[illegible] critical analysis of the dialogue, The Sophist

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Many of Plato's commentators have claimed that the use of modern techniques of logico-semantical analysis can be a valuable aid in unravelling this problem and other difficulties Plato raised and attempted to solve. However, not all modern distinctions and tools can be applied without reservation, for many of these are entirely alien to Plato's thought. Interpreters of Plato must also resist the temptation of applying methods as disjointing the dialogue and selecting specific passages only, in their eagerness to prove that Plato was explicitly interested in ((their own favourite)) problems of 'identity and predication' (not to mention such oddities as the 'self-predication of Forms')), or the distinctions between different senses (or applications) of 'is'.

The present author has tried to understand Plato by a close reading of the complete dialogue and to relate the doctrinal outcome of the *Sophist* to Plato's general development. Close reading, Plato involves following him in his own logico-semantical approach to the metaphysical problems, an approach which shows his deep interest in the manifold ways to 'name' ((or to 'introduce into the discourse

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PLATO'S SOPHIST

A PHILOSOPHICAL COMMENTARY

L.M. DE RIJK

North-Holland Publishing Company, Amsterdam/Oxford/New York, 1986

To my grandson
TESSE NILLIS BLOM* 18–VI–1984

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PREFACE

Archê paideuseôs hê tôn onomatôn episkepsis:
'The foundation of education is the study of the names of things'.
Antisthenes, *fr.* 38 Caizzi

'You may be sure, dear Crito, that inaccurate language is not only in itself a mistake; it implants evil in men's soul'.
Plato, *Phaedo* 115E (tr. Bluck)

'He who knows the names knows the things also'.
Plato, *Cratylus* 435D

The way in which Plato announces (*Sophist*, 249C–D) his novel metaphysics has been puzzling modern scholars for a long time: 'What is and the All consist of what is changeless *and* what is in change, both together'. Did Plato really introduce Change into the Transcendent World and thus abandon his theory of Unchangeable Forms?

Many of Plato's commentators have claimed that the use of modern techniques of logico-semantical analysis can be a valuable aid in unravelling this problem and other difficulties Plato raised and attempted to solve. However, not all modern distinctions and tools can be applied without reservation; for many of these are entirely alien to Plato's thought. Interpreters of Plato must also resist the temptation of applying methods as disjointing the dialogue and selecting specific passages only, in their eagerness to prove that Plato was explicitly interested in (their own favourite) problems of 'identity and predication' (not to mention such oddities as the 'self-predication of Forms'), or the distinctions between different senses (or applications) of '*is*'.

The present author has tried to understand Plato by a close reading of the complete dialogue and to relate the doctrinal outcome of the *Sophist* to Plato's general development. Close reading Plato involves following him in his own logico-semantical approach to the metaphysical problems, an approach which shows his deep

interest in the manifold ways to 'name' (or to 'introduce into the universe of discourse') 'what is' (or the 'things there are').

The reader may be sure that my indebtedness to other authors on this subject is far greater than it may appear from my text. Also many of those who have gone in quite different directions than mine have been of great importance to me in sharpening my own views and formulations. Two authors should be mentioned *nominatim*: Gerold Prauss and the late Richard Bluck; two scholars, whose invaluable works deserve far more attention than they have received so far.

I owe my translations of the Greek to predecessors. Where I have not followed them, my rendering is no doubt often painfully (and perhaps barbariously) literal: I do not wish to incur the suspicion of trying to improve Plato by modernising him.

I am much obliged to Mr. Julian Deahl for correcting my offences against the English language; of course, the final responsibility for all remaining mistakes and barbarisms is mine. I also wish to thank Mr. Tim Verheggen and Mr. Frederick C. Bos of the Editorial Department of the Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen for the great care and accuracy expended on the execution of this work, and Mrs. Wil Vermeulen-Pelgrim and Mrs. Hughien Schilder-de Jong for their judicious typewriting of the two last versions of the manuscript.

Leiden, 5 February, 1986 L.M. de Rijk

PRELIMINARY:

PLATO'S SOPHIST TO BE RECONSIDERED?

