is first introduced in Clouds, he is sitting in a basket, which is dangling from a rope, high above the ground. He explains that it is only by being so suspended, when his mind is in the
heavens, that he is able to think scientifically. It should be remembered that a philosopher was also called a meteorologos (μετεωρολόγος); that is, "one who talks of the heavenly bodies"! (Liddell and Scott, p. 506).

62. Plato, Ion (534b-c). In Republic, Socrates similarly argues that a poet is unable to write well in more than one genre, even in two closely allied ones, such as comedy and tragedy (395a). In Republic, this argument follows the "one man, one job" doctrine that Socrates sets out for the ideal city. That is, because each man, by nature, has certain capacities which enable him to do one job well, that is the job he should do (for example, 353a-4a, 369c-70c). Further, if he attempts to do another job, he will not do it as well, and if he attempts to do more than that one job at which does well, then the division of effort will mean that he will be unable to do well at any of them (for example, 374b-c, 394e-5b. See also Laws 846d-e). That the poet in Ion can only write in one genre, because he is inspired by a specific Muse, but is "at fault in any other kind" (my italics), may be an early version of this doctrine.

63. Tigerstedt, 1969, p. 28.
64. Plato, Ion (534d).
66. That poetry is persuasive will be shown further when the effect of Ion's recitations on the audience's emotions (535c) is discussed. The effect of Socrates' monologue on Ion is also not unlike the effect of his parable on Phaedrus in the dialogue of the same name (244a-57b): both are centrally, and so strategically, located in their respective dialogues, and both are given with a poetic air. Further, both are designed to illustrate the nature of poetic inspiration (245a); its persuasive effect on Socrates' interlocutor (see 257c, for Phaedrus' reaction); as well as the superiority of the philosopher over the poet (see throughout, but especially 248d, 249a, 256b-c, 257b). See also Harriott, p. 83 and Tigerstedt, 1970, p. 25n. 75.
67. Plato, Ion (535a).
68. Bloom, p. 51.
69. According to Harriott, there appears to be two intentions behind the "rambling", "free-association" style of hymnic speech which Socrates adopts in this first monologue: firstly, "Socrates was talking to a rhapsode and gently mocking his companion's speech" (which is similar to Socrates' mocking of Lysias' speech and Phaedrus' enthusiasm for it, in Phaedrus). Secondly, and I think more importantly, "Plato was hoping that his reader would not notice that he was being led to an unexpected destination" (p. 83).
70. Plato, Ion (533e).
71. Schaper agrees: "Plato here states as clearly as Tolstoy was to do later, that art is the communication of emotions" (p. 37). Tolstoy believes that art is the "conveying of various kinds of feelings", and that science, in general, is "the conveying of all possible knowledge". L. Tolstoy (Trans. R. Pevear and L. Volokonsky) What is Art?, Penguin, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1995. p. 158). Like Plato, Tolstoy believes that these feelings are transmitted from the artist to the audience. He considers that the most moral works of art are also the best, in that they are able to transfer feelings which unite "mankind in common bonds". If a work fails to do this, it has no moral value, and so no aesthetic value. D. A. Whewell, Leo Tolstoy. In: D. Cooper (ed.) A Companion to Aesthetics, Blackwell, Oxford, 1996, p. 430.
72. Plato, Ion (535b-c).
73. Plato, Ion (535c).
74. Plato, Ion (535e).
75. Plato, Ion (535e).
Tigerstedt, 1969, p. 21. However, it should be noted that Tigerstedt's argument may be more a reflection of his position on Plato's depiction of poetic inspiration, than it is a comment on this passage. Tigerstedt contends that the Greeks did not consider possession to be a feature of poetic inspiration. On Tigerstedt's views on poetic inspiration and possession in Plato's dialogues, see pp. 27-9 of this thesis and nn. 71, 73, 86, 88-9 of chapter two, Introduction.


Murdoch suggests that Socrates ignores the importance of a technical expertise of poetry that Ion may possess, for while "he may not know much about chariots... he does know how to make an audience weep" (pp. 8-9). See also Saunders, pp. 42-3 and Janaway, 1995, pp. 30-1 on the technical knowledge of poetry that Ion may have.

Plato, *Ion* (538b-c, 538d, 539c, 540a, 540d, 541a). However, as Janaway notes, in reference to an argument put forth by Flashar, Socrates' statements concerning a rhapsodic skill may reflect a "temporary assumption of precisely what is to be refuted" (1995, p. 28n.32). That is, rhapsodic skill is employed by Socrates for the sake of argument only.

Plato, *Phaedrus* (258d). This quotation is from the Hackforth, not the Fowler translation of the dialogue. Unless otherwise specified, the Fowler translation of *Ion* is used in this thesis.

Hackforth, p. 115.


G.B. Kerferd, *The Sophistic Movement*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1993, p. 82. In *Phaedrus*, Socrates states that rhetoric can be used not only in laws courts, but also in public gatherings and private conversation (261a). Thus rhetoric can be equated with the art of speaking in general (Grube, p. 211).


Plato, *Phaedrus* (259e).


In *Phaedrus*, sophistic rhetoric is referred to by Socrates as a "knack" (ἐξημερωθέω) which has "nothing to do with art" (260e). This phrase is also employed by him in *Gorgias* (463b), and can be summed up by the term "pandering", such as is practised by Sophistic rhetors. At (462c), Socrates refers to rhetoric as a "knack".

For example, in *Phaedrus*, the character of Phaedrus can be seen as one who is more admiring of form than content, in that he appears more interested in the sounds of words, than in the meaning inherent in those words. This reflects a certain nature of the soul. Indeed, Socrates states after his second speech that he has made some of the language poetic, to please Phaedrus (257a). Also to please Phaedrus, Plato similarly uses myth, both in his second speech, and in his discussion on writing - a simpler and sometimes more effective way in which to impart a message, and thus persuade, than if one uses a philosophical explanation (see Guthrie, 1995, p. 239. See also n. 91 of chapter two, Introduction.


Janaway, p. 23.


Plato, *Gorgias* (502b). As Grube remarks, in Plato's attack on both rhetoric and art, rhetoricians and
artists are similar in that rather than “helping to make men better by persuading them to do what they know is good or by putting examples of right conduct before their eyes... (they) lose sight of the moral aim of their craft and the immediate pleasure of their audience becomes their only aim” (p. 215).


100. Plato, *Ion* (530b-c).


104. Guthrie, 1995b, p. 204.


107. That it is the irrational and so, emotional, aspect of poetic inspiration (and *mimesis*) which audiences find pleasurable, is argued elsewhere in this study. See pp. 7-8 of this thesis and associated nn. of the *Introduction*, especially nn.70-1.

108. See Hackforth, p. 75 and Guthrie, 1995b, p. 89, on the various forms in which reason and the emotions are portrayed - that is, as either the soul and the body, or as parts of the soul, as elements which are divine and mortal and so on - in Plato’s dialogues. See also W. K. C. Guthrie, Plato’s views on the nature of the soul, *Entretiens sur l’Antiquité Classique* (Fondation Hardt), 3, 1955, pp. 3-22, for a more complete discussion.


111. Grube, p. 122.


114. See p. 43 of this thesis and nn.107-13, above.

115. Schaper, p. 39. The “injustice” to which Schaper may be referring, is that which is created in man when there is an imbalance of the three elements in the soul - reason, desire and spirit. This imbalance prevents each element from performing its own proper function. See *Republic* (435b, 441d-e, 443c-e). See also *Laws* (903b-e). To achieve the harmony of these elements in the soul is also to care for the soul, as Socrates exhorts. Further, in *Republic*, Plato advocates it as the only way in which a just state can be maintained (441d-e, 443a). Schaper’s “battle between poetry and philosophy”, is a reference to “the quarrel between philosophy and poetry”, in Plato’s *Republic* (607b).

116. On poets as teachers of society, and especially as teachers of morality, see pp. 2-5 of this thesis and associated nn. of the *Introduction*. See also Janaway, pp. 44-5.

117. See also Saunders, pp. 20, 22-3, 41.

118. See pp. 49-50 of this thesis and n.93, above.

**Apology**

1. Although in *Apology* Plato goes to the trouble of twice mentioning his presence at Socrates’ trial
(34a, 38b), this does not prove that it is an accurate rendering of the events. Critics are divided as to this (see Guthrie, 1995b, pp. 72-80, for arguments for and against).

2. In his defence, Socrates recalls the formal charges which are listed in his indictment: "Socrates is a wrongdoer because he has corrupted the youth and does not believe in the gods the state believes in, but in other new spiritual beings" (24b-c). As Brickhouse and Smith note, the charge of introducing new divinities, is not unlike Aristophanes' portrayal of Socrates in Clouds (see also n.61 of Iom). T. C. Brickhouse and N. D. Smith, The formal charges against Socrates, Journal of the History of Philosophy, 23, 1985, p. 463.

3. The cross-examination of Meletus by Socrates occurs at (24d-6a).


5. Many commentators (for example, J. Sallis, Being and Logos, Reading the Platonic Dialogues, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, IN, 1996, p. 47, 51; J. Cropsey, Plato's World. Man's Place in the Cosmos, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL, 1997, p. 147 and A. Nehamas, Socratic Intellectualism. In: J. Cleary (ed.) Proceedings of the Boston Area Colloquium in Ancient Philosophy, Vol. II, University Press of America, Lanham, NY, 1986, pp. 305-6, among others) believe that Socrates' actions show a contradiction: Socrates is undoubtedly a religious man, so why would he then set out to refute the oracle's words? Other commentators have noted that it is vital to Socrates' defence that the jurors understand the nature of, and motivation behind, his "divine mission". That is, why Socrates believes that he must spend his life in "obedience to the God", asking men questions even when they arouse so much animosity (T. C. Brickhouse and N. D. Smith, Socrates on Trial, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 1990, pp. 87-96). Therefore, such a contradiction as stated above must be addressed. While Socrates does not believe the oracle to be lying - "that is not possible for him" (21b) - the meaning of the oracle's words is unclear to him. But if Socrates does not believe the words to be untrue, why then would he seek to disprove them? Guthrie believes that this objection is based on a misunderstanding of the way in which Delphic responses were regularly regarded and acted upon. Rather, Socrates set out "to refute the obvious meaning of the oracle, its words taken at face value, in order to discover the answer to its riddle. Everyone knew it spoke in riddles, and any sensible man or city would look past the obvious meaning for what was hidden underneath" (1971a, p. 87). Therefore, Socrates' actions should not be seen as an impious attempt to prove the oracle wrong, but an effort to understand what the god sought to convey (Brickhouse and Smith, 1990, p. 96). But could his actions also indicate how Socrates considers inspiration? If the poets, as well as the seers and prophets, being inspired, are the mouthpieces of the gods, and so do not know of what they speak, why should the oracle, as the mouthpiece of Apollo, know any more than they? Socrates states both in this dialogue (21b) and elsewhere (Republic, 382d), that he does not believe that the gods lie. So Socrates' perplexity, on hearing the oracles' words, may result not from any lies told by the god, but from the oracles' inability to understand or transmit the god's true meaning (see pp. 9-11 of this thesis for a discussion of Else and Verdenius' views of the relationship between poetic inspiration and mimesis. Both argue that as with the oracle in this hypothetical case, the poets are unable to translate the divine message given to them by the Muse). Thus Socrates' quest could be seen as one carried out in order to understand the god's meaning and so the true intentions behind the oracle's words, with the end result being the same as for Guthrie's conclusion.

6. Irwin, 1995, p. 17. See also Plato, Apology (22e).

7. On the poets' reputation for wisdom, see pp. 2-5, 23-4 of this thesis and the associated nn. of the Introduction and chapter two, Introduction.

8. According to Tigerstadt, "φυσις (physêi) in Apology corresponds to θεια μοίρα (theia moira) in
"Ion" (1969, p. 32n. 95). To the Greeks, physis could refer to either one's internal nature; that is, one's natural powers, qualities or constitution - one's mind - or to the nature that is external to oneself; that is, the natural world or universe (see Liddell and Scott, p. 876). Moira is one's fate, share or lot in life, whereas thea moira, is "the divine element behind the cosmos and behind human nature and action" (E. G. Berry, The History and Development of the Concept of Thea Moira and Thea Tyche Down to and Including Plato, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL, 1940, p. 49). Therefore, thea moira is one's share in the divine. Thus in Apology (22c), the nature (physis) which is opposed to wisdom (sophia) in the poets is that element of them, that aspect of their nature, which is affected by the divine element in the world, the gods. Similarly, in this dialogue, inspiration, in being aligned to nature, is also opposed to wisdom (and not skill, as in Ion. See Tigerstedt, 1969, p. 33).


12. Plato, Apology (22c).

13. Plato, Apology (23a). Burnet explains this simply, but well: "The god must mean that all men alike were ignorant, but Socrates was wiser in this one respect, that he knew he was ignorant, while other men thought they were wise. Having discovered the meaning of the oracle, he now felt it his duty to champion the veracity of the god by devoting the rest of his life to the exposure of other men's ignorance". J. Burnet, The Socratic doctrine of the soul. In: Essays and Addresses, Books for Libraries Press, Freeport, NY, 1929, p. 138.

14. According to Liddell and Scott, an eiron is "a dissembler, one who says less than what he thinks" (p. 230). That is, an ironist - one who assumes a pose of ignorance, as does Socrates.


17. Vlastos states that many commentators have not noticed the repetition in Apology of what is said by Socrates in Ion. He compares "ενθουσακοντες ὅσπερ οἱ θεομαντες καὶ οἱ χρησμοδοι" in Apology (22c), as paralleling "the bracketing of the inspired poets with the seers and oracle-givers" in Ion (533e-534c). G. Vlastos, Socrates, Ironist and Moral Philosopher, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY, 1991, p. 288. See also Tigerstedt, 1969, p. 32, who appears to agree with Vlastos on this.

18. That others fare similarly when faced with poetry, is noted by Socrates in Protagoras: "the poets, whom one cannot even question on the sense of what they say" (347e). In Protagoras, as well as in Lesser Hippias (365d) and Laws (668c), Plato implies that because the meaning of poetry is variable, in that it is specific to the reader or listener, it is impossible for one to explain it unless, perhaps, the author is present to do so (this is also suggested in Phaedrus, 215d-e). However, in Apology (22c), we discover that even the author cannot explain his own words. Thus the poet's words, having been born of the irrationality that is poetic inspiration, appear equally opaque to all men, yet continue to affect them emotionally.

19. Plato, Republic (398a, 606e-8b).

20. As has been previously discussed, seers and prophets were traditionally seen as divinely possessed. See p. 26 of this thesis and n. 52 of chapter two, Introduction.

21. On the manner in which Socrates uses the association that he draws between the poets and the seers and prophets to criticize the poets, see pp. 27-9 of this thesis and nn. 64-67 of chapter two, Introduction.

22. E. Asmis, Plato on poetic creativity. In: R. Kraut (ed.) The Cambridge Companion to Plato,

24. When Socrates suggests that to be a good rhapsode, one must be capable of “apprehending (the poet’s thought and not merely learning off his words)” (530c), Ion agrees that he is, thus unwittingly setting in motion the trap which Socrates lays out for him in the third section of the dialogue, which proves that Ion, while being able to act *out the roles* of certain professions which are discussed in Homer, does not possess the skills and knowledge that are required in order to *practise* them. See pp. 40-1 of this thesis and nn. 97-9 of *Ion*.


27. Tigarstedt notes that in this passage Plato brings together in *Apology* that which he keeps “sharply separated” in *Ion* - the poets and the craftsmen. He believes that there is a similarity between the two groups, in that they both “wrongly believe that their art makes them wise, whereas their *σοφία* (*sophia*) is no true wisdom at all” (1969, p. 33n.98).


30. That these “most important matters” refer to the care of the soul, and that this can only be undertaken with self-knowledge, is argued by Brickhouse and Smith (1990, pp. 157-61).


37. Lamb, in his introduction to this dialogue, states that he does not doubt the authenticity of *Alcibiades I*. Although Gulley does not believe *Alcibiades I* can be confidently attributed to Plato, he nonetheless sees it as presenting “a Socrates whose views can be matched in virtually all respects with the views of the Socrates of Xenophon and of the early Plato dialogues”. Similarly, Burnet sees the dialogue as confirming what is said by Plato in *Apology*. Therefore, this dialogue would appear suitable to use in order to examine the meaning of Socrates’ “care of the soul” in *Apology*. Burnet, p. 139; N. Gulley, *The Philosophy of Socrates*, Macmillan, London, 1968, p. 198 and W. R. M. Lamb, *Introduction*. In: Plato (Trans. W. R. M. Lamb) *Alcibiades I*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1986, p. 97. See also Gulley, p. 198 and Guthrie, 1971a, pp. 150-3, for their analyses of this section (129c-130c) of *Alcibiades I*.

38. That Socrates believes in living a life which follows the good, is stated repeatedly throughout the dialogues. For example, in *Gorgias*, Socrates states to Callicles: “Let us therefore take as our guide the doctrine now disclosed, which indicates to us that this way of life is best - to live and die in the practice alike of justice and of all other virtue” (527c). See also *Crito* (47e-8b), *Gorgias* (526d-c), *Laws* (829a) and *Republic* (578c).


40. Plato, *Alcibiades I* (129a). See also Plato, *Apology* (38a), and n. 118 of *Ion*.


42. Plato, *Alcibiades I* (130a). In this dialogue, Socrates posits that the soul is ruler over the body.
While the soul is the user of the body, the body is that which is merely used. As in Phaedo (81b), the soul is described in Alcibiades I as the site of wisdom (σῶφις) (133b-c). Plato (Trans. H. N. Fowler) Phaedo, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1995. Therefore, in Alcibiades I, it can be assumed that as Socrates states elsewhere, reason should rule over the body. As has been previously discussed, the manner in which Plato describes the structure of the soul differs, throughout his dialogues. However, Plato's argument, that reason should rule over man (and the state, as in Republic and Laws) and that it is the only way in which man (and the state, as in Republic and Laws) can be good and just, remains consistent throughout the dialogues. See also p. 43 of this thesis and nn.108-113 of Ion.

43. Plato, Alcibiades I (130a).
44. Plato, Alcibiades I (130c).
45. As Oulley notes, this is also the conclusion presented by Socrates at the end of Phaedo. When his friends ask Socrates how he wishes to be buried, Socrates replies, "However you please, if you can catch me" (115c-d). Socrates thus indicates to his friends that his true self is actually the one who is now participating in this discussion with them, and not the one who will be presently laid out as a corpse (p. 198).
47. Grube, p. 233. McPherran states that in persuading the people of Athens to care for their souls Socrates is thus doing "philosophy". M. L. McPherran, The Religion of Socrates, The Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park, PA, 1999, p. 210n.74. Therefore, Socrates' "divine mission" can be equated with his earlier philosophical activity - although he now sees it as divinely commanded. See also Burnet, p. 138.
49. Plato, Apology (30a).
50. Plato, Alcibiades I (128d).
51. Plato, Apology (22c).
52. Plato, Apology (22d). See also Plato, Alcibiades I (118a-b).
53. Brickhouse and Smith, 1991, p. 142. See also p. 48 of this thesis and n.39, above. In Meno, Socrates similarly states to Meno, "Now do you suppose he would have attempted to inquire or learn what he thought he knew, when he did not know it, until he had been reduced to the perplexity of realizing that he did not know, and had felt a craving to know?" (84c). Guthrie notes that this is "(the essence of the Socratic method, the elenchus... to convince the interlocutor that, whereas he thought he knew something, in fact he does not". In realizing one's ignorance, one is then able to conduct a positive search for knowledge (1971a, p. 127. See also pp. 128-9). However, in Apology, as the poets remain unaware of their ignorance, even after Socrates' questioning, they would not see the need to search for knowledge.
55. Guthrie, 1995b, p. 89.
56. Gulley, p. 201.
57. See p. 44 of this thesis and nn.114-115 of Ion.

Meno
1. Plato, Meno (70a). As Berry notes, this last phrase of Meno's initial question, that if virtue is . neither acquired by practice nor can be taught, then it must be by "some other way" that it comes to
mankind, may allow the entry of Socrates’ final explanation - the introduction of theia moira (θεία μοίρα) (p. 58a.1).  
2. Oulley, pp. 75-6. As can be seen, “virtue” is but a poor translation of the Greek word arete. However, in using “virtue” as the translation, this study acknowledges the advice of Guthrie (and many others): “it is essential to remember that, if we use the English word “virtue”, it is only as a counter to stand for the Greek expression” (1971a, p. 130).  
8. This is also the concern of Protagoras. Furthermore, certain arguments, with regard to whether virtue can be taught, such as the failure of successful fathers to pass on virtue to their own sons, are common to both dialogues. See n.32, below. See also Black, pp. 2 3 and Guthrie, 1995b, p. 241.  
9. Meno’s description of the virtue of a man, that he be “competent to manage the affairs of his city” (Meno (71e). See also (73c), “the power of governing mankind”), is not unlike that which the Sophist Protagoras in the Platonic dialogue of the same name claims that he is able to teach his pupils - political virtue. “good judgement in his own affairs, showing how best to order his own home; and in the affairs of the city, showing that he may have the most influence on public affairs both in speech and in action” (Protagoras, 318e-19a).  
12. Plato, Meno (80a).  
15. Plato, Meno (81a-c).  
16. Guthrie, 1995b, p. 239.  
17. See n.91 of chapter two, Introduction. Tigerstedt believes, and other scholars concur, that Socrates’ revelation of the doctrine of recollection and his examination of the slave, “(i)n spite of its mostly dialogue form...is not a true διαλέξια (dialogue) or ἐλέγχος (elenchus), but a myth” (1969, pp. 39n.110, 40n.111). In that case, with regard to Guthrie’s statements, Plato uses poetic inspiration in Meno (81b-c) not only in the same manner as he does myth, but also to support the myth he is telling, and so his philosophical explanation.  
20. Black, p. 21. This refers to the “maieutic” or “midwife” method, which was the “name given by Socrates to his art of eliciting from others what was in their minds” (Liddell and Scott, p. 483). Like a
midwife, Socrates is barren (his declared ignorance), but he is nonetheless able to induce this information from others. Therefore, what *Meno* demonstrates is that Plato's fundamental conception of education consists "in drawing out, not putting in" (Grube, p. 124). See also Plato's (Trans. H. N. Fowler) *Theaetetus*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1996 (149a-51d), in which Socrates discusses his art of midwifery.

22. As Guthrie notes, at (88d), *phronesis*, usually translated as "wisdom" and "good sense", is substituted for *episteme* or "knowledge", seemingly without any change of meaning intended. *Sophia* (wisdom) and *episteme* are also used interchangeably (1995b, p. 265).
23. Or as Jaeger states, "(s)o this reason - *phronesis*, that tells us which are true and which are false goods, and which of them we ought to choose - must be the knowledge we are looking for" (1986, pp. 170-1). That is, knowledge of that which is good for one, and that which is bad for one, and how to choose between them.

24. Although Socrates does not prove this statement that good men are not good by nature (89a), it is accepted by *Meno* without any objection. See also (98c-d), where Socrates again makes this statement. As with (89a), this statement is not proven, and is again accepted by *Meno* without a murmur. Commentary on this statement is difficult to find. Tigerstedt only notes that it is not proven by Socrates at (98c-d) (1969, p. 38). Bluck similarly states that *Meno* is not given any reasons for "believing that neither *φρονησις* (*phronesis*) nor *ἀλήθης δόξα* (*aletheia doxa*) come "by nature", but clearly he is prepared to accept this assumption". However, Bluck does suggest that Socrates' grounds, "if he has any", might be similar to those stated in *Protagoras* (323c-d): that unlike physical characteristics which are due to nature or chance, good qualities in man are not innate, but are the result of care, practice and instruction (p. 418). Further, that the notion that good men are good by nature is absurd to Socrates is made manifest by his seemingly sarcastic suggestion that if there were such people, they would have to be kept isolated from all malevolent influences from an early age, to prevent their goodness from being tarnished by the association, so that they may, in maturity, prove useful to their country (89b). On (89b), see J. Klein, *A Commentary on Plato's Meno*, The University Of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, NC, 1965, p. 219.
25. Bluck, p. 25. See also pp. 27-9. That is, because the moral character of the Sophists is shown to be found wanting, this conclusion appears to allow the interlocutors to discard the Sophists' claim to teach virtue. See A. Flew, *A Dictionary of Philosophy*, St. Martin's Press, New York, NY, 1979, p. 5, on the *ad hominem* argument. Indeed, even the manner in which Socrates introduces the Sophists into the conversation appears to be disparaging, in that it emphasizes how the Sophists are paid for their services, a practise which he sharply criticizes elsewhere (*Gorgias*, 520c-e and *Protagoras* 313c-14b).
26. Many critics have commented on the sudden and unexpected nature of Anytus' appearance (and his equally sudden disappearance) at this point in the dialogue. See, for example, Klein, pp. 225n.34, 233, and Tigerstedt, 1969, p. 42n.122. Indeed, Anytus' entry appears somewhat like the *deus ex machina* employed in tragedy. Klein also terms his appearance "seemingly god-like" (p. 253). See also n.70, below. In *Apology*, Anytus is one of Socrates' three accusers at his trial.
28. The Latin term *kalón kagathon* (pl. *kaloi kagathoi*), "the beautiful and the good" or "the noble and the good" (Liddell and Scott, p. 397), was usually reserved for men of aristocratic blood. Membership in this status group implied that one was well-born, and so had "inherited certain desirable traits - especially the qualities of being noble and good (agathos) and physically beautiful (*kalos*)," and that one "shared a common value system" with one's fellow members. J. Ober, *Mass and Elite in Democratic
Athens. Rhetoric, Ideology, and the Power of the People, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 1980, pp. 251-2. Such individuals were usually politically prominent in society. If one were political or influential in society it usually indicated that one had the necessary wealth and leisure to pursue a life of civic service. Since it was believed that these individuals "acted differently from ordinary men" (Ober, p. 251), in that the legacy of their birth was a more moral character than others, Anytus would automatically assume that anyone of them would be more than capable of teaching Meno virtue. As Anytus notes, Meno will learn, simply "if he will do as he is bid" (92e).

29. Plato, Meno (92e).
30. Plato, Meno (92b).
31. Plato, Meno (93b).
32. Plato, Meno (93a-94c). That outstanding men fail to pass on their virtue to their sons, is also an argument put forth by Socrates in Protagoras (319c-20b). See Bluck, pp. 26-7. This argument may be intended as ironic in both Meno and Protagoras, since as we know from Gorgias, Socrates did not believe the statesmen to be particularly virtuous. Indeed, as he states in that dialogue, if statesmen were truly good, then their sole concern would be to make their citizens as good as possible - and this, he believes, has not yet been done. See n.65, below.
33. Throughout this section of the dialogue (96a-9a), Socrates uses "right opinion" (ορθής δόξα) synonymously with "true opinion" (ἀληθὴς δόξα). He first mentions "true opinion" at (85c). Klein, p. 244n.8.
34. Plato, Meno (97d). The characteristics of knowledge and true opinion are discussed in several of the Platonic dialogues. See, for example, Timaeus (51c), Republic (476d-78d, 506b-c, 534a), Phaedrus (247c-48b, 270c) and Theaetetus (187bff).
35. Bluck, p. 32.
36. Plato, Meno (98a). As Socrates states, this transition from true opinion to knowledge - what he terms "fastening" - is the process of recollection. In renewing one's prenatal experiences, one is again personally acquainted with the truth. The information thus gained in this process is certain and abiding, and so knowledge. Bluck, p. 33.
37. Plato, Protagoras (314b). This passage (313a-14b) is a criticism of the Sophists' method of teaching. Though one can buy food and drink and then carry it away from the place of purchase in a "vessel" (σκύβα) (314b). This is sometimes translated as "parcel"), one cannot buy knowledge in such a manner. The Sophists, because they charge fees for their services, are like merchants, in that they do not know or care if their wares are good or bad for the soul, but praise all alike, and are willing to sell to whoever wants them.
38. Plato, Republic (479d).
40. As in Meno, knowledge in Plato's Timaeus is "always in company with true reasoning". It is also "immoveable by persuasion". Opinion, on the other hand, is "irrational" and "alterable by persuasion". Further, while "every man" partakes of opinion, "only the gods and but a small class of men" partake of knowledge (51e).
41. That good men are not good by nature, see n.34, above.
42. Bluck includes ἐνθυσιώτης (99c) in his translation of Meno. He explains that it is intended to "prepare the way for the description of the politicians as ἱεροτευν", and for Socrates' suggestion that they are inspired and possessed when successful (see 99d) (p. 427). Tigerstedt also follows Bluck's use (1969, p. 38n.107). It is not included in the W. R. M. Lamb translation of Meno used elsewhere in this
study.