INTRODUCTION

0.0. As Sir David Ross has rightly observed [1951:104], in some of the dialogues of the early and middle periods – the *Protagoras, Cratylus, Theaetetus,* — Plato criticised this or that particular thinker who held opinions different to his own. In the *Sophist* he brings under review the whole gamut of previous thinking. And does so, we might add, on account of a most vital issue, the Doctrine of Being. However, perhaps the most striking fact is that he comes to blows with people of his very own camp, the 'friends of Forms'. Is Plato only correcting himself or are we faced here with no less than a recantation and, thus, Plato's recognition of his own failure? Let us start by singling out the central problem. This has indeed so puzzled Plato's commentators that, in Guthrie's view, serious scholarship has to concede that the problem is almost, if not quite, insoluble, and the Master himself is charged with "a seemingly callous indifference to his readers' comfort" and "bewilderingly loose language, even for him" [V,144; 142]. But, to complicate matters more, Plato himself twice complains of a quite malignant misunderstanding on the part of his opponents[1]. There is plenty of smoke, it would seem. What about the burning question which lies behind all this?

0.1. *A Tantalising Problem Concerning Plato's Sophist*

An impassioned dispute has continued for many decades concerning something put forward in the *Sophist* (249C10–D4) as a most important and remarkable thesis about Being, namely that the true philosopher must refuse to accept from the champions both of the One and of the many Forms the doctrine that all Being is changeless and must, at the same time and with the same vigour, turn a deaf ear to the other party which represents Being as everywhere changing. This thesis is emphasised by a striking metaphor: 'like a child begging for "both!", he must

[1] See below, ad 257A8–11 251B and 259B–D.

declare that 'what is' and the All consist of what is changeless *and* what is in change, both together' (see also below, 5.5).

There have been, and still are, many scholars who think that here Plato is most surprisingly introducing Change into the Transcendent World of Forms, which would indeed be an incredible development. Yet the thesis is put forward as being a highly remarkable one by Plato himself, a modification, it seems, of his own metaphysics[2].

In point of fact, the heated question so far posed by modern scholarship seems to be best worded in this way: how on earth is one to explain the introduction of *kinêsis* into the domain of the Forms? One party answers, if an answer it be, by denying the possibility of explaining this intrusion at all, even of explaining it away; in this view we are forced, even reluctantly perhaps, to acknowledge that Plato in his later days abandoned his Theory of Unchangeable Forms by admitting the changeable and perishable things of the transient world, even Change Itself, into the exalted Domain of True Being. However incredible it may seem, he discarded his earlier and sacrosanct conviction that knowledge must have an unchangeable object[3].

The other party declares that, in point of fact, Plato did not give up his Doctrine of Transcendent Forms, as is patently clear from some unequivocal passages in his later dialogues (e.g. *Statesman*, 269D–E, which repeats the substance of *Rep. VII*, 530A–B; *Timaeus*, 28A; 38C; 51E–52A; *Philebus*, 59A–C). A feature common to all the adherents of this view is their reduction of the introduction of *kinêsis* into the World of Forms to the claim that True Being must have motion, life, soul, and reason. Sir David Ross has weakened [1951:110] this claim by holding that Plato does not say that True Being must have these properties but simply denies that it cannot. Plato's real meaning, Ross asserts, becomes clear in *Sophist*, 249B5–10, where he says in effect that knowledge implies minds that are real and subject to change, and objects (the Forms) that are real and not subject to change. Thus Ross has rendered the *kinêsis* claim entirely harmless and presents it in such way that a recantation of the Theory of Transcendent Forms is most definitely not involved.

Harold Cherniss identifies[4] the *kinêsis* admitted by Plato as the Transcendent Form of Motion, which manifests itself in Being as the self-motion of life, a non-phenomenal motion which is entirely different from Becoming (*genesis*).

F.M. Cornford offers this interpretation [1939:245]: "the world of real being, in fact, does not consist solely of the Unchanging Forms ... but must contain as well life, soul, intelligence and such change as they imply". He substantially reduces these things to what he calls 'spiritual motion' (247).

[2] Correctly noted by Guthrie V, 141.
[3] For adherents of this party (Auguste Diès, Friedrich Solmsen and David Keyt), see Guthrie V, 144; 146–7.
[4] [1936] in R.E. Allen [1965], 352; cf. Cherniss [1944], I, 437 ff.