44. On true opinion, see p. 53 of this thesis and nn. 33-40, above.

45. On soothsayers and diviners as inspired and possessed, see pp. 29-31 of this thesis and associated nn. of chapter two, *Introduction*.


50. See n. 8 of *Apology*, for a discussion of *theia moira* or divine dispensation.

51. Tigerstedt agrees, stating that the conclusion of the dialogue, that virtue is imparted by divine dispensation, “is in reality no conclusion at all but a(n) hidden *aporia*” (1969, p. 44). See also Berry, p. 59.

52. Bluck, p. 43.


54. Plato, *Meno* (93b). As Snell notes, “(a)rete, is “ability” and “achievement”, characteristics which are expected of a “good” man, an “able” man, an *aner agathos*” (p. 158).

55. In *Gorgias*, Socrates states that a statesman’s duty should be to make the citizens “as good as possible” (515c), thus teaching them the importance of caring for their souls (517d-18a). This doctrine indicates that the best way of life is “to live and die in the practice alike of justice and of all other virtue” (527e). However, he believes that statesmen, unlike himself, do not try to fulfil this duty (515b-19c). Because of this, Socrates states that he is one of the few men, if not the only man, in Athens “who attempts the true art of statesmanship, and the only man of the present time who manages affairs of state” (521d). Therefore, although the aim of the statesmen should be to teach virtue, they do not - the same conclusion as is reached in *Meno*. See also n. 32, above.

56. Bluck, p. 43. Guthrie agrees with Bluck’s suggestion that Plato believes that virtue is knowledge and so can be taught: “if virtue cannot be taught in the sense of being handed over like a parcel (see n. 42, above), that is for Plato no indication that is not knowledge” (1995b, p. 261). See also Jaeger, 1986a, p. 172. Guthrie also agrees with Bluck that in founding a school “for the education of statesmen”, Plato is attempting to answer the question posed in both *Meno* and *Protagoras* on the possibility of teaching virtue to others (1995b, p. 265).

57. *Apology* (22e2-3) is a repetition, word-for-word, of *Meno* (99c4-6). See Bluck, pp. 424, 427, Tigerstedt, 1969, pp. 40-1 and Guthrie, 1995b, p. 262. As Guthrie states, when “whole sentences are repeated, the resemblance cannot be possibly accidental” (1995b, p. 262).

58. See p. 2 of this thesis and nn. 11-14 of the *Introduction*.

59. Tigerstedt, 1969, p. 43.

60. Bluck, p. 426.

61. In Plato’s time, poets were traditionally viewed as knowledgeable. See pp. 23-4 of this thesis, and nn. 11-18 of chapter two, *Introduction*. On Plato’s use of a traditionally held belief - that the poets were inspired - to introduce and support a new contention - that the poets were not unlike seers and prophets in that they were possessed and so without knowledge, see pp. 26-9 of this thesis and nn. 50-59 (especially nn. 50-7) of chapter two, *Introduction*.


63. Tigerstedt, 1969, p. 45.
64. See n. 38, above.

65. Plato, *Meno* (93b-4c). Given what Socrates says of statesmen in *Gorgias* (especially 515d-16d), it is unlikely that Plato truly considered the statesmen discussed in *Meno* to be “good”. See n. 32, above.

66. See also Protagoras’ argument on whether good men can pass their virtue to their sons, in Plato, *Protagoras* (326c-8d).


70. Socrates similarly challenges the Sophists indirectly, by subtly encouraging Anytus’ criticism. Indeed, that Socrates’ manipulations are subtle is shown by Tijerstedt’s comment concerning Anytus’ attack on the Sophists: that it “is so ignorant and so prejudiced that it forces Socrates to adopt the strange role of their defender” (my italics) (1969, p. 43). See also n. 26, above, on the opportune nature of Anytus’ appearance in the dialogue. On Anytus’ criticism of the Sophists, see *Meno* (89c-94c) and pp. 52-3 of this thesis.


73. Plato, *Meno* (95e-6a). Some critics argue that Socrates does not fairly examine Theognis’ poetry. It appears that Socrates minimizes the interval between the two passages, and disregards the difference between their contexts. This allows the two passages to be seen as contradictory. See Verdenius, 1958, p. 298 and Bluck, pp. 28-9, 395-6. The Sophists, in that they saw themselves as continuing the educational tradition of the poets (see p. 3 of this thesis and nn. 22-4 of the Introduction), often “included in their art of logos the exposition and criticism of poetry” (Guthrie, 1971b, p. 45). As Bluck notes, the Sophists would sometimes challenge the validity of the advice given in a poem by attempting to prove that the poet had contradicted himself. Simonides’ poem in *Protagoras* (338e-47a) is treated in just such a manner. However, in *Meno*, Socrates, in attempting to prove whether or not virtue can be taught, appears to be emulating this Sophistic method of poetic analysis in his treatment of Theognis’ poem (p. 29). Bluck also suggests that in his discussion of the poet, Socrates is continuing the *ad hominem* form of argumentation that he had used earlier on the Sophists (p. 28) (see n. 28, above).

74. In *Meno*, Socrates does not directly criticize either the Sophists or the poets. With subtle prompting by Socrates, the Sophists are criticized by Anytus, and the poets are criticized based on Socrates’ misleading analysis of Theognis’ poetry. Socrates’ criticism of the statement is equally indirect in that it is implied, not stated, in his discussion with *Meno*. Could it be that this indirect method is also part of Socrates’ maeutic approach, in that by not criticizing them directly, as he does elsewhere, he is drawing out (as opposed to “putting in”) Meno’s own “recollection” as to whether such people are able to teach virtue? See n. 70, above.


76. Of the Platonic dialogues which deal with poetic inspiration, the poets are said to be without knowledge in *Apology* (22c), *Meno* (99d) and *Laws* (719c). In *Ion*, they are said to be without skill (*τεχνη*) (533c), and in *Phaedrus*, they are said to be mad (245a). Further, in *Phaedrus*, to be a good poet, one need not have skill (*τεχνη*), but need only be inspired. That the poets are inspired and so possessed, or are mad, implies that they are without reason, and so lacking in knowledge. Of the dialogues which deal with poetic *mimesis*, poets are said to be without knowledge in both *Republic* (throughout Book X) and *Laws* (719c).


82. Bluck, p. 38. See also pp. 42, 434.
83. Guthrie, 1995b, p. 263.
85. Plato, *Meno* (92c). Cf. (99d): “Then we shall be right in calling those divine (θειοις) of whom we spoke just now as soothsayers and prophets (μαντεῖς) and all of the poetic turn; and especially we can say of the statesmen that they are divine”.
86. Tigerstedt notes that by this instance, “Anyus is put on the same level with other “divine” politicians, of whom he believes himself to be one” (1969, p. 43). See also Plato, *Meno* (95a).
88. Plato, *Meno* (97d-8a). See also n.36, above.
89. See p. 6 of this thesis and nn.53-8 of the *Introduction*. See also Bluck, p. 429.
90. Tigerstedt, 1969, p. 43. See also p. 45. Berry (p. 61) and Bluck (pp. 38-9, 425-6, 434-5) also discuss this issue. Both Berry (p. 61n.1) and Bluck (p. 39n.1) refer to, among others, Wilamowitz and Raeder, who do not believe that Plato is being ironic when he discusses political inspiration.
91. Bluck, p. 434. See also nn.33, 65, above, on Plato’s treatment of the statesmen in *Gorgias*.
92. Bluck believes that in insisting on the poets’ inspiration, Plato is stressing their “lack of knowledge, and their inability to “give an account” of the things they say”. Further, with regard to the statesmen’s inspiration, Plato is equally stressing their lack of knowledge (author’s italics) (p. 434).
93. Sallis, p. 102.
94. See Guthrie, 1993a, p. 239. See also n.91 of chapter two, *Introduction*.
95. See p. 6 of this thesis and nn.33-38 of the *Introduction*.
96. See pp. 23-4 of this thesis and nn.11-21 of chapter two, *Introduction*, as well as n.19, above. See also Bluck, p. 429.
97. On the role of the poets and poetry in the Athenian *polis* with regard to private and public virtue, see p. 4 of this thesis and nn.34-8.
98. In *Phaedrus* (25c7-e8b), Socrates explains to Phaedrus that statesmen not only consider themselves to be authors, but are also keen to advertise the fact by their willingness to sign their names to the proposals they draft.
99. Jaeger, 1986a, p. 157. This issue is also discussed on p. 4 of this thesis and n.34 of the *Introduction*.
100. Plato, *Gorgias* (502e, 503a, b, d, 504d-e, 515c).
104. That statesmen fail in caring for the souls of the people, see Plato, *Gorgias* (503a-c, 515c-19d). See also n.32, above.
106. That poets fail in caring for the souls of the people, see Plato, *Gorgias* (501-2c, 503a-b). See also n.32, above.
108. That the statesmen believe that they know that which they do not, see Plato, *Apology* (21d). That
this is also true for the poets, see Apology (22c). See also pp. 45-7 of this thesis and nn.7-12, 26-30 of Apology.

109. Plato, Protagoras (319b-d).
111. Barker, p. 173.
113. See p. 47 of this thesis.
114. Plato, Meno (96b).
115. See p. 47 of this thesis and nn.55-7 of Apology.
116. See p. 59 of this thesis and nn.104-7, above.

Phaedrus

2. See also Janaway, p. 165.
4. Lysias was an Attic orator and speechwriter (λογογραφός) of some renown (circa 459-380 B.C.E.). His speeches demonstrate a simplicity, clarity and lack of emotionality, that is coupled with a mastery of the vernacular. This “purity” of style led to his being regarded by later rhetoricians as the pre-eminent representative of “Atticism”, as opposed to the florid “Asiatic” school”. S. C. Todd, Lysias. In: S. Hornblower and A. Spawforth (eds.) The Oxford Classical Dictionary, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1996, p. 902. See also Hackforth, pp. 16-18. Nussbaum believes that these aspects of the orator’s style are captured by Plato in the Lysian speech (p. 209).
5. According to Jaeger, love was a popular theme for exercises in the rhetorical schools, and was considered an acceptable subject for oratory. It is also the theme of the speeches in Plato’s Symposium.
6. Plato, Phaedrus (231c).
7. Plato. Phaedrus (234d). This term, συνβοχυσμοι, literally indicates that Socrates joins Phaedrus in a “Bacchic frenzy” (συν = together, along with, in company with; βοχυσμοι = Bacchic frenzy). Liddell & Scott, pp. 765; 145. That is, to act like the celebrants of the mysteries of the god Bacchus (a later name of Dionysus), in a wild and wanton manner, as depicted in Euripides’ Bacchae.
8. Plato, Phaedrus (235a).
9. Plato, Phaedrus (235b). Although he does not initially distinguish them by name, the “wise men and women of old who have spoken and written about these matters” to which Socrates refers are poets such as Sappho and “wise” (σοφος) Anacreon (235c). As elsewhere in the dialogues, Socrates relies on the reputation of the poets as wise to lend support to his arguments. See n.33, below. In Lysis, Socrates also refers to the poets in such a manner: “be guided by the poets; for they are our fathers, as it were, and conductors in wisdom (σοφος)”. Plato (Trans. W. R. M. Lamb) Lysis, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1996 (213c-14a). See also Phaedrus (243a). Similarly, in Meno (81a-b), Socrates uses the traditional belief in the divine inspiration of the poets to give credence to his tale of the immortality of the soul. See the discussion on this point on p. 51 and nn.12-17 of Meno.
11. Hackforth, p. 25.
13. Hackforth, p. 37. Indeed, Socrates later states that “the former discourse (i.e., the first speech by Socrates) was by Phaedrus” (244a).

14. Hackforth, p. 34n.3. See Phaedrus’ words at (236c). Socrates also refers to the fact that Phaedrus has a reputation for compelling others to speak (242b).

15. Plato, Phaedrus (236d). See also Socrates’ words to Phaedrus at (236b).

16. Hackforth, pp. 35n.4, 37. It is later shown that Socrates finds the topic of the speech he is now about to make distasteful, when he states that he feels shame for having spoken ill of Lysias (243b).

17. See pp. 23-4 of this thesis and nn.11-20 of chapter two, Introduction on the function of the poets’ invocations to the Muses. Socrates also invokes the Muses (and Mnemosyne) in Euthydemus (275d), to aid him in his narration.


19. Plato, Phaedrus (238c, 238d, 241c).

20. Plato, Phaedrus (237c). Although this criticism appears to be aimed at Lysias’ speech, given that “(t)he interest of Socrates in definitions is one of the best-attested facts about him” (Guthrie, 1971a, p. 110), and how the importance of defining one’s terms is stressed throughout the Platonic dialogues in which Socrates is portrayed, it is not surprising that Socrates would begin a speech in such a fashion. Along with induction, this “interest” is seen as the Socratic contribution to philosophical method (Aristotle, Metaphysics 1078b27. See also Guthrie, 1971a, p. 105). Later in Phaedrus, when discussing the principles of “true” rhetoric, Socrates makes a similar argument on the importance of establishing the definitions of terms (263a-b). See Hackforth, p. 130 and Guthrie, 1971b, p. 165, on this passage.


23. As Nussbaum notes, “(a)ss with food and drink, it (love) is simply assumed to be an altogether bad state” (p. 206), in that it is an excess of passion, and so is divorced from reason.

24. In Symposium (195a), in his speech on love, Agathon states that “it is meet that we praise him (love) first for what he is and then for what he gives” (195a). That is, Agathon determines that the nature of love must first be defined, before discussing its effects. Socrates later praises Agathon for following this procedure (199c).


26. Pellis, p. 50. Socrates states at the end of his second speech that he was “forced to employ” poetical expressions on account of Phaedrus’ preference for such language (257a). See also Hackforth, p. 35 and J. V. Curran, The rhetorical nature of Plato’s Phaedrus, Philosophy and Rhetoric, 19, 1986, p. 69.

27. As Hackforth notes (p. 53), Socrates explains, seemingly without irony, that it is unnecessary to “make a long speech”, since it is just the complementary account of what has already been said: that is, that the “non-lover possesses all the disadvantages that are opposed to the disadvantages we found in the lover” (241e). See also Tigerstedt, 1969, p. 51n.151.

28. Socrates’ daimon, his “spiritual guide”, is referred to by Plato in the dialogues as a private voice which prevents Socrates from doing certain things he is about to do, such as entering into political life (Apology 31d, Republic 496c), but never urges him to act (Apology 31d). See also Guthrie, 1971a, pp. 82-5. However, Xenophon accords it a positive role as well as a negative one. Xenophon (Trans. H. Tredennick and R. Waterfield) Memoirs of Socrates. In: Conversations of Socrates, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1990 (IV. 8. 1). However, as Hackforth notes, “(n)owhere do we find
Socrates inspired by the Sign, in the sense of being possessed by the deity from whom it emanated" (p. 54).

29. Eros is the son of Aphrodite (242d), and so a deity. However, in Symposium, Plato portrays Eros not as a god, but as a δείκτης μεγάς - a great spirit - a being intermediate between the gods and man (202e).
30. Plato, Republic (379b-80c).
31. Hackforth, p. 54.
32. Plato, Phaedrus (243a).
33. See n.5, above. See also Tigerstedt on this passage (1969, p. 51n.159).
34. Plato, Phaedrus (244a).
35. The three kinds of divine madness discussed by Socrates at this point are mantic or prophetic, telestic and poetic. According to Griswold, telestic madness is “fundamentally medicinal or psychiatric, curing ancient sicknesses through catharses and rites” (p. 76). These sicknesses arise from an inherited curse (Hackforth, p. 60).
36. ἐκ = to denote change from one condition to another (Liddell and Scott, p. 234). βακχευώνος = Bacchic frenzy (Liddell and Scott, p. 145). Therefore, the term used here by Plato, ἀπὸ βακχευωνος, appears to emphasize the transformation of the poet from a state of normalcy - a “gentle and pure soul” - to the madness and possession that he claims is poetic inspiration.
37. Plato, Phaedrus (245a).
38. See n.36, above.
39. See p. 2 of this thesis and nn.11-14 of the Introduction.
40. That poets were traditionally regarded as knowledgeable, see pp. 23-4 of this thesis and nn.11-28 of chapter two, Introduction. That Plato introduced a new notion, that poets were possessed and so mad, see pp. 26-9 of this thesis and nn.60-69 (especially nn.86-7) of chapter two, Introduction.
41. See Liddell and Scott, p. 446.
42. D. A. White, Rhetoric and Reality in Plato's Phaedrus, State University of New York Press, Albany, NY, 1993, p. 71. White believes that both dialogues deal with the same subject matter and so are compatible. Hackforth agrees (p. 62). Indeed, Hackforth implies that the poetry referred to in Phaedrus (245a) must be of the “good mimesis” form as suggested by Tate (p. 84). That is, as discussed in Republic (607a). On “good mimesis”, see J. Tate, Imitation in Plato’s Republic, Classical Quarterly, 22, 1928, pp. 16ff.
43. Tigerstedt refers to commentators such as Hackforth, Wilamowitz and Cornford, who see Phaedrus (245a) as Plato’s “rehabilitation” of poetry (1969, p. 50 and nn.144, 145). Janaway, in noting how different Phaedrus seems to be from Republic, Book X, concurs: “no wonder that writers are prone to announce the Phaedrus in particular as Plato’s recantation, his true defence of what he had previously attacked” (p. 161n.17).
44. That poetry disrupts the rule of reason in the soul, see pp. 43-4, 57, 59-60 of this thesis and nn.105-15 of Ion, pp. 49-50, nn.55-67 of Apology and nn.100-16 of Meno.
45. Plato, Republic (607a).
46. Plato, Republic (607d).
47. Plato, Republic (607a). Simonides, a poet, is also said by Socrates to be a “wise and inspired man” (σοφός γριφός καὶ ἀσύνηκτος ἀνήρ) in Republic (331e). Poets are also said by the multitude to know all things divine (θεῖα) (598e). See also Ion (534a, b) and pp. 7-8 of this thesis and nn.67-9 of the Introduction, and p. 36 of this thesis and nn.50-8 of Ion, which discuss how ancient Greek poetry often
used symbolism which incorporated references to honey and bees to indicate the sweetness of the inspired poet's works and the pleasure to be gained from them.

48. Janaway, p. 162. On Homer as inspired in Plato's Ion: "For all good epic poets utter all those fine poems not from art, but as inspired and possessed" (my italics) (533e). Similarly, "it is not by art that they (poets) compose and utter so many fine things about the deeds of men...but by a divine dispensation, each is able only to compose that to which the Muse has stirred him, this man dithyrambs...another epic" (my italics) (534c).

49. Lyric poetry is also banished from the Ideal State. See Plato, Republic (607a).


52. Plato, Laws (817d). These poets are to be told that only if their work can match those of the lawgivers will they be granted a chorus; otherwise, the lawgivers will never allow them to perform their works.

53. Plato, Phaedrus (245a).


56. Janaway, p. 16.

57. For an earlier discussion on skill, see pp. 24, 32-3, 37 of this thesis and nn.30-2 of chapter two, Introduction and 14.10 of Ion.


59. That Ion is a successful rhapsode, see p. 31 of this thesis and n.3 of Ion.

60. Plato, Ion (534d). See also p. 37 of this thesis.

61. Plato, Meno (99c-d).

62. Murray, 1992, p. 36. Similarly, in Meno, Socrates states that the statesmen who "succeed in many a great deed and word" can be called "divine", and yet they are without "understanding" (99c).

63. Plato, Phaedrus (245a).

64. Janaway supports this reading of Plato's view of poetry and its success: "the "rightness" aimed for in poetry and music, and the criterion of success, is that of pleasing an audience" C. Janaway. Arts and crafts in Plato and Collingwood, Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism, 50, 1992, p. 52. Irwin also agrees: "tragedy-writing provides no norms for a good play beyond the pleasure of the audience" (cited in Janaway, 1992, p. 52).

65. This is determined by Socrates and Polus in Plato's Gorgias (468c). It is then later reasserted by Socrates and agreed to by Callicles at (499c-500a).

66. See pp. 40, 44 of this thesis and mm.95-6, 116 of Ion.

67. Plato, Gorgias (460a). But see also Irwin, 1977, p. 127, for arguments against this position.

68. That this was Socrates' belief is affirmed by Aristotle in his Eudemian Ethics:

"Socrates believed that knowledge of virtue was the final aim, and he inquired what justice is, and what courage and every other kind of virtue. This was reasonable in view of his conviction that all virtues were sciences, so that to know justice was at the same time to be just: for as soon as we
have learned geometry and architecture we are architects and geometricians.

For this reason he inquired what virtue is..." (my italics) (I. v. 1216b2ff)

(quoted in Guthrie, 1971a, p. 131).

But see also Irwin, 1977, p. 127, for a possible Aristotelian objection.

69. Tribe is defined by Liddell and Scott as "practice, as opposed to theory...routine" (p. 817). This definition conforms to Socrates’ use of the term in Gorgias. See n.70, below.

70. Janaway, 1992, p. 48. Poetry fits this definition of a “knack” in that it is not a skill, and hence has no account by which it operates, but is only that which is acquired by routine. For Socrates’ discussion of this, see Plato, Gorgias (462c, d. 463b, 500b, 501a).

71. Plato, Gorgias (502e).

72. Plato, Ion (535e). See pp. 38, 46 of this thesis and n.73 of Ion. See also Plato, Gorgias. This is also true of the rhetor, who as Socrates notes, gratifies his audience’s desires, and in so doing, sacrifices the public interest to his own personal success (502e). This criticism can also be regarded as applicable to the poet, for as Socrates states, poetry is only rhetoric with melody, rhythm and metre removed (502c), and, after all, the tragic poets do use rhetoric in the theatres (502d).

73. See p. 66 of this thesis and n.67, above.

74. Plato, Phaedrus (245a).


76. Tigerstedt, 1969, p. 50. See also p. 51.

77. Hackforth, p. 61.

78. Hackforth, p. 61. Guthrie appears to agree by his observation that in Phaedrus it seems that “as the influence of Socrates recedes, Plato is giving more rein to the poetic side of his nature” (1995b, p. 418).


80. Hackforth, p. 61.

81. Hackforth, p. 62. See Plato, Phaedrus (245a) and Republic (607a). See also pp. 63-4 of this thesis and nn.38-39, above.

82. Janaway is not being strictly accurate here (1995, p. 162). Although Plato does not criticize poetry in Republic as inspired, as he does in Ion, Apology, Meno, Phaedrus and Laws, he does indicate, a couple of times, that the poets are inspired. He also implies, by his use of words, that they are. For example, Socrates states that Simonides, a poet is “inspired” (331e). He later states that some people claim that poets know “all things divine” (861a) (598e). Furthermore, as has been mentioned previously, there appear to be allusions to poetic inspiration in this dialogue (see 398a, b, 607a, c). They are not unlike the words that Plato uses to describe the inspired poet in Ion (534a). Laws also contains such references. See Plato, Laws (802c, d). For discussion of this, see also pp. 7, 36, 64 of this thesis and n.68 of Introduction, nn.34-6 of Ion and n.47, above.


84. See n.83, above.

85. See, for example, Plato, Republic (387b, 398a, 606a, 607e). See also p. 5 of this thesis and n.46 of the Introduction.

86. Plato, Republic (602c-5c).

87. Plato, Republic (604e-5a).

88. For earlier discussions of this, see pp. 43-44, 49-50 of this thesis and nn.105-15 of Ion and nn.55-7 of Apology.
Plato, *Republic* (387b). See also (606e).


Plato, *Republic* (607c).

As Thompson notes, “(b)ecause Plato mistrusts the unrestrained emotionality and the moral irresponsibility that he believes is inherent in inspiration, he dismisses the inspired poet from the ideal state”. C. A. Thompson, *Rhetorical madness: An ideal in the* Phaedrus, *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 55, 1969, p. 360.

Janaway, 1995, p. 163.


See p. 43 of this thesis and n.113 of *Ion* for Socrates’ references to this maxim elsewhere in the Platonic dialogues.


See p. 43 of this thesis and n.113 of *Ion*.

See Socrates’ argument concerning this in Plato’s *Phaedo* (80d 3e - esp. 81a, 82c, d).


As Dorter notes, on reaching their destination, Socrates proceeds to examine his environment with each of his senses - sight (the beauty, height, width and shade of trees, the images and statues), hearing (the sound of the grasshoppers), smell (the scent of the agnus tree) and touch (the coldness of the stream against his feet) (*Phaedrus* 230b-c). Dorter adds that while Socrates does not taste anything, “it is his sense of taste that brought him there: his taste for speeches made him follow Phaedrus as hungry flocks who hold fruit before them” (230d). K. Dorter, Imagery and philosophy in Plato’s *Phaedrus*, *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 9, 1971, p. 280.


See also pp. 61-2 of this thesis and nn.10-12, 25-6, above, concerning Phaedrus’ preference for rhetoric and its use of emotional language over reasoned argument.

Plato, *Phaedrus* (234d). See also n.7, above.

Plato, *Ion* (533e-4d) and *Phaedrus* (245a).

See p. 37 of this thesis and nn.70-3 of *Ion*.


See n.19, above.

Plato, *Phaedrus* (228c, 234d, 235c-d).


Plato, *Phaedrus* (235c).

Plato, *Phaedrus* (235d). See also n.114, below.

Plato, *Laws* (719c). See also Yates, who interprets this (235d) in a similar fashion. She states that “(t)his reminds us of nothing more than Ion being the empty vessel being filled by the divine presence of Homer (p. 57).

See p. 25 of this thesis and n.48 of chapter two, *Introduction* on the use of water imagery in Greek poetry.

Plato, *Phaedrus* (238d). *Numpholeptos* = (to be) caught by nymphs. Liddell and Scott, p. 537. In
the classical period, *nympholeptos* was seen to be a form of possession, in which the sufferer, a *nympholept*, "may act strangely and display a kind of a mania, but was neither regarded as simply "crazy" nor dismissed as incapable of functioning within ancient Greek society". W. R. Connor, Seized by the nymphs: Nympholepsy and symbolic expression in classical Greece, *Classical Antiquity*, 7, 1988, pp. 156-7.


119. Connor, p. 158n.11.

120. Yates, p. 57.

121. Plato, *Phaedrus* (235b, 237a, 238d, 242a, d).


123. Tige; stedt agrees. As he observes, "(i) i cannot be by mere chance that Socrates so often stresses the abnormal, "inspired" mental state in which he is during the first part of the dialogue. Clearly, he does not want to be wholly responsible for what he is saying" (1969, p. 51 n.148, 149).


125. See p. 61 of this thesis and n.18, above.


128. On the role of poetry in ancient Greek society as a moral and civic arbiter, see pp. 2-4 of this thesis and nn.16-18 of the Introduction.

129. On inspiration as the communication of emotions, see pp. 437, 40, 43, 70 of this thesis and nn.70-1, 93 of Ion.

130. See p. 67 of this thesis and nn.76-8, above.

131. Tige; stedt, 1969, p. 54.


133. Tige; stedt, 1969, pp. 54-5.

134. Plato, *Phaedrus* (248e). Therefore, in *Phaedrus*, the poet is thus referred to as both inspired (245a) and mimetic (248e). However, unlike *Laws* (719c), this is not claimed within the same passage. These are the only two dialogues in which both poetic inspiration and poetic *mimesis* are mentioned. However, it has been previously argued that in *Republic* the poet is shown to be not only mimetic, but also inspired. See pp. 64, 68 of this thesis and nn.47, 82, above.


137. It has been previously argued in this thesis that in these dialogues - Ion, Apology, Meno and Laws - Plato is using the known and culturally accepted connection between these two groups as a base from which to launch new criticisms of the poets - ones that are without historical foundation. That is, that because the poets, like the seers and prophets, are inspired, they are also possessed and so mad. See pp. 25-9 of this thesis and nn.45, 47 (esp. nn.45-7) of chapter two, Introduction.


140. Hamilton argues that Plato’s comparison of the nature of the soul to a winged charioteer and his team of two horses in *Phaedrus* (246a-8e, 253c-4e), cannot properly be understood unless one first knows the psychological scheme of *Republic* IV, where the three elements which comprise the soul - reason, spirit and appetite - are distinguished (434d-41c) (1973, p. 50). See also Lee, pp. 183-5. Ferrari also states that it is commonly agreed that the allegory of the charioteer and his horses has “an approximate correspondence to the reasoning, spirited and appetitive parts of the soul familiar from the analysis in *Republic*”. G. R. F. Ferrari, *Listening to the Cicadas. A Study of Plato’s Phaedrus*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1987, pp. 185.