C.J. de Vogel joins Cornford and tries[5] to elucidate this 'spiritual motion'[6] by ascribing it to 'the totality of Being' (200). She interprets Plato's novel metaphysics along these lines (228):

> After his introduction in which it was declared necessary to attack the thesis of Parmenides of the one and immutable Being, after the obviously ironical description of the position of the "friends of the Ideas", we must be prepared for some essential change. It is *not* that to Intelligible Being which as such is and must be immovable and immutable, Soul is added[7] as a different kind, now accepted as "being", in order to make "being" complete. That is not what Plato says. What he does say is simply *that to intelligible Being* itself, of which he is speaking, motion, life and thinking cannot be denied. Somehow this must be understood as Plato's thought. And let he himself explain to us in what sense this is possible. He does not so directly, but he does more or less implicitly in the *Timaeus*.

Guthrie (V,144) considers the notion of spiritual motion to be "eminently reasonable", but he does not want to go "all the way with De Vogel, though her explanation is both attractive and well-defended, namely that for Plato the intelligible world was an articulate, organic unity and therefore a *zôion*, the *noêton zôion* of *Timaeus* 39 e 1".

It should be remarked first that the scholarly world has not been so ready to accept[8] De Vogel's view of a well-established Hierarchy of Being in the Intelligible

[5] [1970], 179–82; 198–209; esp. 227–9.
[6] Quite remarkably she also sees [1970:197–8] some kind of motion in the *symplokê* accomplished by human thinking: "Individual Ideas are identical with themselves and different the one from the other. But they can be interconnected, not all of them with all, nor in an arbitrary way, but some of them with certain others, and in a certain way (*Soph.*, 251D–253E), this is what is done by the act of thinking. And with reference to this operation of connecting and separating, applied by the intellect to intelligible Being, it is said [by whom?, De R.], that Perfect Being "undergoes something" and thus, in a sense, "moves"." But one is inclined to ask her how it can be that Perfect, Transcendent, Unchangeable Being is influenced by something imperfect like *human* thinking. If it were, what then could stop Natorp from considering the Forms merely some kind of 'regulative ideas'? For that matter, De Vogel (rightly but inconsistently) keeps on denying (228) any mutability to Intelligible Being.
[7] The interpretation proposed by Diès [1950], 286–90; cf. Diès [1931], 83.
[8] Cf. her own confession [1970:194]: "I do not have the impression that most scholars share my interpretation. On the contrary most of them seem to be rather reluctant to follow my suggestion". Most scholars indeed reject her view (labelled, following Merlan, by De Vogel herself (377) as 'Neoplatonic Platonism') as anachronistic. It is most remarkable in this respect that one of the adherents of the view that at least Plato's 'oral teaching' must have contained somehow 'Neoplatonic Platonism', Merlan, considered [1967:19] one of De Vogel's key-witnesses, the passage on the Good in *Republic* VI, 509C (where the Good is elevated above other Forms as 'beyond the realm of Being') as just "an isolated passage". De Vogel's reply (186) is extremely odd, if not fallacious: "It is as "isolated" as those on the line and the cave". She apparently fails to see that the Divided Line and the Cave serve only as means to clarify a metaphysical doctrine, well established elsewhere, while the view of the Good stands totally alone. There is no need to repeat any special clarification; yet it would hardly be reasonable to expect an important piece of the doctrine that is obviously foreign to Plato's other teaching to be mentioned just once. I think that Ross' sober statement is perfectly sound as it nowhere violates or distorts the texts: "Plato ...

World of which the idea of the putative 'spiritual motion' is an important part[9]. However, *even if* one should go all the way with De Vogel, there still is a little in the way of an attractive *solution* to the proper problem raised by *Sophist*, 249D3–4. Guthrie after passing his favourable judgment on De Vogel's explanation quite understandably makes this confession (V,144):

> Here however he says that Being includes not only the Forms Rest and Motion, but also 'whatever is unmoved and whatever is moved', which gives colour to the view ... that it includes all or some things in the physical world.

Thus we are bound to come a bit closer to Ross when he declares [1951:111]:

> Finally, summing up the argument, he says that reality must include all things immovable and movable (249C10–D4): the immovable Forms which alone the Friends of Forms admit to be real, the moveable bodies which alone the materialists admit to be real, and the souls which have 'movements of their own'.