141. See pp. 43 of this thesis and nn.108-13 of *Ion*.

142. See pp. 65-7 of this thesis and nn.61-75, above. See also p. 44 of this thesis and nn.118 of *Ion*.


144. Plato, *Apology* (21c). In *Republic*, Socrates states to his companions that the claims of the tragedians and their chief, Homer, should be examined: “since some people tell us that these poet know all the arts (τεχνῶν) and all things human pertaining to virtue (καρδίαν) and vice (κοσμίαν) and all things divine (θείαν)...do poets really know the things about which the multitude fancy they speak well?” (598e-9a). Therefore, because the poets were thought, by the multitude, to know these things and speak well on them, they must have had a reputation for wisdom. That the poets were considered wise, see pp. 2-4, 11 and, to a lesser extent, 23-4, nn.19-38, 101 of the Introduction and nn.8, 21 of chapter two, *Introduction*.

145. Plato, *Apology* (22c). See also pp. 45, 47 of this thesis and nn.28-30 of *Apology*.

146. See p. 41 of this thesis and n.97 of *Ion*.

147. See pp. 32-3 of this thesis and nn.14-19 of *Ion*, for a discussion of what constitutes a *techne* according to Socratic standards.


151. On *Phaedrus’* preferences for style over content with regards to discourse, see pp. 61, 62 of this thesis and nn.10-17, 26, above.

152. That poetry is successful and so “good” based on its ability to induce emotionality in the audience, is argued on pp. 65-7 of this thesis and nn.64-71, above.

153. Plato, *Phaedrus* (261a). That is, any form of expression, written or spoken, whether in prose or in verse, that attempts to influence men’s souls by means of words. See also p. 39 of this thesis and nn.81-2 of *Ion*.

154. Plato, *Phaedrus* (257c-8d). As Socrates states, there is nothing shameful about the writing of speeches. What is shameful is in “speaking and writing badly, instead of as one should” (258d) (Hackforth translation). That is, one should speak or write with the correct end in sight - that of the truth or the good. See also p. 39 of this thesis and n.80 of *Ion*.

155. This is argued by Socrates in *Gorgias* (502b-3a). As has been noted (n.72, above), the criticism made by Socrates in *Gorgias* concerning the rhetor is also applicable to the poet. See also p. 16 of this thesis and n.141 of the *Introduction*.

156. Plato, *Phaedrus* (274b). This is from the Hamilton translation of *Phaedrus*. 
157. See, for example, Socrates' hedonistic arguments concerning poetry and rhetoric in *Gorgias* (499e-503bff - especially 499e).

158. As Hackforth notes, since the Greek word for painting (ζωγραφία) means "a drawing of living beings", it is would seem to be an appropriate comparison for Plato to make with writing (γραφή) (p.158n.4).


160. Plato, *Phaedrus* (275e). Socrates' view in *Phaedrus* is reinforced by Plato in Epistle VII. As he states,

> "if I had thought that these subjects ought to be fully stated in writing or in speech to the public...but were I to undertake this task it would not, as I think, prove a good thing for men, save for some few who are able to discover the truth themselves...for as to the rest, some it would most unreasonably fill with a mistaken contempt, and others with an overweening and empty aspiration, as though they had learned sublime mysteries" (341d-e).


162. Plato, *Lysis*. A similar comment is made by Socrates to Lysis concerning the poets: "are they right in what they say? Perhaps in one half of it, perhaps even in the whole; *only we do not comprehend it*" (my italics) (275b).

163. Plato, *Protagoras* (347c-8a). This criticism of poetry is also related to Socrates' earlier statement concerning rhetoric, in which he states that if one asks any of the popular rhetors a question, "they are just like books, incapable of answering you or putting a question of their own" (329a). As with poetry and the written word, the rhetors are unable to defend themselves. Their speeches are set pieces - demonstrations (an exhibition of Sophistic rhetorical technique was referred to as an *epeidexis*) - and so inflexible. They are designed to impress an audience, and not for use in dialectic. At the end of this diatribe, Socrates returns to his original point: they should set the poets aside, and return to philosophical discussion, which is the only way of coming to the truth of matters. It should also be noted that Socrates' comment on poetry is in marked contrast to the reverence it is shown earlier by Protagoras in his "Great Speech", where he notes the importance of poetry in education:

> "the children...are furnished with works of good poets to read as they sit in class, and are made to learn them off by heart: here they meet with many admonitions, many descriptions and praises and cumbages of good men in times past, that the boy in envy may imitate them and yearn to become even as they" (325c-6a).

That this description corresponds with how poetry was taught in Sophistic education, see Guthrie, 1971b, p. 45 and Kerferd, pp. 40-1.

164. On Socrates' "maieutic" process, see n.70 of *Menex.*


172. As Murray notes, the one thing that the poets are consistently unable to do throughout Plato’s dialogues is to be able to give an account of what they have composed (1992, p. 45).


174. Plato, Phaedrus (276d). Plato’s comparison of the written word to the spoken word in Phaedrus, is the contrast between that which is a pastime or play (παιδεία), and that which is serious (σοφοῦς). This antithesis also figures elsewhere in Plato’s works, in Laws. As Bury notes, Plato abolishes “the distinction between παιδεία and σοφοῦς by combining these two apparent opposites under the wider unity of παιδεία” (education) (p. 312). For further discussion on this in Laws, see G. M. Sargeant, Two studies in Plato’s Laws I. “Song and dance” as a function of the state, Hibbert Journal, 21, 1922-3, pp. 493-550; G. M. Sargeant, Studies in the Laws of Plato II. Man as God’s playfellow, Hibbert Journal, 21, 1922-3, pp. 669-676 and Bury, pp. 311-13.

175. Plato, Phaedrus (276a).

176. Plato, Phaedrus (277c).

177. Plato, Phaedrus (276b).


179. Plato, Phaedrus (276b). See also Hackforth, p. 164.

Laws

3. See pp. 64, 68, 71 of this thesis and nn.47, 82, 134 of Phaedrus.
5. The specialized education of the Nocturnal Council in Laws (965b-8a), although only briefly described, has obvious parallels to the education that is described in detail in Republic for the Guardians (Jaeger, 1986b, p. 260). However, Stalley believes that there are discrepancies between the accounts. R. F. Stalley, An Introduction to Plato’s Laws, Hackett Publishing Company, Indianapolis, IN, 1983, pp. 135-6. Although the education of the Ruler, the equivalent of the philosopher-kings of Republic, is absent from Laws, it is described in Epinomis. Plato (Trans. W. R. M. Lamb) Epinomis, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1986. This work is said to have been written after Plato’s death, by his colleague, Philip of Opus, who constructed it from Plato’s incomplete draft of Laws. Therefore, rather than being considered a forgery, Epinomis can instead be regarded as a supplement, or appendix, to Plato’s account of the educational system of Laws (Jaeger, 1986b, pp. 214, 337n.12).
11. Guthrie, 1993b, p. 325. See also Plato, Gorgias (491d), Republic (430e) and Phaedrus (237d-e).
12. See also Plato, Laws (803d-e), on the avoidance of war.
13. Although in (629a), the Athenian stranger states that the poet was an Athenian by birth, who later became a citizen of Sparta, Tyrtaeus is usually seen as a Spartan elegiac poet, who lived in the mid-seventh century B.C.E. and whose elegies commemorated the Spartans’ military achievements. He was also said to have written songs which “accompanied armed dances and processions at certain Spartan festivals”. M. L. West, Tyrtaeus. In: S. Hornblower and A. Spawforth (eds.) The Oxford Classical Dictionary, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1996d, p. 1568. See also Saunders, 1970, p. 51n.4.

14. Theognis was an elegiac poet of the mid-sixth century, from Megara (probably the city-state of Megara near Athens, despite what is said by the Athenian Stranger in (630a)). According to West, Theognis’ works are a valuable source for information on the “ordinary man” of these times, and his ideas about “life, friendship, fate, death and other matters”. M. L. West, Theognis. In: S. Hornblower and A. Spawforth (eds.) The Oxford Classical Dictionary, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1996c, p. 1503. See also Saunders, 1970, p. 53n.6.

15. Plato, Laws (629c).
17. Plato, Laws (633d).
19. Plato, Republic (413e).
23. That this is so, is also argued by Socrates throughout Republic (see, for example, 485d-e, 558d-9e, 588-91a, 606a-b). He posits that the satisfaction of certain desires only strengthens the elements in the soul that oppose reason. Because such action would disrupt the natural rule of reason, it would also prevent one from caring for one’s soul. This would therefore influence one’s ability to lead a happy, and so virtuous, life. See also p. 43 of this thesis and nn. 108-13 of Ion, as well as Belfiore, pp. 421, 422-24.
24. Plato, Laws (641b-c). See also p. 4 of this thesis and nn.34-6 of the Introduction on the how the identity of the individual in ancient Athens was inextricably linked to his role as a citizen.
25. Plato, Laws (643c). See also (963a). The Athenian’s words once again demonstrate the intertwining of the roles of individual and citizen in ancient Greece. See n.24, above.
26. Plato, Laws (644a). According to Liddell and Scott, a τέχνη βαναυσίας (technē banausias) is one which is “a mere mechanical art”, one which is considered “base and ignoble” (p. 146). That is, it is when one works with one’s hands, as opposed to one’s mind. The mind-body separation of work and education reflects the manner in which the ancient Greeks divided labour (Jaeger, 1986b, pp. 173-4, 326n.52). As Morrow observes, education was seen by the Greeks as “a liberal training of mind and character, rather than a preparation for a trade or craft”. G. R. Morrow, Plato’s Cretan City. A Historical Interpretation of the Laws, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 1960, p. 297. Indeed, in a society where slaves did much of the menial work, those who laboured for wages were seen as lowly compared to those who had the time and money to devote to leisure activities, politics and culture. Millett notes that “(w)ages were seen as purchasing the person as opposed to labour-power; the supposedly degrading nature of craft-work (banausia) led to a downgrading of the individual worker”. P. C. Millett, Labour. In: S. Hornblower and A. Spawforth (eds.) The Oxford Classical Dictionary, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1996, pp. 809-10. It could be said that to Plato, a banausic trade is also one
“which is devoid of a governing spiritual principle and right aim, and is merely a tool, a means to an end” (Jaeger, 1986b, p. 224).


28. Plato, Laws (875c). In Protagoras, Socrates similarly posits knowledge as “something noble and able to govern man, and that whoever learns what is good and what is bad will never be swayed by anything to act otherwise than as knowledge bids, and that intelligence is a sufficient succour for mankind” (352c).


32. Plato, Laws (711c-12a, 875c-d).


34. Plato, Republic (540a).

35. Plato, Laws (644a). See also Republic (401c-2a).

36. Grube, p. 244. In Republic, Socrates argues that most men love belief, rather than knowledge (480e. But see also the argument leading to this conclusion, 475e-480e). Those who love knowledge therefore deserve the title “lovers of wisdom” (φιλόσοφοι) (480e). Since such men are capable of “apprehending that which is eternal and unchanging”, as opposed to those who “are incapable of this, but lose themselves amid the multiplicities of multifarious things”, it is only they, the minority of men, who are “competent to guard the laws and pursuits of society” and so are able rule over the majority of men as guardians (484b-c. See also 484d-5a). In Statesman, the Stranger similarly argues that those with sufficient knowledge can be their own master, while others, with inferior knowledge, can only fulfil the orders given to them by others (260d, e).

37. On higher education in Plato’s Laws, see (965a, 965b-8a). See also p. 76 of this thesis and nn. 3, 6, above.

38. Grube, pp. 244-5. As Bury states, “we are chiefly concerned in the Laws with the training of the ruled rather than of the rulers” (p. 305).


40. Plato, Republic (377b).

41. In Euthyphro, Socrates, in answer to Meletus’ accusation that he is corrupting the young, argues that it is reasonable to take care of the young men first, to try and make them as good as possible, just as a good husbandman will “naturally take care of the young plants first and afterwards of the rest”. Plato (Trans. H. N. Fowler) Euthyphro, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1995 (2d).

42. Plato, Laws (788d-9a).


44. See p. 77 of this thesis and n. 23, above.

45. Since law is a form of education, and the education of an individual is in the correct channelling of their feelings of pleasure and pain, then law can be similarly defined as “the relative merits of pleasure and pain...when this is expressed as a public decision of a state” (644d). This quote is from the Saunders translation of Laws. Plato (Trans. T. J. Saunders) The Laws, Penguin, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1975. Unless otherwise specified, the Bury translation of Laws is used in this thesis.

46. Plato, Laws (653b-c). Such a situation is also presented by Socrates in Republic. He suggests that if one is surrounded by beauty, one will accept and assimilate it for his own good, and will thus condemn and dislike anything ugly, even if one is too young to comprehend the reason. Later, when
reason comes, “the man thus nurtured would be the first to give her (beauty) welcome, for by this affinity he would know her” (401e-2a). Therefore, as in Laws, on attaining the ability to comprehend rationally, a child raised in this fashion would similarly have agreement of his reason and his emotions, and so could also be considered “educated”.

47. Plato, Laws (653c).

48. See p. 77 of this thesis and n.24, above.

49. See p. 3 of this thesis and n.125 of the Introduction. See also Guthrie, 1993b, p. 328n.3.

50. See Morrow, pp. 302-7, on the importance of the musical arts in Greek society. For a discussion of the role of one of the musical arts, poetry, in Greek education, see pp. 1-4 of this thesis and nn.9-37 of the Introduction.


52. Plato, Laws (664e).


55. Plato, Timaeus (44b-c).

56. Plato, Laws (665a). At Laws (808d), the Athenian once again refers to this duality in the child’s nature: “of all wild creatures, the child is the most intractable; for in so far as it, above all others, possesses a fount of reason that is yet uncurbed, it is a treacherous, sly and most insolent creature” (my italics). See also p. 79 of this thesis and n.51, above.

57. Plato, Republic (401d). See also Protagoras, where the Sophist states that “the whole of man’s life requires the graces of rhythm and harmony” (326b).

58. Plato, Laws (653e). Harmony and rhythm are also said to be the gifts of the Muses in Timaeus. Further, harmony was given to man “not as an aid to irrational pleasure...but as an auxiliary to the inner revolution of the Soul, when it has lost its harmony, to assist in restoring it to order and concord with itself...” (my italics) (47d-e). In Laws, rhythm and harmony are also the gifts of the gods, which cause one to dance and sing, and so enable man to form choruses, the basis of the educational system. Since, according to the Athenian, the function of education is to create a concord in the soul between reason and emotion (653b, 659e), the function of rhythm and harmony in this dialogue is thus no different to that as delineated by Plato in Timaeus. See also Republic (401d), and n.83, below.

59. Plato, Laws (654a). This refers to a typical Platonic pun, not easily reproduced in English: the Athenian postulates that the name “chorus” (χορος) - the combination of “round” dancing and singing with musical accompaniment, that was performed at banquets and festive occasions (Liddell and Scott, p. 891) - is derived from the delight or joy (χαρα) (Liddell and Scott, p. 881) that man feels when singing and dancing. However, it is also more than what Saunders terms a “playful etymology” (1970, p. 87n.3). The Athenian later argues that in their state, the songs that the choruses perform should act as “chants” or “incantations” (ἐνθύναι) for the soul (659e). Because singing and dancing reflect innate human tendencies to move and vocalize, they are pleasurable to man. Therefore, like “spells” or “magic formulae”, the choral activities can be used to instill ethical principles - that is, that “which is pronounced right by the law and confirmed as truly right by the experience of the oldest and most just” (659d) - into the souls of the citizens, who then perceive these principles with the same delight and joy as the songs and the dances they perform. A chorus (χορος) (or more properly, choral training) would thus become a thing of joy (χαρά) in a Platonic sense, in that it would enable the participating individuals to form right principles and habits. See also (664b, 665c and 666c). For further discussion of this point, see p. 80 of this thesis and nn.63-70, below.
Elsewhere in his dialogues, Plato also refers to rhetoric as a sorcerer’s art or spell (ἐπωδητήν τεχνής) (Euthydemus 290a). Similarly, in Republic (608a), Socrates counsels that one should recite ethical arguments over to oneself in order to prevent oneself from falling under the “spell” (ἐπωδητήν) of poetry. In all these cases, it appears that Plato is referring not to any truly magical characteristics such things may have, but rather, to their effectiveness as a method of persuasion on the souls of men - be they for good (choruses and ethical arguments) or ill (rhetoric and poetry). See Morrow, p. 310 and W. A. Welton, Incantation and expectation in Laws II, Philosophy and Rhetoric, 29, 1996, p. 218. On rhetoric as “magic”, see J. de Romilly, Magic and Rhetoric in Ancient Greece. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1975, pp. 1-22.

60. The love of pleasure and the dislike of pain is necessarily a part of the other three instincts listed. That is, making bodily movements, vocalizations and mimicking all cause the child to feel pleasure (Laws 653d-c, 664c). Restraining such activity would therefore cause the child to feel displeasure (or pain).


64. Plato, Republic (410c).
65. Plato, Republic (412a).
66. Plato, Timaeus (87c).
68. Plato, Laws (654b).
69. Bury, p. 308.
70. The method which Plato advocates in Laws by which the child’s innate movements and vocalizations are paired to song and dance in choral training, so that the pleasure that he once felt from these movements alone now becomes associated with performing in the chorus, is similar to the experimental method used in Pavlovian or classical conditioning. In this form of conditioning, an innate, unconditioned response is paired with a neutral stimulus, the conditioned stimulus. With successive exposure, the conditioned stimulus can trigger a conditioned response, which is a version of the unconditioned response. L. M. Barker, Learning and Behavior. Biological, Psychological and Sociocultural Perspectives, Prentice-Hall, Upper Saddle River, NJ, 1997, p. 515. With regard to Laws and its educational methods, the unconditioned response would be the child’s spontaneous movements, and the conditioned stimulus, the singing and dancing of the chorus.

73. Plato discusses musical modes and their effects on the soul in Republic (398c-400d) and Laws (654b-56c). The association of certain musical modes with specific emotions is also mentioned in Laches (188d-e). See Anderson (1966, pp. 68-81), on this theory of music as expressed in the Platonic dialogues. See also W. D. Anderson, The importance of Damonian theory in Plato’s thought,

74. On Plato's Timaeus, and its relevance to his discussion of the educational system in Laws, see Grube (pp. 251-2).


76. "Soul" here refers to the immortal, reasoning aspect of the soul.

77. Plato, Timaeus (44b).


80. Plato, Laws (790d). According to Saunders, this condition was believed to be caused by the Corybantes, and was treated "homeopathically by the disciplined music and dancing of Corybantic ritual (author's italics) (1975, p. 274n.1). See also p. 27 of this thesis and n. 70 of chapter two, Introduction on the Corybantes. Linforth presents an alternative view to that of Saunders (pp. 129-34). Although conditions do exist which appear similar to Plato's example of Corybantism, such as St. Vitus' dance or Huntington's chorea (from the Greek choreia, meaning "dancing" or "dance tune", Liddell and Scott, p. 155), they have a physiological, rather than a psychological, foundation. C. H. Best and N. B. Taylor, The Physiological Basis of Medical Practice. The Williams and Wilkins Company, Baltimore, MD, 1943, pp. 1481-2.


82. Plato, Laws (790e).

83. Plato, Timaeus (47d-e). See also Laws (653b, 659e), Republic (401d), and n. 58, above. Although not in reference to Plato's Timaeus, Bury refers, most appropriately, to the choral training of Laws as being "the cosmicizing of the infantile soul's chaos" (p.308), in that it imposes order on the child's natural movements.

84. Plato, Laws (659d).

85. Plato, Phaedrus (261a).

86. Plato, Laws (722c-3d). The difference between "persuasion" and "despotic prescription" or compulsion (723a) can be seen in the Athenian's story which describes the dissimilar treatment methods of two doctors (720a-e, 723a). It should be also noted that a controversy exists, in the secondary literature, concerning the nature of persuasion in Laws. Rather than persuasion being in opposition to compulsion, some critics believe that in Laws they are, in effect, synonymous. The following articles run the gamut of opinion concerning this topic: G. Morrow, Plato's conception of persuasion, Philosophical Review, 62, 1953, pp. 234-50; L. Versenyi, The Cretan Plato, Review of Metaphysics, 15, 1961, pp. 67-80; C. Bobonich, Persuasion, compulsion and freedom in Plato's Laws, Classical Quarterly, 41, 1991, pp. 365-88 and R. F. Stalley, Persuasion in Plato's Laws, History of Political Thought, 15, 1994, pp. 157-77.

87. See, for example, Protagoras (358b-c) and Gorgias (478e, 527e).


91. Shorey. 1994, p. 246n.a. This is affirmed by Plato in Republic (398d).
93. Plato, Gorgias (502c). See also Republic (601a-b).
95. Plato, Laws (653e-4a). See also Timaeus (47d-e) and n.58, above.
96. On the effects of poetry’s melody, rhythm and metre on one’s soul, see n.57, above.
99. As Green notes, the number of people who actually participated in choruses – not even counting those who attended the performances (see n.43 of the Introduction on this point) – was substantial. For example, at a particular Athenian festival, the Great Dionysia, “(e)ach tribe presented a dihyrambic chorus of fifty men and one of fifty boys (10 x 2 x 50 = 1,000). Each comedy had 24 chorusesmen (5 x 24 = 120). Sophoclean and Euripidean tragedies had 15 chorusesmen... (3 x 4 x 15 = 180). Add to these the various trainers and organizers, costumers and musicians (not to mention actors and maskmakers involved in formal drama), and a noticeable portion of the free male population would have been involved” (my italics) (pp. 9-10). See also Haigh (pp. 288-90) and Morrow (1960, pp. 311-12) on the size of the various choruses. Furthermore, if membership in the choruses were rotated (as it was for political and legal bodies, such as the Assembly and juries), so that all who were eligible, eventually had a chance to participate, then it is likely that most of the free male population would then have had choral experience. Griffin agrees: “(e)verybody must either have performed in a dihyrambic chorus or have known someone who did” (p. 44).
100. See Green (pp. 6-10) and Barker (p. 1003), on the role that the chorus played in promoting social unity and disseminating the political, religious and cultural values of the community. See also Goldhill, who discusses the role of the theatre in general in civic life (pp. 97-129) as well as p. 3 of this thesis and nn.29, 30 of the Introduction.
101. On the role and importance of the poet and poetry in Athenian society at the time of Plato, see pp. 2.4 of this thesis and nn.84-81 of the Introduction.
102. When Plato bids farewell to Aeschylus, he states “off you go with your sound advice and save the City for us. Educate the fools – you’ll find a good many” (1500ff). This quote indicates that Plato believes that the poet will know exactly what to compose – for if the poet knows what is “sound”, he must also be qualified to “educate” and so “save” the citizens of Athens. The extensive, and often barbed, social and political criticism made by the poets in their works (particularly in Aristophanes’ plays), as well as their coverage of such contentious topics as incest (Oedipus/Sophocles), matricide and parricide (Orestes/Aeschylus and Euripides; Oedipus/Sophocles), infanticide (Hecules/Euripides) and treason (Ajax/Sophocles), also suggests that the state allowed them a great deal of artistic license in what they could compose. Indeed, Beye states that the coverage of these topics in tragedy and comedy may have been a socially acceptable way of giving “vent to feelings that individuals must repress as too destructive socially”. C. R. Beye, Ancient Greek Literature and Society, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY, 1987, p. 132. However, at the time of Plato, the poets were still required to be circumspect as to what they wrote concerning religion, or they risked being tried for atheism or impiety.
103. Plato, Laws (719b). See also (656c, 700d-c, 801b-c, 817b-d).
104. Plato, Laws (801c-d). See also (817b-d), as well as Republic (377c).
105. Plato, Laws (660a-b). See also Republic (401b, c).
109. Plato, Republic (377a-92a, 394d-8b, 401a-2c, 606c-8b).
110. The poets in Laws will also not be allowed to teach their choruses "whatever form of rhythm, or
tune or words they best like themselves" if they do not concern themselves with their possible ethical
effects (656c), or produce anything which "goes beyond the limits of what the State holds to be legal
and right, fair and good" (801c). See also Anderson (1966, p. 85).
112. Plato, Republic (424c).
113. Plato, Laws (700a-1c).
114. Plato, Laws (797d).
115. Plato, Laws (798c). See also Republic (424b-c) and n.113, above.
116. See p. 4 and nn.29, 30 of the Introduction on the role of the chorus in ancient Athens.
117. Aristophanes, Frogs (1054). See also (1009, 1420-1) and pp. 2-4 of this thesis and nn.9-41 of the
Introduction.
118. Plato, Laws (719b). See also the passage in Laws in which the Athenian discusses the manner in
which the poets "were ignorant of what was just and lawful in music" (700d). According to the
Athenian, this ignorance had repercussions for the state, in that it "bred in the populace a spirit of
lawlessness in regard to music" (700e). As he states, "the universal conceit of universal wisdom and the
contempt for law originated in music, and on the heels of these came liberty. For, thinking themselves
knowing, men became fearless; and audacity begat offrontery...it brought about a liberty that is
audacious to excess" (701a). Socrates warns of such an occurrence in Republic, when he states that
altering the literature and music of a state will create subsequent political change (424e).
119. Plato, Laws (801c).
120. Plato, Laws (682a).
121. Plato, Laws (682a), Ion (534d) and Memo (90d).
122. Plato, Republic (377a).
123. Poets, in that they are divinely inspired, are portrayed by Plato as being without knowledge
(σοφία, φωνεῖν) in Apology (22b-c) and Memo (99c-d), and without skill (ἐξεχνή) and knowledge
(ἐπιστήμην) in Ion (533d, 534b-c, 536c, d, 541c, 543a). Further, the manner in which Plato describes
the poet as divinely possessed and so mad in Phaedrus (245a) and Laws (719c), implies a related
passivity, which may also indicate the poet's lack of knowledge. As noted earlier in this thesis, "for if
the poets are but a conduit for the Muses' words, then it cannot be either by knowledge or skill that
they do what they do" (p. 23 of this thesis). That Plato defines the poet's lack of knowledge or skill as
a characteristic of poetic inspiration, is discussed on p. 23 of this thesis. See also the examinations of
the individual dialogues on this.

124. That poets (as well as statesmen - see Meno 99c) operate on true opinion rather than knowledge has been previously discussed. See pp. 53, 57 of this thesis and nn.33-40, 75-83 of Meno.

125. Plato, Laws (653c-4a). Rhythm and harmony, as elements of poetry and the choral performance, and as aspects of the educational process, are discussed on pp. 91, 92, 93, 95 of this thesis and nn.77, 88, 93-7, above.

126. Plato, Laws (700d). As has been previously noted, bakcheuantes refers to the frenzy of the Bacchantes, who were the ecstatic followers of the god Bacchus (see n.36 of Phaedrus), and katechounenai, in indicating that one is “held” or “owned”, suggests divine possession (see n.65 of chapter two, Introduction).

127. Plato, Laws (700d-e). See also Republic (397a).

128. In this passage, the poet is said to be “frenzied and unduly possessed by a spirit of pleasure” (700d). I am taking this to mean that the poet is inspired by the Muses in the same way as in the other dialogues which have so far been discussed in this thesis which deal with poetic inspiration, since the terms used by Plato in this passage (see n.124, above) are also used in some of these other dialogues to indicate the frenzy and possession which he considers characteristic of poetic inspiration. See, for example, the use of these terms in Ion (βακχευοντας: 534a; καταχειται, καταχειονται, κατεχει: 536b, κοτοκιχνη, κατεχουντα: 536c) and Phaedrus (Μουσικην κοτοκιχνη, οκασιανοι: 245a). Furthermore, in Ion, the behaviour of the inspired poet is likened to the ecstatic behaviour of the devotees of Cybele, the Corybantes (534a, 536c). In turn, their behaviour is akin to that of the Dionysian revelers, the Bacchantes, who are mentioned in Laws (700d) (see n.70 of chapter two, Introduction). Plato also refers to a “Bacchic frenzy” when discussing inspiration (although not poetic) in Phaedrus (234d).