However, it should be noticed that reference to the latter addition about the 'movements of the soul' ('learning, practising, wishing, considering *etc.*) can only be found in other dialogues, e.g. *Theaetetus*, 159B–C and in the *Laws* X, 896E–897A (see Ross, 111, n. 5). In *Sophist*, 249C10–D4 the true philosopher is required to state "that 'what is' and the All consist of what is changeless *and* what is in change, both together" (D3–4). No more, no less.

Something strange may strike those who carefully follow the dispute in its detail. Ross seems in the end to reduce Change as found outside the Forms themselves to 'changing minds'[10]. De Vogel is right in italicising the second member of Ross' list ("*the movable bodies which alone the materialists admit to be real*") which should not be overlooked. However, she thinks that this part of Ross' interpretation can be disposed of by referring to *Timaeus*, 27D–28A and *Philebus* 59A–C, where the *gignomena* are clearly opposed to the *onta*. The evidence of these passages is clear indeed and quite unambiguous. But she fails to see that Ross' paraphrase, including his reference to the Materialists, is nonetheless perfectly correct. Plato indeed says that his novel metaphysics[11] claims that "Being and the All" covers both what is changeless and *what is in change*, as was seen clearly by Guthrie (V,144).

And that is why De Vogel's explanation is of no use as a solution to the intricate problem of *Sophist*, 249D3–4. Plato's explicit assertion about the introduction of

seems never to have brought his 'highest Ideas' into a single system, but in the Good of the *Republic* and the *Philebus*, the Existence of the *Sophistes*, the Truth of the *Philebus* and the One of the Idea–Number theory, we find the sources of the original list of transcendentals — Bonum, Ens, Verum, Unum — which the schoolmen treated as standing above the categories and being true of all that is" [1951:245]. Merlan's historical evaluation of the isolated passage of *Rep.*, 509C proceeds along similar lines: "It remains an isolated passage in Plato. Needless to say, it is of prime importance for Plotinus".

[9] See esp. De Vogel [1970], 225–31; 237–42; also 176–82 and 194–209; 368–77.

[10] [1951], 110. Cfr. 111: "what he does in the *Sophistes* is to recognize, more explicitly than ever before, two elements in reality — universal Forms and individual souls".

[11] For a discussion of the relevant passages from the *Sophist*, see below, *ad* 249CD.

kinêsis into the Realm of True Being cannot be explained away or ruled out by referring to these passages in the *Timaeus* and *Philebus*[12]; it still has to be accepted for what it is. Nor can *kinêsis* be interpreted merely as 'spiritual motion'. The way out of the problem adopted by Cornford and De Vogel is a bad one, for *even if* it were doctrinally correct that Plato admitted such 'spiritual motion', this way offers no help. Ross has very well observed the undeniable fact that Plato's novel metaphysics is likely to be difficult to accept precisely because it seems to move from the sincere Parmenidean views of the Friends of Forms to those of the damnable Materialists who identify True Being with 'changeable body'[13]. It is clearly this aspect upon which Plato's controversial innovation is focussed and there is no question of the involvement of some quite honorable property such as 'life, soul, intelligence'. De Vogel rather boldly introduces[14] Cornford's solution [1939:245] (*kinêsis* as the change implied by life, soul, intelligence) as the latter's escape from Ross' unpleasant conclusion. But there is something striking about her adoption of Cornford's suggestion. Whereas the latter also speaks of *kinêsis* as 'change', De Vogel noticeably avoids using this expression which has such pejorative overtones in any metaphysical context, and instead constantly uses the dynamic expression, 'motion', which is, of course, more easily digested in metaphysical discourse, especially if it is presented as 'spiritual motion'.

The strongest objection to the *kinêsis* = 'spiritual motion' view is the fact that the famous antinomies concerning the five Kinds (which include *kinêsis*) put forward in *Sophist* 254D4–255E2, and especially the remarkable inferences drawn from them by the Eleatic Visitor in 255E3–256D9, can only make us tumble into a *bythos phlyarias* ('a bottomless pitt of nonsense')[15]. Small wonder that these passages are not discussed by De Vogel in her *Philosophia*. In this connection, we should recall *Sophist*, 249B5–C8, where it is firmly stated that, on the one hand, no intelligence can really exist if all things are unchangeable (in such way that change itself must *be*; cfr B2–3), and that, on the other hand, if we allow that all things are moving and changing (*pheromena kai kinoumena*), then we shall on this view be excluding intelligence from the domain of things that *are* (*ek tôn ontôn*), and, in so doing, totally subvert knowledge. These lines can only be understood as *both* associating (B5–7) and dissociating, indeed opposing, Change and Intelligence (B8–C5). How, then, can Change be taken to mean 'spiritual motion' now (quite understandably) be connected with Intelligence and knowledge, now (quite absurdly) be dissociated from them and even opposed to them?

Thus the tantalising problem still remains: on the one hand, Plato is most explicit in his claim that Change and Being are quite compatible; on the other he certainly never abandoned his Theory of Unchangeable Forms.

[12] See also my discussion, below, *ad loc.*

[13] See below, nr 5.4.

[14] [1970], 179: "Quant à Cornford, il me semble qu'il a voulu éviter cette conclusion en déclarant que l'espèce de mouvement à laquelle Platon, dans son *Sophiste*, a voulu attribuer la réalité, c'est le *mouvement spirituel*: "the real includes spiritual motion, as well as the unchanging Forms" (p. 247). Sans doute, il a raison".

[15] For a discussion of these passages, see below, *ad loc.*

In the light of all this, one would do better, it would seem, to take the offensive passage, *Sophist*, 249C10–D4, just as it stands: clearly stating that the whole sum of 'what is' must be both all that is unmoved and all that is moved (249D3–4)[16]. Yet since the innovation is presented by the Eleatic Visitor (241D3) as a kind of 'parricide', one is bound primarily to consider the new metaphysics as qualifying the sharp Parmenidean dichotomy between 'True Being' and Change (Changeability), or rather between 'Unchangeable Being' and 'changeable being'. The parricide is more specifically accomplished by describing as being (*onta*) both 'that which changes' (*to kinoumenon*) and 'change' (*kinêsis*) (at 249B2–3)[17].

However, there is some kind of optical error in the arguments of most of Plato's commentators in that they are inclined to see Plato as introducing Change into the Realm of Transcendent Being and to *interpret this as tending to make the Transcendent Forms themselves changing and unstable.* However, there is definitely nothing in Plato's own words which permits one to draw the latter inference (italicised). The only inference allowed is that drawn by Plato himself in the next section, namely that Being is neither Change nor Rest nor both together, but something different from each, which, in virtue of its own nature, is neither at rest nor undergoing change (250C1–7). This conclusion causes some perplexity (250C9–D4) but it is nonetheless maintained and elucidated in terms of what is called the 'Communion of Kinds'.

It seems then to be obvious that the solution to this tantalising problem is to be found there, in Plato's own expositions, rather than in any speculations (such as that of 'spiritual motion') about which he says nothing in this dialogue but to which he *may* have referred elsewhere. But how are we to understand this Communion of Kinds? Perhaps as precisely the association of Being and Change *in* that domain which was called earlier (249D4) 'the whole sum of being', that is, the domain which contains both 'Being' and 'Non-being'. If one interprets the texts along these lines one might in fact be on the right track, since one of the Ancient Commentators, Ammonius, refers to the section under discussion as Plato's excellent expositions "about Non-being mixed up with Being" (*peri tou synkekramenou tôi onti mê ontos*)[18].

In this way we might come very close to the position of a scholar like Friedrich

[16] See Guthrie V, 142.

[17] Moravecsik [1962:38] seems to be less fortunate in saying that Plato is here showing that the sharp dichotomy between "being" and "becoming" is untenable. This opposition was always maintained by Plato (see the well-known passages from *Timaeus* and *Philebus* mentioned above) as something basic to his metaphysics and epistemology. What *is* qualified is the ontological implication of the dichotomy: in Reality, as Plato emphasises from now onwards, unchangeable Being and changeable Being are connected one with the other and therefore the philosopher must reject the choice '*either ... or*' and begging for 'both!', since Reality also contains both of them. Solmsen correctly speaks [1942:79] of "the barrier between Being and Movement broken down".

[18] In his commentary to Aristotle's *De interpretatione*, ad 17a26 ff. = *Commentaria in Aristotelem graeca* IV 5, p. 83, 8–13 ed. Busse.