129. According to Liddell and Scott, ἀφωνᾶ (old Att.) = “want of understanding, folly” (p. 73). Therefore, Plato is stating that the poet, in being inspired, showed want of understanding - or a lack of knowledge - in his actions toward music.

130. Plato, Laws (700d-c).

131. Plato, Laws (669d). Some of the musical blunders that are mentioned in Laws (669d, 700d-c) as being committed by poets are similar to the criticisms that Socrates makes of them in Republic (397a).


133. Plato, Laws (701a). See also Anderson (1966, p. 79).

134. Several critics (for e.g., Tigges, 1969, pp. 60n, 64; Else, 1986, p. 63 and Janaway, 1995, p. 180n.70. But see also Murray, 1992, p.45) have noted that it is only in Laws (719c) that Plato discusses both poetic inspiration and poetic mimicry in the same passage. However, in the passage under discussion, (700d-e), the poet is referred to as inspired as well as he who uses representation or mimicry. See also n.134 of Phaedrus (on Phaedrus 245a, 248e).

135. See pp. 80-1 of this thesis and n.73, above.


137. Plato, Laws (641b-c, 643c). See also pp. 80-1 of this thesis and nn.71-3, above.

138. Saunders agrees:

“(t)he Athenian wishes to combat the view that if a thing is pleasant, it is therefore good. He wants to avoid giving the impression that he believes ‘if good, then pleasant’, or ‘if pleasant, then not good’. His own view is ‘if good, then pleasant’”. It is in this sense that ‘good’ and ‘pleasant’ are
See also the Athenian’s arguments against the “if pleasant, then good” stance at *Laws* (655d, 657e-9c, 660e-3d).


141. See n. 23, above.

142. That is, in *Laws* (700d-c), as elsewhere in the Platonic dialogues which discuss poetic inspiration, it is because the poet is inspired that he is described as being without knowledge. In turn, it is because the poet is without knowledge that he makes the musical mistakes that are enumerated at (700d-e). See also n. 128, above.

143. See p. 77 of this thesis and n. 23, above.

144. See p. 43 of this thesis and nn. 100–13 of *Ion*.

145. Plato, *Laws* (645b, 689d-c). See also pp. 77 of this thesis and n. 23, above.


148. See p. 77 of this thesis and n. 24, above.

149. See p. 31 of this thesis and n. 70 of chapter two, Introduction. In both *Ion* (533e-4a, 536c) and *Phaedrus* (245a), Plato compares the behaviour of inspired poets to the ecstatic worship of the Corybantes and Bacchantes. See also n. 128, above.

150. On the arguments concerning Plato’s portrayal of the poets as not only inspired, but also as possessed and frenzied or mad, see pp. 27-9 of this thesis and nn. 64–69 of chapter two, Introduction. See also pp. 35, 63 of this thesis, nn. 44–8 of *Ion* and nn. 38–40 of *Phaedrus*.

151. In *Laws* (817a), the Athenian, in pretending to address a question put to him by the “serious” poets - the tragedians - refers to them as “these inspired persons” (ἐναρετοὶ ὁδηγοὶ). Later, in this same speech, he once again acknowledges the poets’ divine inspiration, in his reference to them as “ye children and offspring of Muses mild” (ὦ παιδεῖς μάλακων Μοῦσων εκγόνοι) (817d).


154. See p. 29 of this thesis and n. 91 of chapter two, Introduction.

155. See p. 24 of this thesis and nn. 22–8 of chapter two, Introduction.

156. Guthrie, 1993a, p. 241. Indeed, just prior to this passage, Plato has the Athenian quote Hesiod in order to support his argument that the truth is not easily gained, but requires “the sweat of toil” (719a). Other examples already cited in this thesis include *Menon* (81a-c) (see p. 51 and nn. 14–19 of *Menon*) and *Republic* (547b) (see p. 24 of this thesis and n. 24 of chapter two, Introduction).

157. Tigerstedt, 1969, p. 60. The Pythia was a woman who served Apollo at his sanctuary at Delphi, and dedicated herself to his service for life. In the temple of Apollo, the Pythia customarily sat on a tripod over a chasm in the floor, enveloped by vapours emanating from the earth. Once seated, she would fall into a trance, in which she was said to be possessed by the god. Her utterances were therefore considered to be Apollo’s own words, made in response to a client’s inquiries to the god. These responses were delivered in a form which required that they be translated by the *prophetai* (προφηταὶ), the priests of the temple. But as Sourvinou-Inwood notes, the form that the Pythia’s pronouncements took, and exactly what the *prophetai* did, is a matter of controversy. It is possible that the priests interpreted her fragmentary visions, and then shaped them into coherent, but ambiguous responses.
However, "this was not an attempt to hedge their bets, but as a result of the ambiguity inherent in the god's signs and the Greek perception that ambiguity is the idiom of prophecy, that there are limits to man's access to knowledge about the future: the god speaks ambiguously, and human fallibility intervenes and may misinterpret the messages". C. Sourvinou-Inwood, Delphic oracle. In: S. Hornblower and A. Spawforth (eds.) The Oxford Classical Dictionary. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1996, p. 445. See also Burkert, pp. 115-16 and Maurizio, p. 69.

158. On Plato's comparison of poets to seers and prophets, see pp. 25-7 of this thesis and nn.42-43 of chapter two, Introduction.

159. See n.159, above.

160. On the poet as passive, see pp. 27-8 of this thesis and nn.71, 72 of chapter two, Introduction.


162. On the poets' use of water imagery to indicate poetic fluency, see p. 25 of this thesis and n.48 of chapter two, Introduction.


164. The prefaces or preambles to the laws are first termed "préludes" by the Athenian at Laws (722d).


166. Plato, Laws (653c).

167. As Barker states, "(i)t is the aim of the preamble to achieve such a harmony, and by adding persuasion to command to make appetite accord with reason" (1961, p. 353).


169. See pp. 77, 87 of this thesis and nn.22-4, 148, above.

170. Plato, Laws (719b)

171. See p. 84 of this thesis and n.118, above.


173. See p. 86 of this thesis and nn.141-3, above.
CHAPTER THREE

MIMESIS IN PLATO'S CRITICISM OF POETRY

Introduction
1. See pp. 27-9 of this thesis and nn. 64-87 of chapter two, Introduction.
2. See pp. 23-5 of this thesis and nn. 7-42 of chapter two, Introduction.
3. R. McKeon, Literary criticism and the concept of imitation in antiquity. Modern Philology, 34, 1936, p. 3. As McKeon continues, *mimesis* is sometimes used by Plato “to differentiate some human activities from others or some part of them from another part or some aspect of a single act from another; it is sometimes used in a broader sense to include all human activities; it is sometimes applied even more broadly to all processes - human, natural, cosmic, and divine” (p. 3).
4. McKeon, p. 3.
5. Sorbon considers that “there is a tendency in Plato's works towards a distinct and delimited use within this variety of applications of the words belonging to this *mimeisthai*-group” (p. 100).
6. Sorbon, p. 99. This statement is probably based on the fact that Xenophon was a soldier and, as many critics have noted, a rather intellectually unsophisticated writer (see, for example, Guthrie, 1971a, p. 15 and C. J. Tuplin, Xenophon. In: S. Hornblower and A. Spawforth (eds.) *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1996, p. 1629, among others), and so not a philosopher capable of understanding or investigating Socratic or Platonic thought in any great depth. It is likely, therefore, that his views on *mimesis* are in the “form of common-sense observations of the look of works of art” (Sorbon, p. 81), and so represent the average educated Greek of his time.
7. See p. 21 of this thesis.
8. As Else notes, “(a) reconstruction of the fifth-century concept of *mimesis* is of interest above all as a background for understanding the use of the term by Plato and Aristotle.” To achieve this, one must then ask “(w)hat was the original meaning of *mimeisthai* and *mimesis*, and what line of development did that meaning take before Plato?” (1958, p. 74). Havelock poses similar questions (p. 57n.22).
11. Liddell and Scott, p. 514. See also Sorbon, p. 22. One critic has speculated that Sophron's mimes, with their “realistic setting and conversational style”, provided Plato with the model for his dialogues (Guthrie, 1971a, p. 12. See also Else, 1958, p. 88n.20, who refers to the affinities of some of Plato's early work with mime). Else (1958, p. 88n.20), Guthrie (1971a, p. 12) and Dover (K. J. Dover, Sophron. In: S. Hornblower and A. Spawforth (eds.) *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1996, p.1425) all note that indeed, Plato was very fond of Sophron's mimes. It was even recorded, in ancient times, that after Plato's death a copy of Sophron's mimes was found under his pillow (see Guthrie, 1971a, p.12n.3, for these references).
12. Sorbon, p. 22n.4. See also pp. 23-4 and Else, 1958, pp. 76, 88n.21. Sophron's mimes, which like all mimes, presented human life "as it is" (Sorbon, p. 23), were divided according to subject matter into ονήματα and γυναικεία (i.e. to do with men/women) (Dover, p. 1425).
14. Golden appears to agree with this choice of critics. As he states, "(o)ne group of studies has concentrated on the precise range of meaning of *mimesis* in actual Greek usage and the most significant
results in the area have been achieved by Koller, Else and Sorbom”. I. Golden, Plato’s concept of
16. Sorbom, p. 12. See also p. 18 and Else, 1958, p. 73. According to Sorbom, there are no known
occurrences of the words of the mimeisithai-group earlier than the fifth century (p. 18). E. C. Keuls,
Plato and Greek Painting, Brill, Leiden, 1978, also notes that Koller did not systematically examine all
extant examples of the mimos-group before Plato (p. 10).
19. Else, 1958, p. 73.
22. Havelock, p. 57n.22.
25. J. Tate, “Mimesis”, a review of H. Koller’s Die Mimesis in der Antike. Nachahmung, Darstellung,
26. Else, 1958, p. 74. See also Havelock, p. 57n.22 and W. J. Verdenius, A review of H. Koller’s Die
Mimesis in Antike. Nachahmung, Darstellung, Ausdruck, Francke, Berne, 1954. In: Mnemosyne, 10,
1957, p. 254.
28. Else, 1958, p. 78. See also Sorbom, p. 17. Else further notes that in none of these examples of the
words of the mimeisithai-group “is the tone hieratic, that is, marked by a strongly religious flavour”
(1958, p. 79) as Koller contends.
29. Else, 1958, p. 76. This criticism of Koller leads to Else’s own thesis: that the meaning behind the
original occurrence of the words of the mimeisithai-group was to mime, where one person mimics
another by adopting the characteristic aspects of their persona. See pp. 92-3 of this thesis and nn.43-6,
below.
30. Else, 1958, p. 78. Keuls agrees with Else and Sorbom that the manner in which mimeisicis was used
prior to Plato did not mean “the dominance of dance over the other elements of drama in the total
conception”, as Koller believes. Rather, she believes that “(t)he central notion is that of the conveyance
of meaning through gesture and mimicry” (p. 10). Keuls is thus in agreement with Else and Sorbom on
the original meaning of mimeisicis.
31. Sorbom, pp. 15-17. As he remarks, the reader is not told whether these terms “are quite
synonymous, amplify each other, or are quite distinct from each other” (p. 16). See also Else, 1958, p.
89n.32.
32. Tate, 1955, p. 259.
33. Tate, 1955, p. 258.
34. Else, 1958, p. 84.
35. Else, 1958, p. 73. See also Tate, 1955, p. 258.
36. Else, 1958, p. 73. Else discusses the Damonian-Pythagorean influence on Plato’s concept of
mimeisicis on pp. 83-7. As with Koller, Schipper also believes that the concept of mimeisicis was borrowed
from the Pythagoreans, “for the relation of sensed things to forms which characterize them”. E. W.
201. On Damon’s concept of the ethical effects of music on the soul, see also Morrow, 1953, pp. 306-
37. For further discussion on the Damonian ideas of music as applied to the Platonic dialogues, see pp. 80-1, 116 of this thesis and n.31 of chapter two, Laws and n.185 of Republic.
38. Else, 1958, pp. 84-7. Verdenius similarly contests Koller’s argument that Plato’s concept of poetic mimesis was merely a Platonic transfer of the music theory of Damon (1957a, p. 255). Rosenmeyer also discusses this point, and agrees with both Else and Verdenius’ criticism. Indeed, Rosenmeyer considers that Koller’s account of the influence of Damon and the Pythagoreans on Plato’s concept of mimesis is “much too speculative to be of much use”, and is “premature” in that it largely relies on one chief source, Aristides Quintilianus. On Music. T. G. Rosenmeyer, A review of H. Koller’s Die Mimesis in der Antike, Nachahmung, Darstellung, Ausdruck, Francke, Berne, 1954. In: Erasmus, 10, 1957, p. 296. See also Else, pp. 73-4.
40. Sorbom, p. 18.
41. Else, 1958, p. 79. See also Sorbom, pp. 18-19. Plato was born 427 B.C.E.
42. Else, 1958, p. 79. For other examples which could be included in Else’s first sense of mimesis, see Sorbom (pp. 53-7, 55n.34).
43. Else, 1958, p. 78.
44. According to Else, the difference between the two meanings, is to do with the stress, or accent, that is placed on the word when spoken. This distinguishes mimos (imitation) from mimodos (imitator) (1958, pp. 88n.10. See also pp. 75, 76). Liddell-Scott (p.514) cites both meanings of the word. However, Sorbom believes that Else’s interpretation of the Aeschylus example is not the “sole possible interpretation”, and that it could also refer to the performers, not the performance (p. 54). For Sorbom’s interpretation, see pp. 38-40. Keuls agrees with Sorbom that mimos refers to the actor, not the performance (pp. 14-15). However, as occurrences of mimos in the literature are rare, not only prior to Plato, but also over the entire classical period (see Else, 1958, p. 76, Sorbom, pp. 53n.24, 55n.24 and Keuls, p. 14), the sample available may not be of sufficient size to make this a definitive judgement.
45. Else, 1958, p. 77. This example is from Aeschylus’ play, Chorephorae (564).
46. Else, 1958, p. 76. This example is from the Delian Hymn to Apollo, (I. 163). This example is also discussed by Sorbom (pp. 57-9). The quotation from the hymn that is used here is from Sorbom, p. 57 (see also p. 57n.39).
47. Else, 1958, pp. 74-6. These examples are from Euripides’ (?) Rhesus (256) and Frag. (57 Nauck) of Aeschylus’ Edonoi.
49. Else, 1958, p. 76.
50. Else, 1958, p. 88n.21. See also Sorbom, pp. 22n.4, 23-4, 32n.26, 40 and Keuls, p. 15. Else suggests that the mimos usage have not been widespread in Attica and Ionia not only because it was thought “foreign”, but also it was considered “vulgar” (1958, p. 76). Keuls disagrees with this verdict (p. 15 and n.19). See also p. 91 of this thesis and n.12, above.
51. Else, 1958, pp. 75-6. The example to which Else refers is Aeschylus’ Edonoi (fg. 57 Nauck). See also Else, 1958, p. 88n.21. However, Havelock disagrees with Else who assigns “deliberate deception” to this and other examples (from Aristophanes and Democritus), which then gives them a “pejorative colour”. Havelock believes that in such cases, “imitation is assigned that inferior status required by Platonic analysis, where it is suitable for Platonic epistemology, and this is then read backwards into the pre-Platonic usage” (p. 58n.22).
52. Sorbom, pp. 28-32.
53. Else, 1958, p. 77. The example to which Else refers is from Theognis (?)(370). See also Else, 1958, p. 88 n.22.
54. Else, 1958, p. 77.
55. See n.31, above.
56. Else, 1958, p. 77.
57. Havelock disagrees with this interpretation, instead seeing the Euripides' examples as miming, not "ethical imitation" (pp. 57-9 n.22).
58. Else, 1958, p. 81. See also p. 89 n.39. This example is from Euripides' Helen (940). Havelock also discusses this example (p. 58 n.22).
59. Else, 1958, p. 81. This example is from Euripides' Hercules Furens (i.e. The Madness of Hercules) (294). Other examples from Euripides of this second sense which are also cited by Else include Ion (451), Electra (1037) and Hippolytus (114).
60. Else, 1958, p. 81. This example is from Euripides' Helen (940).
61. Else, 1958, p. 81. This example is from Euripides' Ion (1429). See also Sorbom's discussion of this example (pp. 69-70).
64. Sorbom, p. 19.
65. Sorbom, p. 38.
66. Sorbom, p. 20. See also p. 38 n.47 of Sorbom, for his explanation, by the use of the example "to ape", of how this may occur. He believes that this pattern is also applicable to the words of the mimeisthai-group.
68. Sorbom, p. 39. But also note Sorbom's caveat, that such definitions are not intended to be the verbal translations of words of the mimeisthai group "which could (then) be substituted mechanically for the Greek word when translations are made" (p. 39 and n.49).
69. Sorbom, p. 20.
70. Sorbom, pp. 39, 40.
71. Sorbom, pp. 20, 40.
73. Rosenmeyer, p. 295, Verdenius, 1957a, pp. 255, 256 and Havelock, p. 57 n.22 also disagree with Koller's view. Keuls, however, states that she is "essentially in agreement" with Koller's argument, in believing that the "true medium of mimeis...was drama, in its specifically Greek form, which was a combination of dance, music and words". Therefore, both Koller and Keuls consider that "the origin of the mimeis conception - as well as all of Greek drama...(was) ritual" (pp. 9-10 n.3), and was not related to mime, as Else and Sorbom believe. However, Keuls does revise Koller's thesis, in that while she believes that the origin of mimeis was in "enactment", it did not include "the dominance of dance over the other elements of drama in the total conception" (p. 10). Keul's modified version of Koller's view, therefore, is not that far removed from that of Else and Sorbom - to mime. Havelock makes a similar suggestion when he states that the usage of the words of the mimeisthai-group can only be elucidated by combining Else and Koller's view, that is, by combining Koller's "re-enactment" with Else's application of this to "the manipulation of the living voice, gesture, dress and action generally, and not narrowly to dancing and music", as Koller believes (p. 57 n.22). See also Nehamas, who discusses both Koller and Else's points of view (1982, pp. 56-7, 74-5 n.39-47).
74. Else, 1958, pp. 76, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 87 and Sorbom, pp. 23-40, 78-9, 204.
75. Unlike Sorbom, who considers that their connection to mime is "of basic importance", "Else does not show any especial interest in this connection when he interprets the meaning of the mimeisthai-group" (Sorbom, p. 23).
77. See pp. 90-1 of this thesis and nn. 9-11, above, on the origins of the words of the mimeisthai-group.
78. Else, 1958, pp. 75, 76, 88n.19. See also n.44, above. This view is supported by Aristotle, in Poetics (1447b10) (Sorbom, p. 37n.43).
80. Sorbom, pp. 37n.44, 54n.32.
81. Else, 1958, p. 78.
82. Sorbom, p. 24 and n.10 (see also pp. 23, 25-7). However, also note Sorbom's discussion of the Thucydides and Xenophon examples on pp. 34-5. Else, on the other hand, believes that in the examples which he discusses of mimos, "particular emphasis is laid on the realism or lifeliness of the reproduction", and that this description "comports well with what we know of mime" (1958, p. 78). Keuls also disagrees with Else's belief that mimos is "copying the appearance of, as closely as the medium allows", not unlike photographic reproduction (p. 12n.11).
84. See, for example, Plato, Phaedrus (265d). See also n. 11, above, which refers to a certain critic who has speculated that Sophron's mimes provided Plato with the model for his dialogues.
85. Sorbom, pp. 94, 96. This view is also supported by Xenophon, who demonstrates a similar method for painting in his Memoirs of Socrates. Parthasius, a painter, tells Socrates that "when you are painting beautiful bodies, as it isn't easy to come across one single human being who is beyond criticism in every detail, you combine the best features of a number of people, and so convey the appearance of bodies which are entirely beautiful" (III.10). See the discussion on this passage in Sorbom (pp. 80-91). See also E. H. Gombrich, The Story of Art, Phaidon, London, 1968, p. 96.
86. Sorbom, pp. 96-8. As Sorbom states, there are no reliable indications "that the Greeks of the fifth century had any demands for such realism" in artistic fields like the plastic arts (p. 26). Gombrich supports Sorbom's view that portraiture did not generally exist in Greek art until late in the fourth century (pp. 60, 70-2). Gombrich also implies that the classical Greek artists composed their works by determining what was most characteristic of a particular type of individual or event, as Sorbom similarly believes (pp. 60, 70). As Gombrich notes, "art at that moment had reached a point at which the typical and the individual were poised in a new and delicate balance" (my italics) (p. 70).
87. Sorbom, p. 50. This tendency in Greek art of that period has been referred to as "idealism" (Sorbom, p. 51n.20. See also Gombrich, p. 70). Its theoretical basis appears to be not unlike that which is suggested by the Platonic theory of Forms, which is discussed in Republic, Book X with regard to mimesis. That is, that true art should "mirror those Ideal forms that are the sole realities, approaching them by way of the physical phenomena which are their distorted images". P. Murray and L. Murray, Ideal art. In: A Dictionary of Art and Artists, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1968, p. 206.
88. Sorbom, p. 46n.13. Sorbom notes that when individual persons or situations were portrayed, one was probably able to recognize the artist's representations of types of phenomena because the persons or
situations depicted would have often been recognizable by having been featured in well-known religious or heroic myths (p. 51).

90. Else, 1958, p. 73 (on Koller).


93. Else, 1958, p. 73.

94. See p. 92 of this thesis and nn. 34, 35, above.

95. Sorbom, p. 38.

96. Else, 1958, p. 73 (on Koller).

97. Else, 1958, p. 87 (on Else). See also Sorbom, pp. 20-1.


100. Else, 1958, p. 79.

101. Sorbom, p. 20.

102. Sorbom, p. 39. See also n. 64, above.

103. See p. 90 of this thesis and n. 9, above.

104. Keuls, pp. 22, 24-5 and n. 39. However, for an alternative view - that of Webster - see p. 6 of this thesis and n. 62 of the Introduction.

105. Keuls, p. 28. But see also Sorbom, who suggests that in his work Moralia, Plutarch shows that he understands Simonides’ famous saying, that poetry is speaking painting and painting is mute poetry, to mean that “mimesis is the thing that unites them” (p. 208n. 9). That is, Simonides believes that mimesis was the common element between the two creative arts. Simonides’ (556-468 B.C.E) poetry, however, pre-dates Plato’s (427-347 B.C.E) dialogues.


107. See Sorbom’s remarks on p. 90 of this thesis. See also n. 4, above.

108. Keuls suggests that Plato’s definition of mimesis as impersonation in Books III and X arose from him having to make this concept fit epic poetry (p. 25).

109. Several such critics are noted by Janaway (1995, p. 106n.2).


114. On the importance of poetry in Athenian education, see pp. 1-4 of this thesis and nn. 9, 38 of the Introduction.

115. See p. 6 of this thesis and nn. 39-62 of the Introduction. See also Keuls, p. 23.

On the importance of Homer, see p. 3 of this thesis and n. 31 of the Introduction. Using Brownson’s tables to make my calculations, I found that Homer is quoted 34 times in Republic and Laws, which is more than all the quotations cited from all the other poets combined in those two dialogues (29 times). Moreover, when one takes all the remaining Platonic dialogues into account, Homer is quoted 76 times, whereas when one combines all the quotations that Plato makes from 20 other poets in all the remaining dialogues, it yields only 70 quotations (Appendix, Tables I and III. See also n. 26 of the Introduction regarding these tables). Keuls also believes that Homer’s work is attacked by Plato in Republic, “no doubt because of the exaggerated role it played in Greek education” (p. 25). This can clearly be seen in the number of times that Homer is quoted. Plato, Republic (393c).


On dithyrambic poetry, see n. 116 of Phaedrus.

Plato, Republic (393a-b).

Plato, Republic (393c).

Lee, p. 130.

While poetry illustrates the behaviour of another, the other mimetic arts, painting and sculpture, only illustrate the appearance of another. Thus poetry encourages imaginative identification (that is, mimesis), whereas painting and sculpture do not. As Ferrari notes, “a canvas on a wall tends to invite sustained and relatively detached meditation rather than sympathetic participation” (1989, p. 109). Some critics have suggested that this may therefore be the reason why Plato banned poetry, but not painting, from his ideal city – despite his comparison of it to poetry in Book X. Plato, Ion (535b-c). It should also be noted that in Ion one can see that the effect of the poetry is then carried over to the audience, who also imaginatively identify with the characters that the actors portray (535c). Therefore, Plato considers that merely watching drama” can also produce such effects (author’s italics) (Lee, p. 134n.1). For a discussion of this episode in Ion, see pp. 37-8, 40, 43, 50 of this thesis and nn. 79-8, 92-3, 105-7 of Ion.

From F. M. Cornford’s The Republic of Plato, cited by Lee (pp. 130-31). As Janaway notes, in Plato’s culture, “contact with poetry would always be by way of performance or singing” (1995, p. 96). See also Annas, 1981, p. 94.

Plato, Protagoras (325c-6a). The Athenian also refers to such a practice in Laws (810e-11a).

That Athens was predominantly an oral society, and that the entertainment of the city catered to this, see Pellis, pp. 8-10, and the references listed therein on p. 14nn.5-16.

This is also suggested by Havelock. See p. 3 of this thesis and n. 31 of the Introduction.

See n. 118, above.

Janaway, 1995, p. 94.

That it is the emotional effects of poetry that give man his pleasure, see pp. 7-8, 38, 40, 66, 68, 86 of this thesis and nn. 65-70 of the Introduction, nn. 92-3 of Ion, nn. 85-91 of Phaedrus and nn. 136-41 of Laws.


See nn. 126, 128, above. See also Janaway, who states that with regard to poetry, “(m)imesis as such always brings with it a pleasure and stirring of the emotions” (1995, p. 101).

Plato, Republic (395c). As Socrates states in Republic, it is not that poetic passages are not pleasing to those who hear them, but rather, it is because “the more poetic they are, the less are they
suited to the ears of boys and men” (my italics) (387b). This is because poetry that is more pleasurable than others would cause one to identify with it more strongly than one would if it were not so. Socrates believes that the resulting emotions that such identification would then induce in one would then be stronger than with less pleasing poetry, and so could be more harmful to one’s soul.

138. See n.91, above.
139. See p. 95 of this thesis and nn.90, 91, above.
140. As Jaeger states, *mimesis* is a paideutic or “educational idea when it means abandoning one’s own character to the imitation; it is a technical idea when it means simply reproducing an object seen or heard” (1986a, p. 403n.9). Ferrari also employs this terminology in order to differentiate between the two types of *mimesis* to which Plato refers in *Republic* (1989, p. 125).
142. In Plato’s *Phaedo*, Socrates and Cebes state that whereas for some things one is able to “see these and touch them and perceive them by the other senses...the things which are always the same can be grasped only by reason, and are invisible and not to be seen...the invisible is always the same and the visible is constantly changing” (79a). Plato also contrasts the intelligible and the visible as two orders of things in *Republic* (509d). This describes the division between the Forms and the physical world.
144. On what is defined as *mousike*, see p. 2 of this thesis. See also Sorbom, p. 107n.6.
145. Sorbom, p. 102.
148. Sorbom, p. 137.
149. Crombie agrees. As he notes, a Form or Idea is “...a certain principle of organization which corresponds to a function or need”. From I. M. Crombie, *An Examination of Plato’s Doctrines*, Vol. I, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1962-3, p. 144, cited in Sorbom, p. 137n.49. That this is so, is made clear by Socrates later in *Republic*: “the excellence (σωτηρία), the beauty (κόαλλος), the rightness (ορθότης) of every implement, living thing, and action refer solely to the use for which each is made or by nature adapted” (my italics) (601d).
150. Crombie, p. 144. As for n.149, above.
152. Plato, *Republic* (373b). As Sorbom notes, elsewhere in his works, Plato also distinguishes poets and “some other (type of) imitative artist” (*Phaedrus* 248a), such as a painter or a sculptor, from other groups of individuals (p. 102n.12). Plato similarly singles out artists as this “mimetic tribe” in *Timaeus* (19b-c), and in *Statesman* (288c), refers to artists who produce such imitations as a separate “class”, in which the members do not practise their art for any serious purpose, but “merely for play”. See also p. 96 of this thesis and n.105, above.
153. The argument that Socrates makes concerning the painter and poet’s imitations of couches and tables in Book X of *Republic* extends from (596a) to (598d).
158. Plato, *Republic* (597a, b).
159. Plato, Republic (598b).
160. Plato, Republic (597c). The statements which Socrates makes here correspond to his declaration in Phaedrus, where on a scale which indicates the ranking of souls "according to the fullness of their vision of true Being" (Tigges, 1969, p. 54), he places the poet or some other imitative artist" in the sixth position out of a possible nine (248e). Therefore, in both Phaedrus and in Republic, the poet is portrayed by Socrates as not knowing the "true Being" or "reality as it is" (Republic 598b) - that is, the Forms or Ideas. See Shorey (1994b, p. 429n.4). See also p. 71 of this thesis and nn. 132-8 of Phaedrus on this passage.
161. Plato, Republic (597a). As many writers have noted, when this argument in Republic (596a-8d) is compared to his discussions of Forms elsewhere in his work, there appear to be several inconsistencies in Plato's argument (see, for example, Anas, 1981, pp. 227-31, 234 and Nehamas, 1982, pp. 54-5, 72n.31). However, these inconsistencies in his theory of Forms are largely irrelevant to this argument in Book X concerning poetic mimesis. Halliwell states this position succinctly:

"(w)e should read the present passage...as an ad hoc adaptation of Plato's theory of Forms. It is enough for his polemical purposes if the argument communicates the idea that there are criteria of truth which transcend the material world...and if mimetic art is convicted of being limited...to this lower world" (1988, p. 110).

Janaway agrees with this position: "these anomalies do not detract from the clarity of Plato's explanation of mimesis" (1995, p. 112).
162. Plato, Republic (598b). On the transition from painter to poet in Plato's argument in Republic, Book X. Unlike poetry, which was esteemed in Greek society, the work of painters and sculptors was considered a craft and so banausic or common (ἐμανασίας, see p. 77 of this thesis and n. 26 of Laws). Thus such artists had no influence on Greek society at the time of Plato. Sorbom suggests that in comparing the poets to painters, Plato may have tried to pull down the poets to the level of the painters so they too would be considered craftsmen, and not teachers (p. 147n.85).
163. On mimesis as imitation or representation, see pp. 94-6 of this thesis and nn. 84, 90, 91, 99, 102, above.
164. On the present form of poetic mimesis, see p. 95 of this thesis and nn. 90, 91, above.
165. Plato, Republic (605c-6e).
166. On poetic mimesis as dramatic identification (in Republic, Book III), see pp. 97-8 of this thesis and nn. 119-127, above.
167. Plato, Republic (605c-6e). See also Ion for the effect that poetry has on an audience (535d-c). The Athenian stranger in Laws refers to just such an effect: "a crowd of choirs...the souls of their audience with words, rhythms and tunes most dolorous", and "the man who succeeds at once in drawing the most tears from the...city carries off the palm of victory" (800d). As has been previously noted (see p. 82 of this thesis and nn. 88-97 of Laws), the poet was central to the chorus, as it was he who composed the lyrics, and, originally, the music, of the songs that the choruses sang. Thus Plato shows in these dialogues that mimetic poetry affects the audience in an emotional manner.
168. On Plato's use of the metaphor of the Megarian stone in Ion, see (533d-c) for the Muses' influence on the poet/thapsode, and (536a-b), for the poet/thapsode's influence on the audience. See also pp. 34-5, 37-40 of this thesis and nn. 37-44, 79-96 of Ion for discussion of these passages. Note Schaper's suggestion concerning these passages on p. 35 of this thesis and nn. 42-4 of Ion.
169. In particular, see Plato, Laws (669a-b, 700d-c).
169. See p. 98 of this thesis and n. 140, above.
170. See, for example, Plato, Laws (659c, 660b, 664b-d).
171. See p. 98 of this thesis and n. 140, above.
172. This will be discussed in the next section of the thesis, on poetic mimesis in Republic as well as in the Discussion. The detrimental effects of poetic mimesis on the care of the soul and the welfare of the state will be shown to result from the manner in which it can erode the creed by which Plato believes that the harmony of both the individual soul and the state can be optimally maintained - the "one man, one job" doctrine or the doctrine of specialization. See also p. 16 of this thesis and nn. 139-146 of the Introduction.
173. This is the message that Plato upholds throughout Book II of Laws. See, for example, Plato, Laws (658c-66a, 667c-8b).
174. See p. 92 of this thesis and n. 41, above.
175. Plato, Republic (392c-4c).
176. See p. 96 of this thesis and n. 104, above.
177. See p. 96 of this thesis and n. 105, above.
178. See Keuls, p. 5 and Nehamas, 1982, pp. 55, 74n.33. Nehamas discusses the passages in Republic where Plato uses mimesis in painting in order to criticize poetic mimesis (596d-7a, 597c-8b, 601b-2c). Annas (1981), does not believe that these claims that Plato makes against painting can then be carried across to poetry (pp. 336-8).
179. Plato, Phaedrus (275d-c).
180. Keuls, pp. 5, 13, 24, 26 etc. and Nehamas, 1982, p. 47. Goodrich, however, believes that Plato's arguments in Republic X apply equally to poetry and painting in that they challenge the veracity of both (p. 136). Furthermore, he considers that by these arguments Plato is indicating that both "(p)oet and painter, in conclusion, deserve expulsion" from the city (p. 134). R. A. Goodrich, Plato on poetry and painting, British Journal of Aesthetics, 22, 1982.
181. See the passages quoted from Ion and Protagoras, pp. 97-8 of this thesis and nn. 123-130, above.
182. See p. 97 of this thesis and n. 126, above.
183. See pp. 97-8 of this thesis and n. 126, above.
184. Plato, Ion (535c).
185. See p. 31 of this thesis and n. 5 of Ion.
186. See p. 5 of this thesis, and n. 43 of the Introduction. See also Haigh on the size and capacity of the Athenian theatre (pp. 99-100), and on the composition of the audience (pp. 323-9).
187. Indeed, as Barker notes, Republic is written in "the imperative mood - not by way of an analysis, but rather for warning and counsel" (1961, p. 170).

Republic
1. As Barker notes, Republic "represents the fullness of his (Plato's) thought" (1961, p. 168). See also Guthrie, 1955b, p. 434.
2. On Socrates and the care of soul, see Guthrie, 1971a, pp. 147-53.
4. As Gulley states, "(for Socrates) knowing what is good is a necessary and sufficient condition of possessing goodness and hence of doing what is good" (p. 83). This topic is also discussed by Plato in
Protagoras (352c) and by Xenophon in Memoirs of Socrates (III. 9. 5).
5. See p. 4 of this thesis and n.34 of the Introduction.
6. See p. 4 of this thesis and n.35 of the Introduction.
7. See p. 16 of this thesis and nn.139-41 of the Introduction.
9. See Grube, p. 264. In Republic, Socrates notes that societies are determined by the characters of the individuals of which they are composed (434c, 435c, 436a, 441c-d and especially 544d-e). See also Jaeger, 1986a, pp. 323-4.
12. Socrates’ two chief respondents in this dialogue, Glauccon and Adeimantus, were, in actuality, Plato’s brothers (Jaeger, 1986a, p. 204).
13. Plato, Republic (354a). In that they allowed the worship of foreign gods such as Bendis, the Athenians were said to be “as hospitable to gods as to everyone else” (Strabo, as cited by Guthrie, 1995b, p. 438).
14. Or, as Guthrie phrases it, this discussion is “an exhibition of that elementary Socratic sparring, not too scrupulous in its means, with which the earliest dialogues have made us familiar” (1995b, p. 439). See also p. 441).
15. Anna also sees Cephalus’ statements as representing “the ordinary person’s view of justice” (1981, p. 21). As his view reflects popular belief, and is not an account which has been worked out by philosophical means, it can only be based on true opinion, and not knowledge. On the differences between true opinion and knowledge, see p. 53 of this thesis and nn.34-5 of Meno.
16. Plato, Republic (332d). See also (334b). According to Shorey, Polemarchus’ definition of justice reflects traditional Greek morality. See, for example, its use by Xenophon in Memoirs of Socrates (II. 3. 14, II. 6. 35), and by Pindar in Pythian II (85) (Shorey, 1994a, p. 25n.9). In Republic, Plato portrays it as a view condoned and propagated by the Greek poets (334b).
17. It should be noted that in Republic, “no legal significance attaches to “justice” in Plato’s use of the word. Justice (δικαιοσύνη), along with courage, self-control and wisdom, is one of the four virtues which constitute moral goodness (αρετή)...While justice is, properly speaking, a part of goodness, it becomes in the Republic almost identical with goodness itself” (author’s italics) (Barker, 1961, p. 177n.2).
Grube similarly states that in Republic, “justice” for Plato is “a general name for virtue” (p. 223). See also Lee, p. 87 and Jaeger, 1986a, p. 202.
19. This is not to say that Thrasymachus, in his argument with Socrates, accepts defeat, but rather, as Guthrie states, that “he simply retires with a contemptuous shrug” (1995b, p. 443).
20. Plato, Republic (367c). Glaucon’s condition to Socrates, to prove that justice is superior to injustice, irrespective of whether gods or men know or not, may be an indirect, yet scornful, reference to Antiphon’s On Truth, in which the Sophist states that it is only necessary for one to conform to conventional morality when one is under observation (Guthrie, 1971b, p. 231)
22. Janaway, 1995, p. 81. Janaway believes that poetry’s entry into the discussion at this stage is often
overlooked by critics. However, he notes some critics who are exceptions to this (1995, p. 81n.5).
23. Plato, Republic (366e-7a).
26. That societies are determined by the characters of the individuals of which they are composed, and so a (morally) healthy society is one that is composed of (morally) healthy individuals, see p. 103 of this thesis and n.9, above.
28. See n.21, above. On Socrates’ use of the works of Simonides and Homer in his argument with Cephalus and then with Polemarchus, see Plato, Republic (331e-6b).
29. Plato, Republic (331e). Socrates also makes similarly ironic comments about the poets - that is, stating that they are revered for their wisdom and yet, at the same time, implying otherwise throughout his dialogues. See, for example, Lysis (214a), Gorgias (502b) and Phaedrus (244e-5a).
30. See the earlier examinations in this thesis of the dialogues in which Plato discusses the relationship between poetic inspiration and knowledge and/or skill: Ion, Apology, Meno, Phaedrus and Laws.
32. See, for example, Plato, Lysis (214a-b), Lesser Hippias (365d), Protagoras (347e) and Phaedrus (275e, 277e-8a). See also p. 74 of this thesis and nn.107-8 of Phaedrus.
34. Plato, Republic (362a-3a).
35. Plato, Republic (363e-4a).
36. Plato, Republic (363b, c, 364a, c-d, e, 365b, c, e-366a, b). A quote that Glaucon had earlier used from Arschylus (361b-c) is also later said by him to show better that the unjust man “desires not to seem, but to be unjust” (362a). Note that Musaeus and Orpheus were both mythical poets/singers. Musaeus was said to have invented the hexameter and the alphabet. He was closely identified with Orpheus, who was considered to be the son of Apollo and a Muse. Archilochus was a seventh century (B. C. E.) iambic and elegiac poet from Paros. M. L. West, Archilochus. In: S. Hornblower and A. Spawforth (eds.), The Oxford Classical Dictionary, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1996a, pp. 145-6, F. Graf, Musaeus. In: S. Hornblower and A. Spawforth (eds.), The Oxford Classical Dictionary, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1996b, pp. 1001-2 and F. Graf, Orpheus. In: S. Hornblower and A. Spawforth (eds.), The Oxford Classical Dictionary, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1996c, p. 1078.
37. As has been noted on p. 103 of this thesis and in n.17, above, “justice” can be understood here as virtue or morality.
38. Polis, the Greek word for “city”, refers to a city-state, such as Athens. It is translated variously by Lee in Republic as “state”, “community” or “society” (p. 102n.1), because it is more than a geographical location; rather, it is, as Annas states, “that (which) determines the individual’s political status and background” (1981, p. 72). Polis can also be translated as “one’s country” or even “the right of citizenship” (Liddell and Scott, p. 654).
39. Plato, Republic (369a).
40. Guthrie believes Plato’s examination of justice, in which he equates individual and city, to be a “facile” one, and criticizes it mainly on the grounds that justice may mean different things in different contexts (1995b, p. 444). Annas agrees (1981, p. 72). Guthrie also discusses other authors’ criticism of Plato’s procedure. Jacques, however, suggests there may be an historical explanation for Plato.
considering justice to be the same between the two entities:

"...for the Greek, ethics and politics were one and the distinction we make between them would be artificial to him. The goodness of individuals was closely related to the goodness of the state in which they lived; the good life demanded the good society in which to express itself and the good society promoted and made possible the good life" (J. H. Jacobs, Republic, a Beginner's Guide, cited in Guthrie, 1995b, pp. 444-5).

On this historical explanation, see also pp. 102-3 of this thesis and nn. 3, 4, above. For a longer discussion on this issue, see B. Williams, The analogy of city and soul in Plato's Republic. In: E. N. Lee (ed.) Exegesis and Argument: Studies in Greek Philosophy Presented to Gregory Vlastos, Van Gorcum, Assen, 1973, pp. 196-206. William's chapter also attempts to determine whether, in respect of their being just (δικαιος), such an analogy between cities and man as used by Plato in Republic is appropriate.

42. Lee, p. 100.
44. D. Dawson, Cities of the Gods. Communist Utopias in Greek Thought, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1992, p. 7. On political utopian literature, see Dawson's Introduction (pp. 3-12) and his first two chapters (pp. 13-52, 53-110). Chapter one discusses the use of various utopias in Greek thought, and chapter two largely deals with Plato's use of a utopian model in Republic. Laws is also discussed.
45. Jaeger, 1986a, p. 201. See also Dawson on Hippodamus (pp. 21-26) and Phaleas' achievements (pp. 29-35).
46. Dawson, p. 7. Jaeger also believes that such models "acted as a goad" for social and political reform (1986a, p. 201).
47. Dawson, front flyleaf.
48. Dawson, p. 7. Bloom, however, does not believe that Republic was designed to be an educational or political model. Rather, he sees it as a satire - "the greatest critique of political idealism ever written". (A. Bloom, The Republic of Plato, as cited in Dawson, p. 69).
50. This play is also known as Ecclesiaszusae.
51. See p. 4 of this thesis and nn. 34-5 of the Introduction.
52. Plato, Republic (370b).
53. Plato, Republic (370c).
54. For the instances where the principle of specialization occurs in Republic, and in the other dialogues, see p. 16 of this thesis and n. 143 of the Introduction.
55. Grube, p. 287. This is also the manner by which Annas (1981, p. 73) refers to this principle.
56. A. W. H. Adkins, among many others, in Polypragmasynive and "minding one's own business": A study in Greek social and political values, Classical Philology, 71, 1976, p. 316, refers to the specialization of labour by this name.
57. See pp. 30 of this thesis and nn. 2-4 of Meno. See also Socrates' argument in Republic (353a-4a).
58. Plato, Republic (601d).
59. Grube, pp. 216-17. On this paradox, see Plato, Meno (87d-88d), Protagoras (350d) and Republic (351a), as well as Protagoras (345d), Gorgias (509c), Laws (862aff) for its corollary - that nobody sins willingly. See also Xenophon, Memoirs of Socrates (III. 9. 5, IV. 6. 6.).
60. See p. 104 of this thesis and n. 22, above.
61. *Eu* (εὖ) = well, opposite to bad (κακός). It also implies “greatness, abundance, prosperity, easiness” (Liddell and Scott, pp. 321-2). *Daimon* (δαίμων) = one’s “daemon or genius”, “one’s lot or fortune” (Liddell and Scott, p. 172). Hence, to have *eudaimonia* implies that one has “prosperity, good fortune, wealth, well, happiness” (Liddell and Scott, p. 323). It should be noted that the Greeks did not believe that the value of *virtue* or *arête* to the individual was intrinsic to one, but rather, that it was valuable for its consequences. Such consequences could be “fame and renown, happiness in the predominantly materialistic sense of the pleasurable enjoyment of good things, and profit in the form of monetary wealth or the acquisition of material goods or rewards” (R. W. Hall, *Plato and the Individual*, Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1963, p. 40). That this is also Socrates’ view can be seen by his discussion and tale at the end of Book X of *Republic* on the immortality of the soul (608ff). Although Socrates demonstrates here not only that being just is its own reward, and so the good man can expect to be happy both in this life and the next, he also shows that such a man will be able to achieve a pre-eminent status in society (613c-d). This societal position would then allow him to obtain the monetary wealth and the material goods and rewards described above by Hall.


63. Barker, 1961, p. 172. On ignorance in democracies, see Plato, *Republic* (560a-c) as well as *Protagoras* (319b-d). Aristophanes, in his play *The Knights*, also portrays ignorance as being a feature of democratic governments. Demosthenes tells the sausage-seller that it is his *ignorance* (as well as his ignoble qualities, which Socrates would say were one and the same thing, since as no-one does wrong willingly, wrongdoing can only be due to ignorance) that will enable him to become a “Great Man” in the city *Aristophanes* (Trans. D. Barrett and A. H. Sommerstein), *The Knights/The Birds/The Assemblywomen (Ecclesiazousen)/Wealth*, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1978 (180ff).

64. Barker, 1961, p. 172. On factional fighting and democracies, see Plato, *Republic* (422c, 555c-d, 556c-7a, 559c-60a, 565a-b) and *Laws* (628b, 629c-d).


68. Plato, *Protagoras* (319e).

69. The Greeks termed such meddling, whether it be in the affairs of others, or in the affairs of state, to be “*polypragmosyne*” (πολυπραγμοσύνη) (Liddell and Scott, p. 658). “*Apragmosyne*” (απράγμοσύνη), that is, to be free from business or *pragmata* (πράγματα), was the term given to the opposite state (Liddell and Scott, p. 111). Hence, if one carried out the task for which one was best suited, and did not interfere in another’s task, one would be seen as *apragmosyne*. For more on the manner in which these terms were used in ancient Greek politics, see Adkins (n. 61, above), as well as V. Ehrenberg, *Polypragmosyne: A study in Greek politics*, *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 67, 1947, pp. 46-67. Ehrenberg discusses the use of these two terms by Thucydides, Aristophanes, Euripides, Xenophon and others - all of whom were either contemporaries or near contemporaries of Plato.

70. Indeed, as Annas remarks, “differences of talent are seen solely as means towards the greater good of the whole” (1981, p. 75).


74. Jaeger similarly notes the influence of medicine in Plato’s dialogues (1986a, p. 306; 1986b, p. 3), as does Guthrie (1995b, p. 164). See also *Protagoras* (352a), *Gorgias* (464a-6c, 518b-d), *Phaedrus*
(268a-c, 269a), Republic (382d, 389b-c, 459c-d). Laws (720a-c) and so on, for examples of Plato's use of medical analogies.

75. Jaeger, 1986a, p. 322; 1986b, p. 22. See also Plato, Republic (444d).

76. This refers to the doctrine of the mean - also known as the "golden mean". This doctrine is often associated with Aristotle or Horace, both of whom extol its practise (Flew, p. 134). However, according to Hutchinson, it has also been attributed to earlier sources: the Delphic oracle's "nothing in excess" (μηδὲν ἄγαν), and Theognis' "[t]ry for nothing excessive. The middle degree is best" (II. 335-6). D. S. Hutchinson, Doctrines of the mean and debate concerning skills in fourth-century medicine, rhetoric and ethics. Apeiron, 21, 1988, p. 18n.1. The doctrine commends the life of the mean, the "rational and virtuous course between extremes of excess - for example, temperance shunning both asceticism and profligacy" (Flew, p. 134). Thus in this doctrine, a balance or an harmony between the extremes of diet, exercise and temper was counselled for mental and physical health. Note that in Republic, Socrates, when discussing physical education, recommends moderation not only in sleeping habits, diet and exercise, but also in "contact with the Muses" (my italics) - that is, in "musical" education (404a-b, d-c, 410a, c-412b). See also Republic (591c-d) and Philebus (25e-6a). Plato (Trans. Fowler, H. N.) Philebus, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1995.

The writers of the Hippocratic corpus believed that there were elementary forces or qualities (Demartec) such as heat, cold, dry, moist, sweet and bitter, which were "active in the human body and that the perfect balance of the qualities whose number is not limited, constitutes health" (my italics). Therefore, not unlike the golden mean, in this doctrine, health was also said to be maintained by a proper balance - in this case, of opposites. Illness was thus seen as an imbalance, or a dominance of the wrong opposite. H. E. Sigerist. A History of Medicine. Vol. II, Early Greek. Hindu and Persian Medicine, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1987, pp. 318-19. Plato refers to this Hippocratic doctrine of the humours in both Symposium (186d-e) and Timaeus (82a).

77. As with the previous maxim (see n.76, above), this saying has also been attributed to many sources, among them, Juvenal, in his Satires ("mens sana in corpore sano"), and has "found use for many centuries as the stated educational goal of many schools: to train the body as well as the mind". E. Erlich Amo, Amas, Amat and More, Harper and Row, New York, NY, 1985, pp. 184-5. According to Hutchinson, Plato, throughout his dialogues, makes this analogy "between the goodness of the soul and the health of the body, from which it would seem to follow that what makes the body healthy is similar to what makes the soul good" (p. 17). See, for example, Gorgias (464a) and Republic (412a, 441c-4d (esp. 444d), 591b, d).

78. See nn.76-7, above.

79. Plato, Republic (373b).

80. See n.9, above.

81. Amas, 1981, p. 77. See also in Republic, where, after having discussed the living conditions as well as the musical and physical education of the Guardians, Socrates comments to Glaucion and Adeimantus that in doing so, "we have all unaware purged the city which a little while ago we said was luxurious" (399e).

82. Plato, Republic (373a-b). Shorey suggests that the "girls" to which Socrates refers here are the flute girls who play at men's banquets and drinking parties (1994, p. 160n.3), and cites Symposium (176c) as evidence. See also Meno (347e-d).

83. Plato, Republic (373b).

84. For a discussion on Socrates' earlier references to poets in Republic, see p. 104 of this thesis and nn.25-26, above.
85. For a previous reference to this passage, see p. 99 of this thesis and nn. 141-52 of chapter three, Introduction.

86. See, for example, Plato’s Philebus, where Protarchus, in opposition to Socrates’ negative assessment of music (i.e., μουσική, such as poetry), that it is “full of guesswork and imitation (μιμήσεως) and lacked purity”, declares that even if this is so, the knowledge of such works is still necessary to man’s life “if our life is to be life at all” (62b-c). From what has been previously discussed, this also seems to be the view of the Greek public (see p. 102 of this thesis and nn. 184-7 of chapter three, Introduction. See also M. C. Nussbaum, Poetry, goodness, and understanding in Plato’s Phaedrus. In: J. Moravcsik and P. Temko (eds.) Plato on Beauty, Wisdom and the Arts, Rowman and Littlefield, Totowa, NJ, 1982, pp. 114-15, who discusses this passage in Philebus.

87. Plato, Republic (373d).

88. Plato, Republic (369b).

89. Plato, Republic (373e). In Plato’s Phaedo, Socrates similarly notes to Simmias that unnecessary desires are the cause of wars (66c). Therefore, that which exceeds the requirements of necessity (as in Republic 373b) can be assumed to cater also to unnecessary desires (as in Phaedo 66c), and so will lead to war and other evils. See also Shorey, 1994a, p. 164n. 5. Unnecessary desires are again discussed by Socrates in Republic (5586-9d). Here too, it could be said that unnecessary desires lead to war and other evils - in this case, the stasis or factional fighting (see n. 295, below) which results in the overthrow of the democratic state and the establishment of tyranny.

90. On the principle of specialization, see pp. 106-7 of this thesis and nn. 52-71, above.

91. Plato, Republic (374c). See also (370c), as well as p. 106 of this thesis.

92. Socrates first mentions the term “guardians” at Republic (374e). But see also (414b, 428d). This guardian class will later be divided by Socrates into two separate classes: the auxiliaries (the soldiers) and the guardians (the philosopher-rulers).

93. Plato, Republic (374e).

94. Plato, Republic (376c). On the kaloi kagathoi, see p. 53 of this thesis and n. 28 of Meno.

95. As Lee notes, “(c)ourage requires “high spirits”” or thymoeides (θυμοειδής). “The Greek word, which this phrase translates, is used by Plato to cover a group of characteristics such as pugnacity, enterprise, ambition, indignation, which he will later regard as one of the three main elements of the mind or personality...”mettle” or “spirit” is a fair translation, and the slang term “guts” and the politician “vitality” have a somewhat similar meaning” (pp. 109-10). Liddell and Scott translate this word as “high-spirited, courageous”, but also as “hot-tempered, restive” (p. 371). It is derived from thymos (θυμός) - which can also mean “mind” or “soul”.

96. Plato, Republic (376c).

97. Plato, Republic (375c). See also T. A. Sinclair, Plato’s philosophical dog (Republic ii. 375a-376c), Classical Review, 62, 1948, pp. 61-2, a short note on the manner in which Socrates’ reference to the guardians as the “watchdogs” of the state should be understood - as a parody of the “Nature” school of sophists (p. 62).

98. Guthrie, 1993b, p. 450. Guthrie also notes that the term for “spirited”, used by Plato when describing the three main types of impulse in the psyche, is also the term he uses here, to describe one element in the guardian’s nature - θυμοειδής (thymoeides).

99. Plato believes that what one is taught, that is, “science and training” (see Republic 374e), is different from one’s “nature” or character, which is inherent. See also Shorey, 1994a, p. 173n. 5. Both Isocrates and Plato discuss, in their works, the importance of these three factors - talent (physis),
training (melēτē) and knowledge (epistēmē) to education. See Isocrates’ Antidosis (156-88) and Against the Sophists (14-17). Isocrates (Trans. G. Norlin) Discourses. In: Isocrates. Vol. II. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1992. See also Plato’s Phaedrus (269d): Pericles is used by Plato in this dialogue as an example of one who has benefited, in his education, from having had all three factors (270a). For a discussion of this issue, see Jaeger, 1986b, pp. 63, 191, 305n.69, 332n.53.

102. On the musical arts and gymnastics as the basis of Athenian education, see p. 80 of this thesis and n.63 of Laws. See also Republic (410b-12a) on the need, in education, for a correct balance between these two areas.

103. On the musical arts (mousike), see pp. 2, 13 of this thesis and n.125 of the Introduction. Dance, as an element of the musical arts, and so of Athenian education, is not discussed in Republic. However, it is discussed, at length, in Laws.

104. Indeed, Socrates even comments that it would be difficult to improve upon this educational system “which long time has discovered” (Plato, Republic 376e). See also Statesman (300b) and Laws (844a), where the same argument is used by Plato to defend existing laws.


106. That the works of the poets were used in ancient Athens to teach children (as well as adults) moral behaviour has been discussed. See, for example, pp. 2-4 of this thesis and nn.9-28 of the Introduction.

107. Plato, Republic (392c). Plato refers to the content or subject matter of poetry as λόγον (logon, the matter), and to its form or style as λέξεως (lexeos, the manner). See also Shorey, 1994a, p. 224a.


109. Plato, Republic (376c). See also (403c-d, 404c, 411a-12a) for further references by Socrates to the influence of the musical arts on the soul.

110. Plato, Republic (376c). The Greek word ψευδος (pseudos) could be equally applied to tales which are based on the writer’s imagination, and so are untrue - that is, “novels” or “fiction” - and to those which are told in order to deceive - “lies”. Plato uses pseudos in both cases. See also Cornford’s explanation, as cited in Sorbron, p. 118n.2, as well as Lee, p. 114n.1.

111. Sorbron, p. 118.

112. Plato, Republic (377b).

113. Plato, Republic (379a).

114. Plato, Republic (377c).

115. The Greek word τυπος (typos) can refer to “a print or impress of a seal”, “a form, a mould, a model” (Liddell and Scott, p. 824). Its use here (Plato, Republic 379a) appears to refer to Socrates’ earlier statement, that the age at which a child should commence education is when he is very young, as at such an age he is “best moulded and takes the impression (τυπος) that one wishes to stamp upon it” (377b). This typical Socratic/Platonic play on words continues throughout this discussion on poetry and poetic mimesis in Books II and III (see 380c, 383c, 387c, 398d).