Solmsen, who seems to be perfectly right in associating[19] the new notion of Being, as covering both Rest and Change and both Sameness and Otherness, with the dynamic conception of Being which was earlier presented by the Eleatic Visitor, at 247D–E:

> *Sophist*, 247D8–E4: I posit, then, that anything really *is* (*ontôs einai*) which is so constituted as to possess any sort of potentiality either to affect something else in any way, or to be affected (even to the slightest extent by the most trivial agent, and even though it be only on one occasion). So I am positing that 'things that are' (*ta onta*) are distinguished by the mark that they are simply power (*dynamis*)[20].

Such a definition of Being clearly implies a recognition of the dynamic character of nature and from now on emphasis is laid on an aspect of Being which is rather different from the Permanence, Perfection and Absoluteness which Plato formerly stressed. Solmsen had good reasons to assert that "Movement, change and affectibility" are notions which can no longer be considered incompatible with Ideas. Things happen to them which "we said do not happen to what is at rest", to use Plato's own words (248E4–5).

The association of the 'dynamic definition' of Being with the novel metaphysics proposed in 249C10–D4 is the more obvious if we examine Plato's own words. In point of fact, after suggesting this definition the Eleatic Visitor proposes to Theaetetus that he turn to the opposite party, the friends of Forms, and ask their consent (248A). It is precisely in qualifying their first spontaneous rejection of the new definition (248C–249C) that the Eleatic Visitor arrives at his declaration of the novel metaphysics (249C–D).

All this suggests a different approach from that which is commonly made. To use Solmsen's formula[21] "the Forms too are forced out of their isolation and become connected with the world in which they may display their productive power". I feel no hesitation about adopting his view that this is only the beginning of the discussion. Once the barrier between Being and Change has been broken down, a number of other cognate notions are bound to come up for consideration. But, unlike Solmsen[22], I would then think of the notions of 'Sameness' and 'Otherness' as the indispensable companions to 'Change' and 'Rest', all four of which should be associated with Being. 'Being', indeed, can no longer be kept in sacrosanct isolation. Just as the notion of a 'Whole' (*holon*) or a 'One' (*hen*) turned out to imply the recognition of 'parts' (or 'Many'), so the new notion of Being requires the recognition of the four other 'highest Kinds'. It is their communion which warrants the actualisation of Being; to quote Solmsen once more [1942:80]:

[19] [1942], 80–3; cfr. 78–9.

[20] For a discussion of this passage, see *ad loc.*

[21] [1942], 78. I suspect however that Solmsen's exposition also suffers a bit from overemphasising the role of the discussion of Life, Soul and Intelligence in the argument of the Eleatic Visitor. See also below, 5.5, n. 14.

[22] Who mentions "life, soul and mind" [1942:79]. For this tribute by him to the common view, see the previous note.

Otherwise, Being would not become actualized (or, as the English language has it, 'materialized'); it would be barren and dead, severed from enlivening contact with the world that is constantly renewed. It needs this world to display its power. If it does not act and produce, it cannot even *be*. And yet, though Plato had, in his earlier works too emphasized the productive capacity of the Ideas which were to inspire and direct all human actions which realize value, this vision of 'Being in its fullness' is something new.

This approach is quite different from all of the foregoing in several respects:

1. it does not associate the 'novel metaphysics' with any deterioration of the Transcendent Unchanging Forms; their genuine Nature is not affected in the least by the introduction of Change and Otherness into the domain of Being; on the contrary their action as dynamic entities is elucidated and it can now be understood that 'being acted upon' is not just formally opposed to Being, but, as the counterpart of Being, *is*.

2. any idea of a recantation or abandonment of the Theory of Forms is entirely out of the question; on the contrary, the theory of Forms is established more firmly than ever before because some fundamental objections to it (such as those raised in the *Parmenides*) are solved.

3. there is no need any longer to seek refuge in notions such as 'spiritual motion' which are quite irrelevant to the main problem of *Sophist*, 249C–D. Briefly, the occurrence of any major problem in Plato is not abused by the commentator in order to return again to his favourite theme.

4. above all, this solution, or rather (at this early stage of our discussion), this perspective, seems to draw all its support from the line of argument of our dialogue itself and needs to make no appeal to any speculations of a wider range nor to vague parallels in some other of the dialogues.