116. Both Jaeger (1986a, p. 403n.74) and Bloom (1991, p. 352) seem to suggest this. In Republic, the four cardinal virtues are said to be wisdom, courage, temperance and justice (427e). However, piety was often considered by the Greeks to be also one of the cardinal virtues. This seems to be the case not only in Plato’s Euthyphro, but it is also intimated in the dialogue under discussion - in Republic (386a) (Shorey, 1994, p. 200n.4). That piety was so considered can also be seen elsewhere in Greek literature, such as in Pindar’s Nemean (III. 74). Bowra, with regard to the lines 70-5 of this ode, notes that “(t)here are three ages of man - youth, maturity and old age. In each the four traditional virtues, wisdom, justice, reverence (i.e., piety), and temperance, must be applied to the right conditions at the

115. Socrates’ words in Republic, that certain beliefs of men, having been formed in childhood from exposure to such poems, later prove to be “indelible and unalterable” (378e) seem to be supported by the case of Euthyphro, in Plato’s dialogue of the same name. Now a young adult, Euthyphro still fervently believes that the tales which the poets tell of the immorality of the gods are true (6a-c).


117. See also p. 24 of this thesis and n.24 of chapter two, Introduction.

118. Plato, Republic (377e-378c). For other examples of Plato’s use of the language of exclusion with regards to poetry, see (378d-91e).


120. Jaeger, 1986a, p. 213. Even though Plato’s criticism of the content of poetry was more radical than anything previous, Ferrari considers that it “had both philosophical and more conventionally poetic precedent (for example in Xenophon and Pindar)” (1989, p. 110). The bibliographic references to these works are cited by Ferrari, 1989, p. 110n.19. See also Janaway, 1995, p. 88n.23.


122. Jaeger, 1986a, p. 213. See also Plato, Republic (378c-d).

123. See p. 5 of this thesis and nn.43-5 of the Introduction.

124. And, as has been mentioned earlier, “happy” citizens make for “happy” societies (see pp. 106, 108 of this thesis and nn.57-61, 86, above). On the principle of specialization, see pp. 106-7 of this thesis and nn.52-73, above.

125. That this concept is not a new one, can be seen in the pre-Platonic poetic examples used by Koller, Else and Sorbom (nn.45, 47, 51, 53, 58, 59, 60, 61 of chapter three, Introduction. However, both Ferrari (1989, pp. 114-15) and Janaway (1995, p. 94n.39) suggest that Plato’s application of the concept of mimesis to poetry in Republic, Book III may be a novel one. That is, even if the terms that Socrates uses in Republic, Book III, are not “Platonic neologisms” (Ferrari, 1989, p. 115), the manner in which he technically applies them here, and the context in which he explains them, is new. See also p. 96 of this thesis and nn.104-8 of chapter three, Introduction on this issue.

126. See pp. 97-8 of this thesis and nn.119-30 of chapter three, Introduction.

127. How not only a poet, rhapsode or actor, but also a schoolchild, was expected to recite or act out poetry, was discussed earlier, on pp. 97-8 of this thesis. See also nn.127-130 of chapter three, Introduction.

128. The effects of mimesis or dramatic identification on one is shown in Ion (535b-c). On this passage, see pp. 97 of this thesis and n.128 of chapter three, Introduction.

129. Plato, Republic (395d).

130. Sorbom, p. 123. See also Plato, Republic (402a, 522a). As Sorbom notes, it is in this latter passage that Socrates states that the music (mousike i.e., poetry) that he and his companions had earlier described (in Books II and III) “educated the guardians through habits” (my italics) (p. 123n.22). The meaning of the term “habit-formation”, which Sorbom uses to describe this process, is not unlike the manner in which it is also employed in modern psychology, in learning theory. Indeed, experimental psychologist C. L. Hull’s “drive” theory states that if an individual repeatedly performs a behaviour, then it is more likely that that behaviour will occur when similar conditions arise (as in the cowardice example used by Sorbom, see n.131, below). See B. B. Wolman (ed.), *Dictionary of Behavioral Science*, Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, New York, NY, 1973, p. 167 and D. G. Mook,
131. Sorbom, p. 124.
132. On the cardinal virtues of Greek society, see p. 110 of this thesis, and n. 114, above.
133. Plato. Republic (395e). Janaway refers to this process as the “Principle of Assimilation”, which states that “people come to resemble whatever they enact” (1995, pp. 96-7).
134. For an earlier discussion of the principle of specialization in Republic, see pp. 106-7 of this thesis and n. 52-71, above.
136. Sorbom, p. 122.
137. That watching another act out a part takes the form of dramatic representation or imaginative identification, see the discussion on Ion, pp. 37-8, 40, 43, 44 of this thesis. That this is also true for one when reciting or singing such a part oneself, see pp. 97-8, 101-2 of this thesis. See also Janaway, 1995, p. 96 (and n. 43).
140. Plato. Republic (394e).
141. Indeed, Socrates does not believe that the same man can practise well even the same two forms of imitation “that appear most nearly akin” - as in the writing of tragedy and comedy - and nor can the same actor act well in both (Republic 395a). However, in Symposium, Socrates appears to contradict this statement when he tells the poets Agathon and Aristophanes that the same individual “could have the knowledge required for writing comedy and tragedy - (and) that the fully skilled tragedian could be a comedian as well” (223d). See Shorey, 1904a, p. 233n.4 and Janaway, 1995, p. 75, on this passage. The statement that the Athenian makes in Laws, that “it is impossible to learn the serious without the comic” (816c), also appears to contradict the Socrates of Republic (395a).
142. See p. 106 of this thesis.
143. See p. 109 of this thesis and n. 92-8, above.
144. See p. 106 of this thesis.
145. See pp. 112 of this thesis and n. 128-31, 133, above.
146. Plato. Republic (401b-d, 425a) and throughout chapters 2 and 3. Laws.
149. Plato. Republic (395c).
150. The work of craftsmen was classified as banauy (sec p. 77 of this thesis and n. 26 of Laws), and so beneath the dignity of educated men such as the guardians, who are members of the kaloikathagoi (see p. 109 of this thesis and n. 94, above).
152. Janaway, 1995, p. 98 (at p. 98n.30, Janaway cites others who are in agreement with this point).
155. On the “patterns” or typoi of poetry determined by Socrates and his companions to be suitable for the education of the guardians, see Republic (377a-92c) as well as p. 110 of this thesis and n. 113, above.
156. The mimetic poet of Republic and the inspired poet of Ion are both described by Plato in a similar way. Just as the poet in Ion is inspired and so “divine” - a “light, winged and sacred thing” (534b) - so
too in Republic the mimetic poet who is to be exiled is regarded as an "holy and wondrous and delightful creature" (398a). See also pp. 7-8 of this thesis and nn. 67-70 of the Introduction.


159. The aulos, a wind instrument, was not only used "in many religious contexts, in drama and other forms of choral performance, at weddings, symposia and revels generally", but was also the principal instrument of the Dionysiac cult and the mystery religions (Barker, 1996, p. 1005). Anderson also associates the music of the aulos with the ritual activities of the Bacchantes and Corybantes (on these worshippers, see pp. 27, 61, 85, 87 of this thesis and n. 70 of chapter two, Introduction, n. 7 of Phaedrus and nn. 126, 128, 149 of Laws), and so with madness and orgiastic behaviour (1966, pp. 65, 68).


161. In Republic (398d), song is said by Socrates to be composed of these three elements. See also Gorgias (502c), Republic (601b) and Laws (669d-e) on the elements of which poetry is composed.

162. On narrative in poetry as either direct speech or mimesis, see pp. 97-8 of this thesis and nn. 170-32 of chapter three, Introduction. For a further discussion of mimesis in poetry, see pp. 112-15 of this thesis and nn. 125-56, above.

163. Sorbon, p. 125. In Laws, the Athenian Stranger notes that musical compositions - that is, poetry and song - are mimetic (655d, 663b, 669b).

164. As Sorbon remarks, the "literal" rendition of certain sounds, such as animal noises, is obviously a tendency in contemporary Greek music that Plato not only dislikes, but also believes debased (p. 126n. 27). See Plato, Republic (396b, 397a) as well as Laws (669e).

165. Plato, Republic (399a).

166. Sorbon, p. 126.

167. Sorbon, p. 125. On harmony in music, see Plato, Republic (399a, c) and on rhythm, see (399e-400a). In Laws, the Athenian stranger defines harmony and rhythm, either bodily or vocal, thusly: "the order in motion is called "rhythm", while the order in voice, "harmony"" (665a). The combination of the two is "choristry" (665a) - that is, (group) singing. See also the discussion on p. 79 of this thesis and n. 56 of Laws.

168. The effects of harmony and rhythm on the soul are discussed in Timaeus (47d, e). For Laws, see p. 79 of this thesis and nn. 53-9 of Laws.

169. On the use of indirect speech in lyric poetry, see p. 97 of this thesis and nn. 120-2 of chapter three, Introduction. On the use of direct speech or mimesis in tragedy and comedy, see pp. 97-8 of this thesis and nn. 123-32 of chapter three, Introduction.

170. Plato, Republic (401d), as well as (601b).

171. Plato, Republic (401d).

172. Plato, Republic (398d). See also (400a, d). According to Shorey, originally, poets composed their own music to fit their poetry (see p. 82 of this thesis and n. 91 of Laws). Later developments in music changed this practice (see n. 176, below).


175. Plato, Laws (669d-e).
As has been noted, poetry was seen as the didactic tool of the polis - in civic and moral virtue (see pp. 2-4 of this thesis and nn. 6-38 of the Introduction). However, as Barker notes, these developments toward instrumental music, "spelled the downfall of an integrated art closely allied to religion and civic tradition: ... (as well as) the emancipation of pure music from ritual, and crucially, from poetry, which came gradually to be seen as a separate art. This musical revolution went hand in hand with the radical political and social changes of the late fifth century" (1996, p. 1006). The Damonian prediction that Plato adopts in both Republic and Laws, that changes to a society's music results in changes to its social and political systems, seems to have been borne out in this case. On the Damonian theory of music and societal change, see Republic (424c). This same point is made in Laws (700d-1b, 719b).

See also pp. 83-4 of this thesis and nn.109-15 of Laws.

Earlier in Republic, when discussing the content of poetry, Socrates states that dirges and lamentations would be harmful to the guardians in that they imply that death is something "terrible", and so to be feared (387d-8e). Their performance, he believes, would thus instill fear in the guardians, and could well induce in them an excess of grief, neither of which Socrates believes are appropriate emotional responses for the guardians of the city - considering they have been chosen for, among other moral qualities, their courage (375bff) and their temperance (389d). Furthermore, since Socrates does not believe that death is a terrible thing, and so something to be feared (as well as Republic 387d, see also Apology 40c-1d, Gorgias 527c and throughout Phaedo), he would also believe that dirges and lamentations for the dead person on the part of his relatives or friends would be unnecessary.

Malakia (μαλακία) is a softness and delicacy of character. This possibly indicated to the Greeks that one possessed of such a quality would also show the more "feminine" traits of weakness and cowardice (Liddell and Scott, p. 486) - ones which would not be considered desirable in the guardians, the defenders of the city.

That temperance and courage are two qualities that Socrates desires in the guardians, see also n.178, above.

Anderson, 1966, pp. 107-8, 109 and L. Harap, Some Hellenic ideas on music and character. Musical Quarterly, 24, 1938, p. 151. Harap (p. 151n.20) and Anderson (1966, p. 73) also report Aristotle’s belief, in Politics, that Plato was mistaken in the notion of the ethos of the Phrygian mode in Republic (cited in Harap). Haigh similarly notes that the Phrygian mode was considered both "passionate and enthusiastic" (p. 321). The connection of this mode with religious ecstasy can also be seen in Euripides' Bacchanales (Bacchae); "On, Bacchanaul maidens...glad-pacing the glad God's praise out with Phrygian cries and the voice of singing..." (my italics) (159). See also n.184, below, on Plato's Laches (188d).

Such religious fervour was demonstrated by the Bacchantes (see Bacchanals, n.182, above) and the Corybantes - the worshippers to whom Plato compares the inspired poets in Ion (534a, 536b, 536c), Phaedrus (245a) and Laws (700d). On this association, see pp. 27, 35, 61, 63, 85 of this thesis and n.70 of chapter two (Introduction), n.47 of Ion, nn.7, 36, 38 of Phaedrus and nn.126, 128 of Laws. Thus it
would seem that the Phrygian mode is a curious choice for Socrates to make for the musical education of the guardians.

184. Plato, *Laches* (188d). Indeed, in this dialogue, Laches sees the Dorian mode as the "sole Hellenic harmony" (188d). This statement can be seen as an example of Plato’s admiration of certain Spartan customs. This tendency of Plato’s can be seen throughout *Republic*, such as in his incorporation of their communal meals (*syssitia*) and the manner in which they raised children - by separating them from their families and raising them communally - into his ideal state. Shorey states that the Dorian mode had "a manly, stately character" (1994, p. 39n.2). Note that in the same passage, Laches is distainful of the Phrygian mode (188d) (see n.182, above).

185. Anderson, 1966, pp. 73, 74-5. As Anderson notes,

"it appears reasonable to believe that Plato used Damonian theories for his own independently established ends, adopting some points and discarding others, doubtless with compromises not now perceptible... (but) (i) is time to discard the old idea of Plato as an unoriginal musical theorist, a mere Damonian echo. Where predecessors had laid a secure foundation, he built on the past; but he built powerfully, daringly, and above all, with individualism" (1966, pp. 80-1).

See also p. 81 of this thesis and n.73 of *Laws* on the Damonian theory of music.


188. A cithara or *kithara* was a stringed musical instrument, a type of lyre - a box-lyre - which was plucked with the fingers or with a plectrum. "(S)everal strings could be struck in a single sweep, while the left hand’s fingers damped those not intended to sound" (Barker, 1996, pp. 1004-5).

189. For the use of shepherds, to soothe their animals, in their fields. Note that this is a specific and limited use. See p. 116 of this thesis for the argument concerning musical instruments with a wide harmonic range.

190. Marsyas, a satyr, was believed to have invented, or to have found, the *aulos* or double flute, which Athene had cast aside because she believed that in playing the instrument she distorted her facial beauty. The satyr then challenged Apollo, on his *kithara*, to a competition, but lost, and was flayed alive by the god. K. Dowden, Marsyas. In: S. Hornblower and A. Spawforth (eds.), *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1996, p. 930. Satyrs such as Marsyas were portrayed as creatures with some animal features, "unrestrained in their desire for sex and wine", and generally represented naked. R. A. S. Seaford, Satyrs and Silens. In: S. Hornblower and A. Spawforth (eds.), *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1996, p. 1361. It would thus seem logical that the music of the *aulos*, the musical instrument most commonly associated with Marsyas and the satyrs, was similarly thought of as being wild and abandoned. That this is so can be seen in Plato’s *Symposium*, where Alcibiades refers to the emotional effect that *aulos* music can have on an individual (215c). See also n.192, below.

191. Anderson, 1966, p. 68. See also pp. 108-9, 259n.92, where Anderson notes the close association of *aulos* music with the Phrygian mode, and hence with ecstatic religion (n.192, above).

192. According to Graf, "Apollo’s instrument is the lyre (kithara) whose well-ordered music is opposed to the ecstatic rhythms of flute and drums which belong to Dionysus" (my italics) (1996a, p. 122). See also nn.180, 191, above.


195. Anderson, 1966, p. 67. See also Plato, Symposium, where Alcibiades states that the emotional effect of aulos music on one does not depend on whether the player is a "fine flute-player or a paltry flute-girl". Indeed, as he continues, no matter who plays the aulos, "they have no equal for exciting a ravishment, and will indicate by the divinity that is in them who are apt recipients of the deities and their sanctifications" (215c).

196. Plato, Republic (399e). Cf. (372d-3d). See also pp. 107-8 of this thesis and nn.73, 81, above.


198. Plato, Republic (399e).

199. Janaway, 1995, p. 103. See also Plato, Republic (400d-e).

200. Plato, Republic (398e, 399a).


204. On the principle of specialization, see pp. 59-60, 106-7 of this thesis and nn.109-12 of Meno and nn.52-71 of Republic.

205. Plato, Republic (379a).

206. Plato, Republic (401b).

207. As Socrates states here, "if education is good, it will bring to one balance and fairness, but if it is bad, the opposite" (Plato, Republic 401d-2a). This is from the Lee translation of Republic. Unless otherwise specified, the Shorey translation of Republic is used throughout this thesis.

208. On the importance of early education to Plato, see the discussion on p. 78 of this thesis and nn.39-44 of Laws.

209. Plato, Republic (377b). See also p. 110 of this thesis and nn.111-13, above.


211. Plato, Republic (401c).

212. See p. 112 of this thesis and n.128, above.

213. See p. 112 of this thesis and n.129, above.

214. Plato, Republic (378d). See also pp. 103-4, 109 of this thesis.


216. Jaeger, 1986a, p. 358. On true (or right) opinion and knowledge, see earlier discussions on pp. 53-4 of this thesis. Note that with regard to right action, true opinion can have the same effect as knowledge.


219. Annas, 1981, p. 335. Indeed, Annas even states that "we are driven by the peculiarties of Book 10 to see it as an excrescence" (my italics). She believes that Plato "clearly wanted to add extra material on points that he felt had not been adequately or forcefully enough treated. But the result is that Book 10 itself appears gratuitous and clumsy and full of oddities" (p. 335). See also p. 96 of this thesis and nn.110-12 of chapter three, Introduction.

220. Guthrie, 1995b, p. 544n.2. Halliwell agrees. As he states, "(t)hat Plato intended bk. 10 to be integral to the work is demonstrated by the large number of references to earlier arguments: see 595a5, 7.8, 596a6, 602e8, 603d5, e5, 607b1-2, 612b2ff., b4, 613c8, e1" (1988, p. 24n.1). Ferrari also concurs with these judgements (1989, p. 125n.43).

221. Plato, Republic (392c).
223. For a discussion of Socrates’ method of analysis in *Republic*, in his comparison of the state and the individual, see pp. 104-5 of this thesis and nn.37-31, above.
226. Some critics have dismissed this procedure, believing it to be “worthless” (R. C. Cross and A. D. Woolley, *Plato’s Republic. A Philosophical Commentary*, Macmillan, London, 1964, pp. 104-5), involving a “fallacy” (Annas, 1981, p. 111). This is because these four virtues are not shown by Socrates to be the only ones existing in the state. See also Annas, 1981, p. 110, Guthrie, 1995b, p. 471n.3 and n.119, above, on Socrates’ omission of the virtue of piety (*οὐκομητία*). In his commentary in *The Republic of Plato*, J. Adam indicates that the doctrine of the four cardinal virtues was likely “a familiar tenet of the Platonic school”, and that its pedigree was possibly Pythagorean (Vol. 1, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1969n, p. 224).
228. On the guardians and auxiliaries, see n.92, above.
231. Plato, *Republic* (430a). See also p. 109 of this thesis and nn.100-2, above, on the musical arts and gymnastics as the basis of Athenian education.
232. In Book III, Socrates criticizes such poetry as encouraging fear and cowardice among men (Plato, *Republic* 386a-8e). See also pp. 110-11 of this thesis and nn.114-18, above.
237. In Book III, Socrates criticizes such poetry as encouraging a lack of self-control or temperance among men (Plato, *Republic* 388d-91e). See also pp. 110-11 of this thesis and nn.114-18, above.
239. On the principle of specialization, as discussed earlier to this point in *Republic*, see (353a-4a, 370b-c, 374b-c, 394c-5b, 397d-e, 406c, 406c-7a, 412a, 415a-c, 421c, 423d). See also pp. 106-7 of this thesis and nn.52-71, above. The economic and physical consequences of adopting or not adopting the principle of specialization is also pertinent to the three gentlemen’s earlier discussion on the origins of society. See Plato, *Republic* (369b-70c) and the discussion on p. 106 of this thesis and nn.52-4, above.
240. Plato, *Republic* (433a). *Polypragmosyne* is discussed in n.69, above.
241. On this procedure, see n.236, above.
242. That is, justice is “a quality which made it possible for them all to grow up in the body politic and which when sprung up preserves them as long as it is present” (Plato, *Republic* 433b).
243. As noted by Nettleship. As he states, “(o)ne is apt to think of virtues as abstractions, or as, so to say, appendages hung on man. He (Plato) emphatically represents them as forces, powers (*δύναμεις*) to do something: a man of great virtue in Greek means a man of great power of doing certain things” (p. 149). This reading is confirmed by Liddell and Scott. *dynamis* (*δύναμις*) = generally, “strength,
power, ability to do a thing...a...faculty, capacity" (p. 213).
244. Cornford notes that justice is “a principle of differentiation and specialization of the parts”. When
considered as “virtues of a whole consisting of different parts. Justice and Sophrosyne are
complimentary”. A state with three classes “which had only Justice, would not be united: it would be a
mere aggregate of three separate classes, each doing its own work and not interfering with the rest.
Justice thus keeps the parts distinct; Sophrosyne is needed to hold them together” (1912, p. 248).
245. Plato, Republic (435e).
246. The logical procedure employed by Socrates here is known by various names. Nettleship refers to
it as the “Law of Identity and Contradiction” (p. 155), Annas (1981, pp. 137) as the “Principle of
Conflict”, and Guthrie (1995b, p. 474), as the “principle of non-contradiction”. In Republic, it is stated
thusly: “the same thing will never do or suffer opposites in the same respect in relation to the same
thing and at the same time” (436b). Therefore, if Socrates can demonstrate that there are such
contradictions in the functions of the soul, he can then presume “that it was not the same thing
functioning but a plurality” (436c). That is, that the soul is composed of more than one element. It is
unnecessary to go into the intricacies of this argument for the purposes of this thesis. A detailed
critique of this argument can be found in Cornford (1912, pp. 260-2) and Annas (1981, pp. 124-5, 137-
9).
247. Plato, Republic (439d).
248. Plato, Republic (439e, 441a).
249. Plato, Republic (436b, 437b, d, 439a, d, 439c-440a, 440b, 442a-b, 580e-1a).
251. Plato, Republic (580e-1a).
253. See n.247, above. Plato, Republic (581b-c). See also (439d, 580d).
254. Annas, 1981, pp. 125-6. An example of such practical wisdom is shown by Plato in Republic
(440a-d).
256. Plato, Republic (440d, e, 441a).
257. Plato, Republic (441a).
258. Nettleship, p. 157 and Plato, Republic (439c, 440a, 441b). See also n.95, above.
259. Nettleship, p. 157 and Plato, Republic (440a-d, 441b-c). See also n.95, above.
260. Plato, Republic (581b). See also n.95, above.
262. Plato, Republic (441e). Earlier in Republic, when Socrates is concluding the discussion on the
guardians’ musical education, he remarks to his friends that a good blend of music and gymnastics
should bring about an “harmonious adjustment” of the two principles of high-spiritedness and the love
of knowledge “by the proper degree of tension and relaxation of each” (411e-12a). See also pp. 80-1 of
this thesis and nn.62-75 of Laws, for a discussion of education as a synthesis of music and gymnastics,
and nn.231, 242, above.
263. Plato, Republic (442a). See also (433b-c) on the principle of specialization as it relates to the
justice of the state.
264. Plato, Republic (442b). See also (389d-91d), on the need for a state, if it is to function well, to
have its citizens obey and support the rule of reason and control their desires, and how some poetry
fails to convey this important message.
265. Or, as Guthrie explains, justice is “not identical with the principle of division of labour but
analogous to it (τοῦτον τὶ, 443c), and the principle itself is an image or reflection (εἰδωλὸν) of justice" (author's italics) (1995b, p. 475).

266. Nettleship, p 160.

267. Plato, Republic (443d).

268. Plato, Republic (443d-e).

269. Socrates' statement, at (443e-4a), supports his familiar thesis that virtue (in this case, justice) is knowledge. The corollary of this thesis is that no one does wrong willingly. Vice (injustice), therefore, must be due to ignorance - this is also borne out in Socrates' statement. See Guthrie (1971a, pp. 130-42) for a discussion of these Socratic theses. See also n.59, above.

270. On Plato's use of medical analogies, see p. 107 of this thesis and n.74, above.

271. Plato, Republic (444c).


273. See pp. 120-2 of this thesis and nn.231-2, 236-7, 257, 262-3, above, on the various statements made earlier by Socrates on the effect of good and bad education on the characters of the individuals within the classes of the state, as well as on the concord between the reasoning and spirited elements (which in turn affects the strength and thus the behaviour of the desiring element - see 442a-b) as to which element is to control the soul and which elements are to be subordinate.

274. Plato, Republic (445a).

275. Plato, Republic (445b). Earlier in Republic, at (353d), Socrates posits to Thrasymachus that if the function of the soul is to live well, its excellence or virtue would be to live well. Therefore, the description of the soul at (445a) as "the very nature and constitution of that whereby we live" is appropriate. Furthermore, using the earlier argument, it would follow that if the soul were "disordered and corrupted" as it is said at (445b), the soul would then no longer be able to perform its specific function, and so the quality of one's life would be impaired - that is, as it would no longer possess excellence, one could no longer live well.

276. Plato, Republic (445b).

277. As Shorcy notes, this statement suggests the Socratic principle of the unity of virtue (1994a, p. 422n.a). This principle is discussed in such early Platonic dialogues as Laches and Charmides, and demonstrates that even though it seems that there are separate virtues - courage, temperance, piety and the like - there is really only one form of goodness or virtue, because all virtues are reducible to knowledge - the knowledge of that which is good and that which is bad.

278. Plato, Republic (445e). Aristocracy (αριστοκρατία) is "the rule of the best" (Liddell and Scott, p. 117). That is, aristos (αριστός) = "best in its kind", "best, noblest, bravest" (Liddell and Scott, p. 117); krateros (κρατήρος) = "strong, stout, mighty" - as in power (Liddell and Scott, p. 448).

279. Plato, Republic (445c).

280. Plato, Republic (424c). This so-called Damonian thesis (with which Plato obviously agrees - but see also Anderson, 1966, pp. 75, 77-9, 80-1, on Damon's views), noted by Socrates in Republic, of the importance to the state of the immutability of the musical curriculum, was discussed earlier in this thesis with regard to Laws. See pp. 83-6 of this thesis, nn.109-13, 127-134, 136-140 of Laws and n.185, above.

281. As Socrates had noted earlier in the dialogue, the development of one's character depends on the type of poetry that one is taught (Plato, Republic 401a). See also discussion on p. 118 of this thesis.

282. Plato, Republic (435c). This is from the Lee translation of Republic.

283. Plato, Republic (387e). On mimetic poetry and its effects on the character or soul of the individual, see also the discussion on pp. 112-18 of this thesis and nn.122-295, above.
284. Plato, Republic (424a). See also n.280, above.

285. Plato, Laws (816d-e). This is true for any skill (τεχνην). For example, to be a carpenter, one must have understanding of not only what is a good technique for measuring and sawing wood, but also of what is a bad technique, so that one may learn from the good and avoid the bad. This is also true for virtue (προετοιμασία), as all virtues can be reduced to the knowledge of what is good and what is bad (see n.277, above).

286. Aristotle appears to see the order in which Plato presents the unjust states in Republic as an historical one, and so criticizes him on that basis: that is, that the various states either did evolve or could evolve in an order other than that which Socrates describes. Aristotle (Trans. T. A. Sinclair) The Politics, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1992 (V. xii. 1316a17-b29). See also Annas, 1981, pp. 294-5. However, just because the order in which the states are presented is not historical, that is not to say that Plato does not employ, in his descriptions, aspects of states which were either contemporaneous with him, such as Sparta (timarchy/oligarchy), or with which he had personal experience, such as Athens (democracy) and Syracuse (tyranny).

287. Plato, Republic (544d-e). See also n.9, above.


290. Plato, Republic (545b). At (368d-9a), Socrates first explains the usefulness of this procedure. It is also discussed on pp. 104-5, 120 of this thesis and nn.37-47, 223-4, above.

291. See n.284, above.

292. See n.796, above.

293. Timokratia or timarchion is, literally, “a rule by honour”. That is, time (τυμη) = “worship, esteem, honour” (Liddell and Scott, p. 807); archos (αρχος) = “a leader, chief, commander” (Liddell and Scott, p. 122), and krateros (κρατερος) = “strong, stout, mighty” - as in power (Liddell and Scott, p. 448).


296. Plato, Republic (546d). Eugenes, from which the modern term “eugenics” derives, is “well-born, of noble race, of high-descent” (Liddell and Scott, p. 323). At Republic (458c-461e), Socrates discusses the eugenics program of the ideal state.

297. Plato, Republic (546d).

298. Plato, Republic (547a).

299. Plato, Republic (548b-c). When concluding his discussion of the education of the auxiliaries, Socrates refers to an hypothetical individual, who is very similar to the timarchic individual, in that both prefer gymnastics to the musical arts. Both souls possess much the same nature:

...at first he becomes “very fit and full of pride and high spirit and becomes more brave and bold than he was...”, but with no contact with the musical arts, “even if there was some principle of the love of knowledge in his soul, since it tastes of no instruction nor of an inquiry and does not participate in any discussion or any other form of culture, it becomes fickle, deaf and
blind..." (411d).