I am myself inclined to regard the last item as being of no small importance. Indeed, whoever ploughs through the vast literature on the dialogue cannot help but be struck by all those attempts to interpret Plato by recourse to an (occasional or even frequent) appeal to some 'negligence', 'lack of seriousness', 'inconsistency', or even 'fallacious thinking' on Plato's part[23]. Generally speaking: from the methodological point of view, such an appeal is monstrous as it is destructive of all sound philological and philosophical inquiry. Such people take the course of least resistance: any loose end to one's interpretation is easily imputed to Plato's supposed deficiencies, and thus the commentator ultimately carries his point.

My own experience as a life-long reader of Plato's dialogues is that he is a most brilliant logician (a genuine artist of the *logica utens*[24], to use the terminology of the Mediaeval authors, rather than a professor of the *logica docens*) and, most of all, an overpatient teacher whose constant habit is to proceed step by step and to lead his readers by the hand. His literary talent is quite uncommon, to the extent, indeed, that he is able to draw on all means for expressing himself (even if he does have a clear preference for irony and banter) with all due clarity and sensibility, with all the shades of earnestness, humour, mockery, sarcasm or indignation wanted.

Every student of Plato would do better to listen to him in the course of close-reading. Most of all, let Plato be his own spokesman.

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[23] The disease seems to be epidemic in nature in that even quite serious and brilliant scholars are sometimes infected. For example, Otto Apelt; see below, 12.2, n. 2. Guthrie (V, 142; see 0.0.) feels quite uneasy about Plato's behaviour. Cornford charges [1935:248–9] Plato with using the keyterm '*to on*' without pointing out that its meaning shifts (see below, 6.3); for similar criticism by Cornford, see *ibid.*, 311 and 317. Runciman speaks [1962:94; see below, 7.1], when referring to Plato's arguments for his vital metaphysical thesis, of an 'erroneous deduction' (at 250C3–7). Richard Robinson even wrote a book on Plato's use of fallacies (see Tigerstedt [1977:22–24] for an antidote). Bluck [1975:145] thinks that he can get rid of some of the difficulty by assuming that the Eleatic Visitor's wording is deliberately misleading but that it is Theaetetus rather than the reader who is meant to be misled, and charges Plato with also creating confusion in other respects (114–5 and 152–3). Peck takes [1952:32 ff.] the *megista genê* section to be 'largely sophistical' and thinks (43) that the ambiguity of '*to on*' is the cause of much trouble. For that matter, in the same paper he initiates the notion that some, at least, of the fallacies in Plato's dialogues might be part of a deliberate plan and not the errors of a logical incompetent, a view with which Sprague has agreed (*Introd.*, XIV). As is well known, no dialogue suffers to the same extent from the effects of this commentatorial disease as does the *Cratylus*, which has seemed to more than one commentator to amount to a protracted practical joke, apparently interspersed with some plain fallacies so as to heigthen the gaiety. Of course, the disease leads to excesses, too; for example, J.R. Trevaskis considers (100, n. 3) the argument of 250B2–5 (which is undoubtedly fundamental, in Plato's mind; see 250B1–2: "consider ... more carefully") to be fallacious and says that here Plato is, *not untypically* (my italics), prepared to use merely plausible arguments in order to illustrate the *aporia*. "Plato often seems willing to use any method to suggest to his reader that there is a difficulty to be solved". On his interpretation the whole 'vowel analogy' is "a detour along the way" (11). In winding up his interpretation of *Sophist*, 253A1–C3 he tries to counterbalance the apparent lack of evidence for his own views peroratorically: "Unfortunately Plato omitted to say so in so many words". Specimens of such an interpretative procedure may be found rather frequently. For example, Calvert also begins by 'discovering' an important distinction in the *Cratylus* between 'Form' and 'Proper Form' and then proceeds to denounce "Plato's use of language as inconsistent" (34) and is inclined to suppose that Plato may have been only half aware of this distinction, which (mark you) "merely reflects bewilderment in his thought at the time of writing the *Cratylus*". A similar procedure is found in Xenakis; see e.g. 39 and 43 ("perhaps this is a slip"). This kind of approach makes virtues of the very shortcomings of one's own interpretation and has, to my mind, much in common with Emmenthaler cheese, the holes in which form part of its attraction. — Marten [1965:205–6] quite correctly keeps aloof from such unhistorical criticisms of Plato and denounces the inadequacies of modern interpretation which basically fails to grasp Plato's real question and metaphysical solution. For that matter, Neal misreads what Marten says (at p. 205) by not observing the *oratio obliqua*.