300. Plato, Republic (548c).
301. Plato, Republic (548e).
302. Plato, Republic (549b). See also n. 299, above.
303. On this Socratic paradox, see pp. 102, 106, 123 of this thesis and nn. 43, 59, 269, above.
304. Plato, Republic (550b).
305. Lee, p. 321. Although the Greek term oligos (ολίγος) is defined as "of number or quantity, few, little, scanty, small" (Liddell and Scott, p. 551), in The Politics, Aristotle also defines an oligarchy as not "where few are sovereign in the constitution" (IV. iv. 1290a35-6), but "when the rich are sovereign" (IV. iv. 1290a45) - presumably because the rich are usually few in number.
306. Socrates would consider a democracy to be equally unjust in that it also violates the principle of specialization in this manner. For just as an oligarchy chooses those who are to be in political authority by their wealth, rather than by their ability, a democracy chooses its politicians by the drawing of lots. See Plato, Protagoras (319b-d). See also pp. 60, 106-7 of this thesis and n. 112 in Meno and nn. 66-8, above.
307. A typical Platonic play on words. An oligarchy is, literally, "rule by the few" (see n. 305, above). Because the oligarchs are miserly and so unwilling to pay for men, the ranks of their army would be thin, and they would thus only be rulers of a "few".
308. Plato, Republic (552c). In Laws, the Athenian stranger similarly refers to individuals who are "indolent, careless and idle" by this term - as "sting-less drones" (901a).
309. Plato, Republic (552e).
310. Plato, Republic (553d).
311. Plato, Republic (554b).
312. Plato, Republic (555a). See also (443d-e).
313. Demokratia is the power, or rule, of the people. It is, therefore, "popular government" (Liddell and Scott, p. 183). That is, demos (δῆμος) = "the people of the country" (Liddell and Scott, p. 183); krateros (κρατερός) = "strong, stout, mighty" - as in power (Liddell and Scott, p. 448).
314. Plato, Republic (556b-c). See (410b-12a), where Socrates discusses the importance of an education which balances both "music and gymnastics" (411e). Both, he considers, are necessary for the "soul's sake" (410c). Thus it can be assumed that the oligarchs' dependants, in that they are "spoiled" (Sophoulos) and "soft" (μαλακος), and so averse to "toil of body and mind" (556b-c), have a lack in their intellectual and physical education. See also n. 317, below.
315. Jaeger, 1960a, p. 333. In turn, the democratic state perishes from "a surfeit of freedom" (Barker, 1961, p. 297), its distinguishing feature. See Plato, Republic (562b-d).
316. See pp. 125-6 of this thesis and nn. 287-9, above.
318. Plato, Republic (557a). See also n. 306, above.
319. Plato, Republic (557b).
320. Plato, Republic (558c).
321. Plato, Republic (557b). As Barker states:

"(i)n0g0rance was to Plato the especial curse of democracy. Here, instead of the professional, the amateur was predominant. In Athens especially democracy seemed only to mean the right divine of the ignorant to govern wrong. Any man may speak in the Assembly and sway decisions: any man, whatever his capacity, might be appointed to executive office by the chance
of the lot. Besides the inefficiency which it entailed, and the parade of false
equality which it involved, such a system was to Plato unjust" (1961, p.
173).

See also (558c) and n.306, above.

322. See pp. 122-3 of this thesis.

323. See pp. 118-19, 122 of this thesis and nn.211-13, 262, above. See also n.326, below.

324. Plato, Republic (558b).


326. Plato, Republic (558e-9a). Meletos refers to the "care" or "attention" paid by one to something, such as in "practice, exercise" (Liddell and Scott, p. 495), training or discipline. It was regarded by Plato to be a crucial component of education. See n.99, above.

327. Socrates terms the desire by which the soul of the oligarchic individual is ruled to be a "necessary" or "profitable" (χρηματιστικός, lit. "the art of money-making" Liddell and Scott, p. 894) desire in that it aids production (559c). "Unnecessary" desires are therefore "spendthrift" (σωζαλτικός. Αν αντιλοπτής is "a spender, waster" Liddell and Scott, p. 58), in that they are only for pleasure and are "wasters and not winners of wealth" (558d). See also p. 108 and n.89, above.


329. Plato, Republic (560b). Anepistemosyne is "want of knowledge, ignorance, unskilfulness" (Liddell and Scott, p. 68) - in this case, of how to bring up a child properly. As Jaeger notes, traditional education in ancient Athens always began in the home: it was the "transmission of the arete embodied in the father to his own children". The father was thus the "natural model for a son to imitate...the prototype of all teachers" (1986a, p. 345. See also p. 427n.359 for evidence of this practice in ancient Greek literature).

330. Plato, Republic (560c).


332. Plato, Republic (561e). The "manifold" or "versatile" democratic individual is not unlike the type of individual created by exposure to mimetic poetry, for both neglect the principle of specialization.

See pp. 112-13 (esp. pp. 124-5) of this thesis and nn.134-44 (esp. n.383), above.

333. Plato, Republic (561c-d).

334. Plato, Republic (561e).

335. See p. 128 of this thesis and nn.315-16, above.

336. Although tyrannis is "kingly power, sovereignty", it can also mean "absolute power, despotic rule" (Liddell and Scott, p. 824). This is because the term originally referred to the irregular manner in which the power was gained, and not the manner in which it was exercised, and so was applied equally to the mild rule of some kings and the oppressive rule of others. Eventually the term became one of reproach, and was then taken to refer to a rule that was "imperious, despotic" (Liddell and Scott, pp. 824-5).

337. Plato, Republic (562b). See also p. 128 of this thesis and n.315, above.

338. Plato, Republic (442a-b).

339. Socrates' proposition, that the same three elements exist in the individual as they do in the state, is discussed on pp. 121-3 of this thesis and nn.245-64, above.

340. Anarchos (αναρχος) literally means "without head or chief" - archon being a leader (Liddell and Scott, p. 62). Therefore, an anarchic state is one in which there is no ruling authority.

341. Socrates' vivid description of the democratic state's descent into anarchy and the manner in which anarchy permeates all quarters, is worth quoting in full:
"the father habitually tries to resemble the child and is afraid of his sons, and the son likens himself to the father and feels no awe or fear of his parents, so that he may be forsooth a free man. And the resident alien feels himself equal to the citizen and the citizen to him, and the foreigner likewise... (the) teacher...fears and fawns upon the pupils, and the pupils pay no heed to the teacher or their overseers either. And in general the young ape their elders and vie with them in speech and action, while the old, accommodating themselves to the young, are full of pleasantry and graciousness, imitating the young for fear they might be thought disagreeable and authoritative... (Finally,) slaves, male and female, are no less free than the owners who paid for them. And... the spirit of freedom and equal rights (existing) in the relation of men to women and women to men... (and) likewise the horses and asses are wont to hold on their way with the utmost freedom and dignity, bumping into everyone who meets them and who does not step aside" *(Republic 562e-3c).*

Examples of these kinds of behaviour are also reported by other authors who were contemporaries of Plato, such as Euripides, Aristophanes, Isocrates, Xenophon and Aristotle (see Shorey, 1994b, pp. 307n.a,b, 308n.a,b,c, 309n.a). See also M. Ostwald, *From Popular Sovereignty to the Sovereignty of Law, Law, Society, and Politics in Fifth-Century Athens,* University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, 1986, pp. 235-6, who lists similar examples.

342. Plato, *Republic* (563e). This extreme reaction by democratic citizens to any restriction in one's liberty is also reflected in Callicles' statement to Socrates in *Gorgias* that no man can be happy if he is "a slave to anybody at all" (491e). However, Callicles believes that living "rightly" or with "freedom" is to be able to fulfil one's desires completely without restrictions - to be free is to be "as strong as possible" without being chastened, so that "each appetite in turn" can be satisfied "with what it desires" (491c-2a). Therefore, as with the democratic citizens, Callicles has a very broad definition of what constitutes personal freedom, and, like them, appears to have very little tolerance for any restrictions that are placed upon it.

343. Plato, *Republic* (563e-4a). That this was regarded as a common law in ancient as well as modern times can be seen in Shorey (1994b, p. 312n.c).

344. As in an oligarchy, the drones existing in a democracy are a class of lazy and thriftless individuals. See p. 127 of this thesis and nn.308-9, above.

345. Socrates' reference to remarks supposedly made by Euripides at this point in the discussion, that "(t)yrants are wise because they converse with the wise" (see also Plato (Trans. W. R. M. Lamb), *Theages,* Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1986, 125d), and that their power is "likest God's" (568b), indicates that he believes that the poet approves not only of the type of wretched company that the tyrants are forced to keep - and pay - in order to ensure their continuing power, but also of tyrannical rule. His statement, that "being wise as they are, the poets of tragedy will pardon us and those whose politics resemble ours for not admitting them into our polity, since they sing the praises of tyranny" (568b) (my italics), harkens back to an earlier statement he had made, in his first criticism of mimetic poetry in Book III, that the poets, because of their employment of *mimesis* and its effects on the souls of those who act out their works, should not expect that the people will treat them well, but rather, they should expect to be exiled from the ideal state (397e-8b). Is this because the effects, as has been argued (see pp. 112-15 of this thesis and nn.125-56, above), of mimetic poetry on the soul, are no different to the effects that the praises of tyranny in the poets' plays have on the souls.
of its audiences? For there the poets, by “draw(ing) the polities towards tyrannies and democracies” (568c), must affect the souls of their audience, since they have to change in order to correspond with the state of which they now represent. Socrates is thus claiming, in both these examples, that the poets harm the soul of those who act or read or listen to their works - a claim he will further press, in two arguments, in Book X.

346. Plato, Republic (572c)
347. Plato, Republic (573a).
348. Plato, Republic (573b).
349. Plato, Republic (573c).
350. That a man, acting in these ways, was regarded as “tyrannical” in ancient Athens, can be seen in the examples from literature listed in Shorey (1994b, p. 343n.4, 4).
351. On the classification of desires into that which is “necessary” and that which is “unnecessary”, see p. 129 of this thesis and nn.326-30, above.
352. Plato, Republic (571c). See also Timaeus (71e-2a), which similarly refers to the irrational nature of man when asleep.
353. Plato, Republic (571b).
354. Jaeger, 1986a, p. 344. Timaeus (71e-2a) also refers to the rational means by which a man can come to understand the nature of his dreams.
356. See Plato, Gorgias (466d). In this dialogue, Socrates argues to Polus that tyrants are not all-powerful and so completely free in their actions “since they do nothing that they wish to do, practically speaking, though they do whatever they think to be best” (466d). This statement reflects the Socratic paradox that “no-one does wrong voluntarily” (Gulley, p. 120). That is, if virtue is knowledge, as Socrates believes, and if for all voluntary or free actions, knowledge is a necessary and sufficient condition of doing what is good, then actions which are evil must occur because of ignorance, and so are involuntary. If tyrants do only what they think is best, they may be doing what they please, but not what they want. Since, as Irwin states, “what everybody wants when he does an action is for the good to be achieved by that action” (1977, p. 117), when somebody does what they want, it must be for the good, since one does not harm oneself willingly. Therefore, the tyrant’s actions are not voluntary and so free because they are not good, and thus cannot be what he wants to do. See also p. 130 and n.342 on personal freedom.
357. That the tyrant is a slave in his own state and in his own soul, is confirmed by Socrates at Republic (579d-e).
358. On justice in the soul, see p. 123 of this thesis and nn.260-9, above.
359. Plato, Republic (587b-e).
360. Plato, Republic (367e). See also p. 104 of this thesis and nn.20-1, above.
361. For a good outline of Socrates’ three arguments concerning the comparative happiness of the just man and the unjust man in Book IX, see Nottleship, pp. 315-37 or Guthrie, 1995b, pp. 537-42. For criticisms of these arguments, see Barker, 1961, pp. 301-5; Annas, 1981, pp. 324-34 or Guthrie, 1995b, pp. 537-42.
363. On Plato’s “good philosophical reasons” for resuming his discussion of poetry in Book X, see p. 119 of this thesis and nn 220-2, above. As Halliwell notes:

“...arts of the soul were analyzed at 4.435b seq., and the kinds of character resulting from the various relations between them were examined in bks. 8-
9. It is all this, together with the metaphysical apparatus in the middle books of the *Republic*, which explain the return to the subject of poetry: Socrates can now see what he regards as deeper and fuller reasons for discarding the mimetic arts" (p. 106).

Thus it can be seen that Socrates has been gradually preparing the reader for this attack on mimetic poetry in Book X since the end of his first examination of poetry, in Books II and III. See also n.365, below.

364. Annas, 1981, p. 335. See also n.219, above.

365. As Nehamas states, "(b)ooks 8 and 9 of the *Republic* consist mainly of a discussion of threats against the unity of the soul and the city. Book 10 belongs primarily with them, and shows that poetry is one of these threats and that the city is proof against it" (1982, p. 51). See also n.363, above.

366. Janaway also divides Book X into four arguments, which occur in two pairs (1995, pp. 133-52).


368. On the content of poetry, as discussed in Books II-III, see pp. 110-11 of this thesis and nn.113-17, above.

369. *Mimesis* is defined as an "imitation", "a representation by means of art" (Liddell and Scott, p. 513). However, if that artistic imitation or representation is false - that is, untrue to the original - can it still be classified as *mimesis*? In Books II-III, despite the fact that Socrates believes the poets falsely depict, in this case, the gods and the heroes and their actions, he nevertheless refers to them as imitators, as those who use representation or imitation. For example, as Socrates states in Book II with regard to poetry's content, anyone "images badly" (*εἰκοσά...κοκος*) (377e. *Eikazo* = to "represent by a likeness, portray", Liddell and Scott, p. 227. See also Adam on (377e): "(i) is taken for granted that poetry is a species of imitation" (1969a, p. 112)), if, like a poet, he represents the gods as immoral. See also (388c): what the poets depict is an "unlikely a likeness" (*ἀνωμοιοικὸς μοιμαθησθείσαν*). By Book X, *mimesis*, by Socrates' own definition, is untrue, since he states, it depicts the appearance of a thing, and not its reality (*Plato, Republic* (597e, 598b, c-d, 600c, e, 601a-b, etc.). See also pp. 99-100 of this thesis and nn.141-44, of chapter three, *Introduction*.

370. On the form of poetry, as discussed in Book III, see pp. 112-13 of this thesis and nn.123-44, above.

371. *Plato, Republic* (595b). It is thus implied that mimetic poetry is not unlike a drug, which poisons the soul (and so the state) via dramatic performances and the educational process. The "antidote" or knowledge needed by the citizens to avoid being drugged in this manner is supplied by the philosopher-rulers, who determine what poetry is to be admitted into the state and so performed, and who oversee its educational system.

372. It is worth noting that the Greek terms used here to indicate the "corruption of the mind" (595b) that is caused by mimetic poetry are also used elsewhere by Plato to indicate "the psychological harm which can be caused by teachers and others". See *Republic* (605c, 611b), as well as *Crito* (47d, e), *Protagoras* (318d), *Menon* (91c, 92a) and *Laws* (890b) (Halliwell, p. 107). That the poets were regarded as the teachers of all Greece has been discussed earlier in this thesis (pp. 2-4 and nn.11-37 of the *Introduction*). Plato is thus implying, in his choice of words here, that the poets do psychological harm to all those who are taught their works.

373. See n.282, above.
374. Plato, Republic (595c).
375. On the two epistemological arguments in Book X, see pp. 99-100 of this thesis and nn.141-64 of chapter three, Introduction.
376. On this second argument, see p. 99 of this thesis and nn.155-7 of chapter three, Introduction.
377. This refers to Socrates’ curious analogy of the painter “who will paint us a cobbler, a carpenter or other craftsmen, though he himself has no expertise in any of these arts, but nevertheless if he were a good painter, by exhibiting at a distance his picture...would deceive children and foolish men”. Plato, Republic (598b-c). See also Ferrari, 1989, p. 128 and Janaway, 1995, pp. 133-7 on this passage.
378. Plato, Republic (598e).
380. Plato, Republic (599a). Similarly, in Ion, Socrates sets out to prove to the rhapsode Ion that just because he is able, in his performances of Homer, to speak and act as if he were a doctor or a charioteer, that does not make him one (Saunders, 1987, p. 58). See also pp. 41-2 of this thesis and nn.98-104 of Ion.
381. Plato, Republic (599a-b).
383. Plato, Republic (600c).
384. Plato, Republic (601b). At (602d), Socrates declares that the products of a mimetic artist such as a scene-painter are examples of “witchcraft”. They thus affect man as does a “spell” or “magic” (602d. See also 608a). At (608d), he also states - as he had done earlier at (595b) - that one needs a “countercharm” against poetry to “preserve us from slipping back into the childish loves of the multitude”. Socrates also describes the “imitator” (presumably the poet, since Homer is discussed immediately following this remark) as “some magician or sleight-of-hand man” (598d), who deceives others “into the belief that he is all-wise” (598d). Janaway also notes that this theme of “enchantment” runs throughout Socrates’ criticism of poetry in Book X (1995, pp. 142-3). Plato also refers to rhetoric in such terms (see, for example, Plato, Republic 267d and Gorgias 456a, c). As de Romilly notes, this is because both poetry and rhetoric utilize techniques (such as the use of the Gorgianic figures by the Sophists) which stir the emotions, creating sorrow, pleasure, fright or confidence. These techniques create a sound, which is pleasing to the ear, and which lulls an audience into an acceptance of the speeches’ principles. The audience is thus moved, as if by “magic” (pp. 1-22). In Ion, we see the rhapsode, by his delivery of Homer, provoke in the audience these very reactions (535e). As Gorgias states, poetry is speech with metre, and speeches enchant and persuade, and move people’s minds as if by sorcery (Trans. D. M. MacDowell), Encomium of Helen, Bristol Classical Press, Bristol, 1982 (9-10).
385. Plato, Republic (601b), as well as (398d, 401d, 598d, 607c). In Laws, the Athenian similarly discusses the powerful hold that rhythm, metre and harmony have over man, and, in particular, on the developing souls of children (653d-4a). On this, see p. 79 of this thesis and nn.56-9 of Laws.
386. Plato, Republic (601b). In Plato’s Gorgias (502c), Socrates determines that poetry stripped of such adornments, would be speech-making or rhetoric - the art of persuasion. See also Pellas, pp. 43, 49n.42.
387. Plato, Republic (606c). See also Aristophanes, Frogs (1009, 1054).
388. On the position of the poet in society at the time of Plato, see pp. 2-4 of this thesis and nn.11-38 of the Introduction.
389. Socrates' position in Republic - that although the poets are the moral authorities in society, they are not qualified to be so - can also be seen in Meno. See p. 58 of this thesis and nn. 97-9 of Meno.


391. Plato, Republic (602c).

392. On the psychology of the individual soul, as discussed by Socrates in Book IV, see pp. 121-3 of this thesis and nn. 245-69, above.

393. Examples of such deception (i.e., trompe l'oeil) in the mimetic art of painting (or sculpture) can be found in Republic (598a, 601b), Phaedrus (275d) and Sophist (235d-6a).

394. In Book I, Socrates determines that the function or "work" (ergon) of a thing is that which "only it can do or that which it does best" (353a). This is from the Lee translation of Republic. For this argument on function in its entirety, see (352d-4a). See also p. 106 of this thesis and nn. 57-8, above, on function.

395. Plato, Republic (602c). On the part of the soul "that reasons and calculates", see p. 122 of this thesis and nn. 233-5, above.

396. On an earlier discussion of the "principle of non-contradiction" and its application, see p. 121 of this thesis and n. 246, above.

397. Plato, Republic (602e-3a).

398. Plato, Republic (603a).

399. In Republic, Socrates refers to the part of the soul that is opposed to measurement as "inferior" or faulos (φαύλος) (603a) (i.e., faulos = "trivial, paltry, petty, sorry, poor" - Liddell and Scott, p. 856). Nehamas observes that in Philebus, Socrates makes a similar statement: "if arithmetic and the sciences of measurement and weighing were taken away from all the arts, what was left of any of them would be... pretty worthless (φαύλον)" (55c) (1982, p. 66). It should also be noted that Socrates then argues that music (i.e., mousike) is an example of such an art (56a) (Anderson, 1966, p. 67).

400. Plato, Republic (603a-b). Janaway's note, that Socrates' use of metaphor here implies that "mimetic art is nothing but a cheap prostitute with which a cheap part of the mind can have a good time", perfectly captures the hooded insult behind Socrates' words (1995, p. 146).

401. Plato, Republic (603c).

402. On these contradictions in man, see Plato, Republic (439a-41c).

403. Plato, Republic (387d-c).

404. Ferrari, 1989, p. 133. On the part of the soul that employs measurement, see Plato, Republic (602d-3a). See also (387d-c) on censoring poetry that does not depict moderation in grieving.

405. Plato, Republic (604a-b).

406. See n. 396, above.

407. Plato, Republic (604d).

408. As Janaway observes, these two cases of conflict in the soul (cf. 602c to 603a-4d) both share "the desire to indulge the disorderly, childish part of us (which) persists despite rational judgement to the contrary" (1995, p. 148). See also Ferrari, 1989, p. 133.

409. Ferrari, 1989, p. 133. But see also p. 133n.56, for critics who have found this correspondence troubling.

410. Plato, Republic (604e).

411. Plato, Republic (602b).

412. Plato, Republic (605a). See also Gorgias (502b-c).

414. In Republic, Socrates argues that

"when in man the desires incline strongly to any one thing, they are weakened for other things. It is as the stream has been diverted into another channel...So, when a man's desires have been taught to flow in the channel of learning and all that sort of thing, they will be concerned, I presume, with the pleasures of the soul in itself and be indifferent to those of which the body is the instrument" (485d).

That is, to divert a stream one way, will prevent water from flowing in another direction. If this analogy is indeed true for the workings of man's soul, then Socrates' later statement, in Book X, that because mimetic poetry encourages and strengthens the irrational part of man's soul, it will then tend to destroy the rational part (605b), is correct. See also Belfiore (1986, p. 423) on this passage.

415. Plato, Republic (605b)

416. Plato, Republic (605c).

417. Plato, Republic (605c-d). The Athenian similarly observes in Laws that in civic ceremonies such as public sacrifices, it is the chorus which best succeeds in "drawing the most tears" that "carries off the palm of victory" (800d).

418. Plato, Republic (387b). See also p. 65 of this thesis and nn.63-4 of Phaedrus, which discusses this same point.

419. Plato, Republic (605d). See also (387e-8a, 398c). As Socrates has stated earlier, both reason and law (λόγος καὶ νομος) exhort one to be restrained in their public emotions (604a) - that is, one should handle such crises in a rational, not irrational manner. Plato employs Odysseus (see Homer, Odyssey, XX. 17-18) as a model of such moderate behaviour: Odysseus is seen plotting against his wife Penelope's suitors. Although angry, he curbs his emotions by smiting his breast and chiding his heart to "endure" - for as he states, he has endured far worse (390d).

420. Plato, Republic (387d-e). See also Guthrie, 1995b, p. 553.


422. Plato, Republic (442a-b).

423. Plato, Republic (606b).

424. Plato, Republic (606b). As Socrates notes, this principle does not only apply to representations of grief, but any poetic representation of excessive emotionality which would normally be controlled in us by reason for fear that we would make an exhibition of ourselves; this could thus include representations of laughter (see 606c-d, but also 388e-9a), sex (see also 389d-e, 390c), or anger (see also 390e) - that is, "all the appetites and pains and pleasures of the soul which we say accompany all our actions" (606d).

425. Ferrari, 1989, p. 138. Jaeger believes that the metaphor of feeding or nourishing (τροφοδοτει) that Plato employs here and at (606d) in Republic "shows the immediate influence of poetry on education; for according to Plato, all paideia is nourishment of the mind" (see, for example, Republic 491d) (1986a, p. 429n.13).

426. For Socrates' explanation of how this irrational part of the soul can grow, unchecked, see n.414, above.

427. Plato, Republic (606d). Indeed, this is equally true for the emotions of the tyrant (see p. 131 of this thesis and n.357, above).


429. On the relationship between the individual and the state, see pp. 103, 125-6 of this thesis and nn.8,
430. Annas, for example, does not believe that the parts of the soul discussed in Republic, Book X, have “any perspicuous connection to their roles as seen so far in the theory of the soul’s parts that Plato has used to establish conclusions about justice” (1981, p. 339. See also p. 340) - that is, in Books IV, VIII and IX. Janaway states that it is “notorious” that Plato does not again employ in Book X the three parts of the soul delineated in Book IV, which implies that many writers have also made this point. However, Janaway does believe that there exist in Book X “points of continuity with the earlier discussions of the soul” (1995, p. 144). Halliwell believes that while the earlier analysis of the soul in Book IV is alluded to at (602e8), it is “without direct reference to the tripartite scheme”. Indeed, he notes, “in what follows a fresh and essentially bipartite view of the soul is developed” (author’s italics) (p. 133. See also his discussion of (602e8) on pp. 134-5). Adam agrees with this view, and notes that the resemblance between the two “theories” (i.e., between the tripartite and the bipartite schemas) “is greater than the difference” between them (1969b, p. 406). However, a “bipartite view of the soul” could also mean not that the two books differ in their portrayal of the parts of the soul, but only that in Book X, Socrates does not discuss all three parts, because not all are relevant to the psychological pair of arguments that he employs there against poetic mimesis.

431. B. Rubidge, Tragedy and the emotions of warriors: The moral psychology underlying Plato's attack on poetry. Arethusa, 26, 1993, p. 249. Rubidge notes several commentators, such as Adam (see n.430, above), Cornford and Ferrari, who also believe that aspects of Plato's attack on mimetic poetry in Book X can be reconciled with the tripartite psychology of Book IV (p. 250n.2). Rubidge, p. 250n.3. R. Rosenstock, in his argument for the "structural and thematic coherence" of Book X with the rest of Republic, also employs a form of this method (Rereading the Republic, Arethusa, 16, 1983, p. 219).

432. Rubidge, p. 250. For the details of his analysis of Republic, Books IV and X, concerning the effects of mimetic poetry on the soul, see Rubidge (pp. 251-68).

433. On the "desiring" part of the soul, see pp. 121-2 of this thesis and nn.249-52, above.

434. On the "spirited" part of the soul, see p. 122 and nn.256-61, above.

435. See pp. 137-8 of this thesis and nn.424-8, above, for these conclusions concerning the harmful effects of mimetic poetry on the soul.

436. On the nature of justice in the soul, see p. 123 and nn.266-9, above.

437. The effect of dramatic identification on the individual can be seen in Ion. See p. 97 of this thesis and nn.123-8 of chapter three, Introduction. However, the effect of dramatic identification on the audience, as shown in Ion, appears to be no different. See pp. 97, 102 of this thesis and nn.126, 130, 138-7 of chapter three, Introduction. The difference between the individual (as an actor or a reader) and the individual within an audience with regard to their reactions to poetic mimesis may therefore be only one of degree - that is, the presence of others feeling the same emotions as one, may intensify the feelings experienced and so enhance the mimetic experience.

438. On poetic mimesis acting in a manner not unlike poetic inspiration, see p. 100 of this thesis and n.168 of chapter three, Introduction.

439. That the ethical consequences of dramatic identification on the soul are negative, see pp. 101, 112-15 of this thesis and n.183 of chapter three, Introduction and 115-56, above.

440. On the principle of specialization, see pp. 106-7 of this thesis and nn.52-71, above. That dramatic identification (i.e., mimesis) violates this principle, see pp. 112-13 of this thesis and nn.134-44, above.

441. That the principle of specialization supports cooperation among men, not competition, see p. 107
of this thesis and nn. 69-71, above.

443. That unjust (and so unhappy) states do not follow the principle of specialization, can be seen on pp. 126 (timarchy), 127 (oligarchy), 128 (democracy), 129 (tyranny) of this thesis and nn. 298 (timarchy), 306, 308 (oligarchy), 319-24 (democracy), 340, 341 (tyranny), above.

444. On the effect on an individual who violates the principle of specialization, see pp. 112-13 of this thesis and nn. 134-44, above.

445. That if one fulfills the function for which one is best suited, one is therefore caring for one's soul, see p. 106 of this thesis and nn. 57-61, above.

Laws

1. On the analysis of poetic inspiration in Laws, see pp. 75-89 of this thesis and its associated endnotes in chapter two, Laws.

2. Plato, Laws (641b-c). See also n. 24 of chapter two, Laws.


5. Plato, Laws (653b-c). See also n. 46 of chapter two, Laws.

6. Concerning the Athenian's choice of choral training as an education to virtue for the citizens of Magnesia, see pp. 78-82 of this thesis and nn. 39-47 of chapter two, Laws.

7. That song is mimetic in character, see Plato, Laws (655d, 668b, 669b).

8. That poets composed the lyrics to the songs sung by the choruses, and had once composed the music to fit the songs, see p. 82 of this thesis and nn. 90, 91 of chapter two, Laws.

9. That rhythm and harmony are the elements of which song and dance are composed, see pp. 79-80, 82 of this thesis and nn. 51-8, 67, 92-4 of chapter two, Laws. That these elements have a powerful effect on man's soul, see pp. 79, 82 of this thesis and nn. 57, 59, 96-7 of chapter two, Laws.


14. Plato, Laws (660a). See also (798d, 812c): on the use of rhythms "as imitations (μιμηματα) of the manners of good and bad men" (798d), and "musical representations (μιμησις) of a good kind and of the bad" (812c).


17. Sorbon, p. 125. See also Sorbon on the manner in which moral characteristics are manifested by poetic mimesis (p. 166).


19. On habit-formation, see p. 112 of this thesis and nn. 129-31 of Republic.

20. On mimesis as dramatic identification in the individual, see pp. 97-8, 100, 102, 112-14 of this thesis. See also nn. 128, 135, 167, 184 of chapter three, Introduction and nn. 125-33, 137-9, 145-6 of Republic for Book III.

21. On mimesis as dramatic identification in the audience, see pp. 98, 102, 139 of this thesis. See also nn. 130, 184-5 of chapter three, Introduction and nn. 418-9 of Republic for Book X.

26. On the “immoral” desires of a tyrant, see p. 131 of this thesis and nn.348-59 of *Republic*.
27. Sorbom, p. 167.
31. See n.25, above.
32. Plato, *Laws* (656a). That people are sometimes ashamed to do in public what they enjoy in private, see p. 142 and n.28, above.
34. That the poets’ mimetic abilities can contribute to the good or to the harm of the individual and so the state, see p. 140 of this thesis and n.7, above.
36. Plato, *Laws* (658e-9a). As A. H. Griffts remarks, “wisdom, cleverness and poetic skill had always been admired in Greek society, as the character of Odysseus demonstrates” (Seven sages. In: S. Hornblower and A. Spawforth (eds.), *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1996, p. 1397). These were the qualities assigned to the Seven Sages of ancient Greece - wise and well-educated men, not unlike those to which the Athenian refers in *Laws* as the men by whose standards of pleasure choruses should be judged (658e-9a). Indeed, Plato refers to these very sages in *Protagoras*, attributing to them “those maxims which are on every tongue - "Know thyself" and "Nothing overmuch"” (343a-b), the maxims by which Socrates lived and died. It can be seen then, that the wisdom of older men was a cherished commodity in ancient Greece. In *Republic*, however, Socrates states that “(i)n our former selection, we chose old men (i.e., so that the older guardians would have authority over the younger ones - see 412e), but in this one that will not do” (536d). But this statement does not indicate that the wisdom of older men should no longer be appreciated, but rather, that there is a difference between the states represented in *Republic* and *Laws* with regard to the manner in which they are ruled - the former, by a philosopher-ruler, and the latter, by laws. On this issue, see pp. 77-8 of this thesis and nn.27-38 of chapter two, *Laws*.
40. That societies are determined by the characters of the individuals of which they are composed, see n.4, above, and pp. 102-3 of this thesis and nn.2-9 of *Republic*.
41. See n.36, above.
42. Plato, *Laws* (664d, 665a). The Athenian’s reference at (665a) to his previous discussion of this third
chorus could possibly be at (653d), “although there has been no mention of the three choruses up to this point” (Morrow, 1960, p. 313n.3). Although Clinias states that he “recollects” such a discussion (665a), this statement may simply be made from politeness, for he then remarks that “at first mention of it, a Dionysiac choir of old men sounds mighty strange” (665b). This puzzled tone suggests that the third chorus and its composition is a topic to which he has just been introduced.

The first chorus, the children’s chorus, is dedicated to the Muses. This chorus will sing, “with the utmost vigour and before the whole city” (664c), of the moral doctrines that the three men have established in their discussions. The second chorus, consisting of individuals under thirty, will invoke “Apollo Paian (i.e., “the Healer”. Bury, 1994a, p. 127n.2) as witness of the truth of what is said, and praying him of his grace to persuade the youth” (664c-d).

As the Athenian has previously noted, the “charm” of mimetic works such as poetry and song, is their ability to condition the populace into correctly disciplined feelings of pleasure and pain (659e. But see also Republic 424c-5a, where this notion is first discussed (Morrow, 1960, p. 309n.61)). The choruses’ role, therefore, is to use the songs - these “charms”, “chants” or “incantations” (ἐναποθη - “an enchantment, charm or spell” - Liddell and Scott, p. 310) (see 659e, 665c, 666c) - to “enchant”, “inspire” or convince the populace that the moral or “good” life, as sanctioned by the law and by the experience of the oldest and most just men, is the best and most pleasurable life. That is, the songs are a device by which to produce in man’s soul an harmony - between reason and emotion. See also Morrow, 1960, pp. 309-13 and Sorbom, pp. 167, 171.

Plato, Laws (664c). This quotation is from Saund’s (1975) translation of Laws. Note that Bury’s translation of Laws has been used throughout this thesis, unless otherwise indicated.

This Socratic doctrine is featured in many of Plato’s dialogues. See, for example, Gorgias (527e).

Plato, Laws (664d). That is, these “uplifting” stories will be based on the same “virtuous characters” as those featured in the songs of the other two choruses (Saunders, 1975, p. 102n.11).

Plato, Laws (665c-d).

Plato, Laws (667b). Morrow suggests that the “noblest music” to which the Athenian is referring here is philosophy (1960, pp. 313-14). See also Phaedo, where Socrates states to his followers that he believes that “philosophy” is “the greatest kind of music” (61a). But are Plato’s frequent allusions to this third choruses’ inspired state - he refers to them as “godlike men” (θεοις συνδοξασθαι), who will use oracular speech (θεος φησις) to inspire and enchant others - a reference to their philosophical and so, semi-divine nature (as man’s reason partakes of the divine), or, as befitting a “Dionysian” chorus, to their use of wine? Or is Plato noting that it is the wine that will allow them to inspire others?

Plato, Laws (667b).

That the experience of poetic mimesis is pleasurable for man has been previously argued on pp. 7-8 of this thesis and in nn.67-70 of the Introduction.

Plato, Laws (668a).

On the best or “noblest” music, see n.40, above.

Plato, Laws (668c). Ousia = “the being, essence, nature of a thing, Plat.” (Liddell and Scott, p. 579).

That poets do not understand the “essential” nature of phenomena (and so cannot represent it), but only their sensual aspects - their “visible” nature, which consists of colours, shapes and sounds - has been previously discussed. See pp. 98-9 of this thesis and nn.141-52 of chapter three, Introduction.

Plato, Laws (668d).


Plato, Laws (669a-b).
60. Sorbom, p. 174.
61. See nn. 54, 55, above.
64. On this issue, see pp. 115-7, 142 of this thesis and nn. 161-7, 170-6, 185, 199 of *Republic*. See also n. 73, above.
67. These passages were previously discussed on pp. 85-9 of this thesis. See also nn. 120-170 of chapter two, *Laws*.
68. Plato, *Laws* (700d-e). See also *Republic* (397a).
69. That the poet is unable to capture accurately the moral value of the subject matter, see nn. 62-4, above.
70. The Greek word *anoia* has been previously defined. See p. 85 of this thesis and n. 129 of chapter two, *Laws*.
72. That the poet is unable to judge the goodness or badness of his mimetic works, see p. 145 of this thesis and nn. 56-7, above.
73. That the poet who blunders in his mimetic art will do himself the greatest harm by welcoming base morals, see p. 145 of this thesis and n. 59, above.
74. On the Greek word *anoia*, see p. 146 of this thesis and n. 70, above.
75. As the Athenian states, the poet should not be allowed to compose “just as they please... (for they would not be likely to know what saying of theirs might be contrary to the laws and injurious to the state” (719b).
77. On the Athenian’s argument concerning the education of the individual and the state, see p. 87 of this thesis and n. 148 of chapter two, *Laws*.
78. On unjust states and their corresponding individuals, see pp. 125-32 of this thesis and nn. 284, 286-9, 291-365 of *Republic*.
79. For a previous discussion of this passage, see pp. 87-9 of this thesis and nn. 152-70 of chapter two, *Laws*.
81. On the first criterion necessary to judge a choral work, see p. 145 of this thesis and n. 60, above.
82. On the third criterion necessary to judge a choral work, see p. 145 of this thesis and n. 63, above.
84. This inability of the poet to discern which of his contradictory utterances is true can affect the education of the citizens to virtue, by causing disharmony in their souls. This effect on the individual soul can then threaten the welfare of the state (Laws 719b). See pp. 88-9 of this thesis and nn. 143-70 of chapter two, *Laws*.
CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSION/CONCLUSION


2. For a discussion of the reasons behind Plato's choice of inspiration and *mimesis* as the means by which he would criticize poetry, see pp. 6-8 of this thesis and nn.53-71 of the *Introduction*.

3. That the manner in which Plato discusses poetic inspiration and *mimesis*, differs from the manner in which they were understood and used in his time, is discussed in chapter two, *Introduction*, pp. 22-31 of this thesis, and in chapter three, *Introduction*, pp. 90-102 of this thesis, and in their respective endnotes.

4. On the proposition that there are two parts to the mimetic process, see pp. 132-3 and nn.368-70 of *Republic*.

5. That poets covered contentious social and moral issues, see p. 83 of this thesis and n.102 of chapter two, *Laws*.

6. See p. 2 of this thesis and n.12 of the *Introduction*.


8. That the poet, before and during Plato's time, was considered an educator, is discussed on pp. 2-4 of this thesis and nn.11-38 of the *Introduction*, and throughout the thesis.

9. That poetry was considered a large part of one's education in ancient Athens, is discussed on pp. 2-3 of this thesis and nn.19-25 of the *Introduction*. That Plato devotes so much space in his dialogues - for example, in *Republic*, Books II-III, X and in *Laws*, Books II and VII - to discussions of the role of poetry in the states' educational systems, is also evidence of this. See in this thesis the examinations of the relevant books in these dialogues.

10. Havelock believed that the works of the poets originally functioned in the form of oral encyclopaedias, and that this information was transmitted to the public by the poets by means of poetic *mimesis*. See pp. 3, 4 of this thesis and nn.31-3 of the *Introduction*.

11. On the intertwining of the role of the individual with that of the citizen in ancient Athens, see pp. 4, 102-3 of this thesis and nn.34-5 of the *Introduction*.

12. As for n.11, above.

13. On this passage in *Epistle VII*, see p. 4 and n.39 of the *Introduction*.

14. As Shorey notes, as well as in *Epistle VII* (326a-b - but see also 328a-b) and *Republic* (473c-d - but see also 499b, 540d), the idea of the philosopher-ruler is present, in some form, elsewhere in Plato's works. See, for example, *Laws* (711d-12a, 713e), *Phaedrus* (252e) and *Statesman* (293c) (1904a, p. 508n.s.).

15. On this passage in *Ion*, see p. 34 of this thesis and nn.24-35 of *Ion*.

16. See Plato, *Gorgias* (502c) and n.15, above.

17. That Plato admits in *Statesman*, and later, in *Laws*, that it is unlikely that such a rule is achievable, see pp. 77-8 of this thesis and nn.27-33 of *Laws*.

18. However, it should be noted that in *Laws*, the state is run by a group of men who have been educated along philosophical lines, the Nocturnal Council. In *Epinomis*, their education is described, and it follows the educational system laid out by Socrates in *Republic* for the potential philosopher-rulers. See p. 76 of this thesis and n.5 of *Laws*.

19. Both Hackforth and Tegerstedt believe that Plato, in *Phaedrus*, portrays poetic inspiration in a
positive light, whereas in Republic, he is severely critical of poetic mimēsis. See p. 8 of this thesis and nn.72-3 of the Introduction.

20. The notion that poetic inspiration in Phaedrus is referred to in a laudatory way is challenged throughout my analysis of this dialogue (pp. 57-72 of this thesis and associated endnotes), but see especially pp. 63, 67-8 of this thesis and nn.62, 76-92 of Phaedrus.


22. Murray, Rosen and Yates' arguments, that the relationship between inspiration and mimēsis in Plato's criticism of poetry concerns the poet's lack of knowledge, are discussed on pp. 11-12 of this thesis and nn.66-106 of the Introduction. As with nearly all the secondary literature reviewed earlier in this thesis on the relationship between inspiration and mimēsis in Plato's criticism of poetry (see pp. 11-15 of this thesis and the associated endnotes), the arguments that are relevant to this thesis in Murray and Rosen's studies are not their major focus, and so are consequently brief, consisting, mostly, of only one or two paragraphs (see p. 15 of this thesis). Yates' arguments, however, are more extensive (but see n.135 of the Introduction with regard to their relevance to this thesis).

23. That all the dialogues in which inspiration or mimēsis are used by Socrates to criticize poetry he attempts to prove that the poets are acting without knowledge, see n.76 of Meno.

24. That the poet is only able to compose in one genre, and that this is indicative of him being without skill and so knowledge, is discussed on pp. 36-7 of this thesis and nn.62-9 of Ion. Note, however, that the interconnectivity of the rhapsode and the poet is also suggested by the metaphor of the Megarian stone. On this, see pp. 34-5 of this thesis and nn.37-40, 43 of Ion.

25. Vlastos shows that there is a repetition in Apology of what is said by Socrates in Ion. See n.17 of Apology. Furthermore, Socrates' statement concerning the poets' inspiration and their lack of knowledge in Apology (22c) is also a repetition - word-for-word - of what he says in Meno (99c). See p. 55 of this thesis and n.37 of Meno.

26. In insisting on the poet's inspiration, Bluck believes Plato is stressing the poet's lack of knowledge. See pp. 58 of this thesis and n.97 of Meno. See also nn.35-6 of Meno.

27. For other passages in Phaedrus which support this reading, see pp. 68-72 of this thesis and nn.93-142 of Phaedrus.

28. Plato, Laws (682a). On this passage, see p. 84 of this thesis and nn.120-4 of chapter two, Laws.

29. On this passage in Laws, see pp. 85-6 of this thesis and nn.126-31 of chapter two, Laws.

30. On the two arguments in Republic, Book X, concerning the poets' lack of knowledge, see pp. 99-100, 133-6 of this thesis and nn.153-64 of chapter three, Introduction, nn.375-415 of Republic.

31. On the two nature of phenomena, see pp. 98-9 of this thesis and nn.141-52 of chapter three, Introduction.

32. On these two passages in Laws concerning the poet's lack of knowledge, see pp. 85-9, 146-7 of this thesis and nn.136-70 of chapter two, Laws, nn.67-84 of chapter three, Laws.

33. Plato, Laws (700d-e).

34. On the true nature of phenomena, see p. 152 of this thesis and n.33, above.

35. Plato, Laws (669b). But see also n.62 of chapter three, Laws.


37. On the three criteria by which the musical (and so mimetic) arts should be judged, see p. 145 of this thesis and nn.50-64 of chapter three, Laws.

38. Menza, Ferrari and Guthrie's arguments, that the relationship between inspiration and mimēsis in Plato's criticism of poetry is based on role-playing or impersonation, are discussed on pp. 12-13 of this


40. That even the schoolchild employs *mimesis* in the form of role-playing can be seen in Plato’s *Protagoras*. See p. 97 of this thesis and nn.127-128 of chapter three, *Introduction*.

41. That *mimesis* as role-playing produces a strong emotional reaction in the poet/rhapsode/actor as well as in the audience, can be seen in *Ion*. See p. 97 of this thesis and n.126 of chapter three, *Introduction*.

42. This quotation from *Republic* is cited on p. 98 of this thesis. See also n.134 of chapter three, *Introduction*.

43. That poetry was considered by the ancient Greeks to be the primary method by which the moral and civic standards of the state were taught, is discussed throughout this thesis. See, for example, pp. 2-4 of this thesis and the associated endnotes.

44. Poetic education in ancient Greece commonly consisted in telling tales of the characters and deeds of the gods and heroes. Indeed, Thucydides wrote in *Iliad* that the poets’ two traditional functions were “to hymn the immortals and the glorious deeds of heroes” (16.2). See pp. 2, 6 of this thesis and nn.15, 56 of the *Introduction*. Further, that which Plato considered to be the proper content of poetry did not appear to stray from this definition. See, for example, *Republic* (377a-92c).

45. That the tales told of gods and heroes were well-known by all, see p. 2 of this thesis and n.15 of the *Introduction*.

46. Writers contemporaneous with Plato indicated in their works that these poetic tales of the gods and heroes provided the young with moral examples that they could admire and so emulate. See, for example, Niceratus’ statement in Xenophon’s *Symposium* (p. 3 of this thesis and nn.20-21 of the *Introduction*) and Aeschylus’ remark to Euripides in Aristophanes’ *Frogs* (p. 3 of this thesis and n.28 of the *Introduction*). Further, if Plato’s portrait in *Protagoras* of the great Sophist is a true one, then Protagoras’ statement in that dialogue is also an affirmation of this position (p. 2 of this thesis and n.19 of the *Introduction*).

47. That it was commonly believed, in Plato’s time, that the poet was inspired by the Muse, see pp. 2, 6 of this thesis and nn.11-14, 53-5 of the *Introduction*.

48. That in all five of his dialogues which criticize poetry on the basis of it being inspired - *Ion*, *Apology*, *Men*., *Phaedrus* and *Laws* - Plato utilizes this traditional belief to criticize the poet’s abilities and his work, see pp. 22-31 of this thesis and the associated endnotes of chapter two, *Introduction*. See also in this thesis the examinations of these individual dialogues.

49. See, for example, Plato, *Ion* (533e-4a, 534b-c, e).


51. That poetry is a transmission of the emotions, from the poet to others, has been discussed previously, on pp. 37, 43 of this thesis. See also n.78 of *Ion*.

52. Plato, *Ion* (533d-e). This passage on the Megarian stone was previously discussed on pp. 13-14, 34-5 of this thesis. See also nn.38-9 of *Ion*.

53. Sorbom, Welton and Schaper’s arguments, that the relationship between inspiration and *mimesis* in Plato’s criticism of poetry is that they act - either separately or together - as a form of communication, are discussed on pp. 13-14 of this thesis and nn.172-35 of the *Introduction*.

54. In *Republic*, Book X, it is the communication of emotions - and their resultant appeal - from the poet or actor to the audience, that is harmful to the harmony of man’s soul and so to the welfare of the
state. See Plato, Republic (602c-8b), as well as pp. 135-9 of this thesis and nn.390-440 of Republic.

55. Plato, Republic (605c-d). This quotation is discussed, in the context of Socrates’ argument against mimetic poetry, on p. 137 of this thesis. See also n.412 of Republic.

56. This two-part mimetic process was first proposed in this thesis on p. 113. For a fuller discussion of this, see pp. 132-3 and nn.308-70 of Republic.

57. The psychological process by which an individual abandons himself to these emotions and then assimilates them into his own character, is examined by Socrates in the fourth argument of Republic, and has been previously discussed in this thesis. See pp. 136-8 and nn.416-20 of Republic.

58. That the poetically inspired state can be seen as the transfer of emotions, from the poet to the actor/rhapsode and thence to the audience, was suggested on p. 155 of this thesis.

59. Sorbron, Welton and Schaper suggest that in poetry, inspiration and mimesis may work together, step-wise, as a form of communication. See pp. 13-14 of this thesis and nn.123-35 of the Introduction.

60. The meta-relationship that I am proposing here, that in Plato’s criticism of poetry, inspiration and mimesis are related in that both affect the care of the soul and the welfare of the state, is first presented on p. 16 of this thesis and in nn.139-46 of the Introduction.

61. That Plato, in all the dialogues in which he criticizes the poets on the basis that they are inspired or use mimesis in their poetry, argues that they are also lacking in knowledge, is shown on pp. 151-2 of this thesis and nn.23-38, above. This is also shown, in this thesis, in the examinations of the individual dialogues.

62. That the poets, in Plato’s time, were considered divine, and that this did not appear to affect their reputation in society, is discussed on p. 2 of this thesis and in nn.11-14 of the Introduction.

63. On the traditional beliefs held in Plato’s time concerning the poets’ inspired nature, see chapter two, Introduction, pp. 22-31 of this thesis and the associated endnotes. See also the examinations of the five dialogues in which Plato criticizes poetry on the basis of inspiration.

64. On the studies which have investigated the origins of words in the mimesisthai-group and its pre-Platonic usage, see chapter three, Introduction, pp. 90-102 of this thesis and the associated endnotes.

65. The manner in which audiences, in Plato’s time, reacted to poetry and its mimetic nature, can be seen in Plato’s Ion (535e). As Ion states, he is a successful rhapsode. Therefore, these emotional reactions to his performance by the audience must be indicative of their pleasure. That it is the generation of such emotions that gives the audience its pleasure, is argued throughout this thesis. See, for example, pp. 37-9, 43 and n.107 of Ion. Nehamas considers that the poetry of Plato’s time was comparable in its influence to that of the mass media in the modern age. If this is so, it indicates that poetry, and thus poetic mimesis, enjoyed a great popularity. See p. 5 of this thesis and n.43 of the Introduction.

66. That poetry, at the time of Plato, featured largely in the education of Athenian citizens, see pp. 2-4 of this thesis and nn.19-37 of the Introduction.

67. Literary references abound in the works of the classical period. See, for example, Aristophanes’ plays (1964), The Frogs and The Poet and the Women (Thesmophoriazusae), which were previously discussed in n.27 of the Introduction. Plato’s use of poetry in his works has also been previously discussed. See p. 3 of this thesis and nn.25-7 of the Introduction.

68. That poetry not only harms the citizens of the state, but also the state itself, is shown throughout my examinations of both Republic and Laws (inspiration) and (mimesis).

69. That the identity of the individual in Athens was considered indivisible from his role as a citizen, see p. 4 of this thesis and nn.34-7 of the Introduction.
Plato, *Apology* (22b-c, d).

Plato, *Ion* (536e).

The connection that Plato establishes between the poet and rhapsode in *Ion* is discussed on pp. 35, 37 of this thesis and nn.40-3, 70 of *Ion*.

Plato, *Apology* (22d). See also *Alicibiades I* (118b).

To Socrates, these “most important matters” refer to the necessity of caring for one’s soul. This is argued by Brickhouse and Smith (1990, pp. 157-61).

As Guthrie states, that his fellow-citizens should “look after - care for, tend - their souls (τῆς ψυχῆς επιμελεῖται)” was Socrates’ most insistent exhortation (1971a, p. 147).

Socrates’ argument, in *Alicibiades I*, on the necessity of caring for one’s soul, and the manner in which this can be achieved, is discussed on pp. 48-9 of this thesis and nn.37-54 of *Apology*.


Guthrie, 1971a, p. 139.

The Greek notion of function is discussed on pp. 50, 106 of this thesis and nn.2-3 of *Meno* and nn.57-61 of *Republic*.

Plato, *Alicibiades I* (130a). See also pp. 49-50 of this thesis and nn.54-6 of *Apology*.

Plato, *Republic* (441e). See also p. 122 of this thesis.

Plato, *Republic* (443d-e). See also p. 122 of this thesis.

Plato, *Republic* (606c-7a).

Although the findings which indicate that the poets cannot teach others to care for their souls, and so teach them to be good men and good citizens, can be found throughout my examinations of the six dialogues, they can also be found on the following pages in which the analysis of each dialogue is concluded (approximately): *Ion* (pp. 43-4), *Apology* (pp. 49-50), *Meno* (pp. 58-60), *Phaedrus* (pp. 67-8), *Laws* (pp. 89, 147) and *Republic* (pp. 138-9).

Plato, *Apology* (29a).


Plato, *Apology* (30a). But see also (36c).

Plato, *Crito* (48e ff).


On inspiration and *mimesis* as role-playing and as a form of communication, see pp. 153-6 of this thesis and nn.38-59, above.


In *Ion*, the performer’s emotional response to the poetry he is performing can be seen at (535c). The audience’s emotional response to the poetry as it is acted out by another person or persons can be seen at (535d-e). See also pp. 37-8 of this thesis and nn.72-3 of *Ion*.

In *Laws*, the performers are the choral singers and dancers, and the audience are those who are watching and not participating in the choruses. It is implied, in the text, that the emotional response of both the performer and the audience to poetry exists, as it forms the basis of their educational conditioning.

On poetry, be it inspired or mimetic, as a form of communication, see pp. 154-6 of this thesis and
nn.52-9, above.

97. That the two relationships between inspiration and mimesis in Plato's criticism of poetry - as role playing and as a form of communication - are, in themselves, related, see pp. 154-6 of this thesis and nn.51-9, above.

98. On the principle of specialization, see pp. 105-7 of this thesis and nn.52-71 of Republic.

99. See p. 106 of this thesis on the principle of specialization as being the function for which one is best suited. See p. 157 of this thesis and n.78, above, on the caring of the soul as the function for which one is designed.

100. Certain dialogues are labelled “Socratic”, not because it denotes dialogues in which the character of Socrates is presented as the main interlocutor, but rather, because it refers to several early dialogues which resemble one another in various aspects to the degree that they can form a unified group. See Jaeger, 1986a, p. 87 and Guthrie, 1995b, pp. 67-70, on the similarities between the early Platonic dialogues which determine their inclusion into the category “Socratic”.

101. That if an individual were to follow the principle of specialization, he would also be caring for his soul, is argued on p. 113 of this thesis and nn.142-4 of Republic.

102. The manner in which role playing, in the form of dramatic identification, violates the principle of specialization and so harms the soul, is discussed on pp. 113-14 of this thesis and nn.134-44 of Republic.

103. See p. 113 of this thesis and n.141 of Republic.

104. See p. 114 of this thesis and n.148 of Republic.

105. Plato, Laws (658c-9a, c, 660a-b, 662b-c, 801c-d).

106. Plato, Republic (435e-441c). See also pp. 121-2 of this thesis and nn.242-61 of Republic.

107. That in Republic, justice can be equated with virtue, see p. 103 of this thesis and n.17 of Republic.

108. In Laws, this is the concord between reason and emotion. See Plato, Laws (653b-c, 659e, 689d). See also Republic (430e, 591d) (Bury, 1994a, p. 211 n.2).

109. Plato, Republic (442b).

110. The second pair of arguments in Republic, Book X, on the manner in which poetry, as dramatic identification, harms the soul, are discussed on pp. 135-8 of this thesis and nn.593-429 of Republic.

111. On the insatiability of desire, see pp. 137-8 of this thesis and nn.427-8 of Republic.

112. That in Republic, reason is said to be the natural ruler over one’s soul, see n.81, above.

113. That in Athens, performances of poetry were well attended, see p. 5 of this thesis and n.42 of the Introduction.

114. It is argued in n.99 of chapter two, Laws, that most of the male citizenry in Athens would have participated, at one time or another, in the performances of poetry.

115. Plato, Republic (435c).

116. On the origin of societies, see Plato, Republic (369b-70c) as well as p. 106 of this thesis and nn.52-3 of Republic.

117. For a more detailed discussion of Republic, Books VIII and IX, see pp. 125-31 of this thesis and nn.286-357 of Republic.

118. On a description of the lack of proper education in these four unjust societies, see n.117, above.

119. Plato, Republic (546d).

120. Plato, Republic (548b-c).

121. Plato, Republic (548c).

122. Plato, Republic (552c, 553d).
123. That the democratic individuals cannot have had a good education because they are not just, see p. 129 of this thesis and nn.323, 328-9 of *Republic*.

124. That the tyrannical individual is also affected by his bad upbringing and lack of education, see p. 131 of this thesis and nn.346-8 of *Republic*.

125. See p. 129 of this thesis as well as n.331 of *Republic*, which discusses the *stasis* in the souls of the four unjust individuals.

126. That Socrates' discussion in *Republic*, Books VIII and IX of the unjust states and their corresponding individuals are important to his arguments against poetry in Book X, see p. 132 of this thesis and nn.163, 365 of *Republic*.
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