[24] Especially in his *Parmenides* and *Sophist*. I fully agree with Sprague, who, after her meticulous study of the *Euthydemus* and some other dialogues, says (p. XIV) that her "estimate of Plato's logical powers is unusually high". Kretzmann's clear survey of Platonic Semantics [1967:360–2] bears fitting tribute to Plato's major contributions to semantics proper.

Chapter one

THE DISPUTE ABOUT INTERPRETING PLATO

1.0. Any discussion of the tantalising problem mentioned in the previous section should range over the much larger framework of the hermeneutic problem. E.N. Tigerstedt precedes [1977] his illuminating book on the continuous combat between Plato's interpreters with a device taken from the *Life of Plato* which his commentator Olympiodorus of Alexandria (s. VI A.D.) added to his commentary on the *Alcibiades maior*[1]. There 'Simmias the Socratic' is said to have interpreted Plato's last dream ("that he had become a swan which flew from tree to tree, thereby causing the utmost trouble to the archers who wanted to shoot it down") to mean that Plato would elude all the efforts of his interpreters. Simmias the Theban must have possessed the power of prophecy, as is borne out by the history of Platonic scholarship. The dispute between the various schools of Platonic interpreters, as Tigerstedt rightly asserts (*ibid.*), is not confined to judgement and evaluation but concerns the very essence of Platonism. It bears on both the man and his work. Was he a rigid system-builder or an unsystematical questioner, of whom we can never be absolutely sure that he is not speaking ironically, to the extent indeed that we must recognise Irony as "the central problem in the interpretation of Plato"[2] who would thus seem to exactly parallel the Kierkegaardian Socrates whose Irony finally wrecked him?[3] And speaking of the man's *Dialogues*, do they

[1] Olympiodorus, Commentary on the first *Alcibiades* of Plato. Critical text and indices by L.G. Westerink (Amsterdam 1956), p. 6. I have used Tigerstedt's translation of the passage [1977:11].

[2] Rosen [1968], p. XIV, quoted by Tigerstedt [1977:96].

[3] See thesis 6 of Kierkegaard's doctrinal dissertation (dating from 1841 and still written from the Hegelian point of view which the author subsequently rejected) "On the concept of Irony with Constant Reference to Socrates"; it runs: "Nicht allein, dasz Sokrates sich der Ironie bedient hat: er ist vielmehr der Ironie dermaszen hingegeben gewesen, dasz er selber ihr Opfer ward".

only conceal his real views and is there hidden behind the written work a 'Secret Doctrine' which can only be painfully distilled from vague hints in the *Dialogues* and the scanty information supplied by Aristotle and other ancient writers who, it is believed, reflect Plato's oral teaching in the Academy?

1.1. *On The Different Approaches*

Tigerstedt's book gives [19–91] us a fascinating and critical survey of the various attempts made in modern times to cope with the problem of interpreting Plato. He rightly argues [1977:92] that most of the solutions proposed try to explain away the very existence of such a problem. Some of the interpreters have taken refuge in deleting the obnoxious texts, an approach which Tigerstedt happily labels as 'the resort of the scalpel'. Others, such as Robinson, are ready to recognise numerous contradictions in Plato as well as ambiguities and other obscurities or gaps but ascribes these simply to his inability to reason logically and coherently. In his *History of Formal Logic* (transl. Ivo Thomas, 1961) I.M. Bocheński says (34) that Plato found it difficult to solve "logical questions that seem elementary to us". Such a radical refusal to interpret Plato in his own terms (and according to his own quite consistent logic) and the requirement that he meet modern *alternative* views and standards, which are often completely alien to Greek ways of thought, cannot help but blind an interpreter to essential aspects of Platonic philosophy[4].

The device of some 'Unwritten Doctrine' is the modern way of ordering what Plato has taught in the *Dialogues* into a well-ordered and clear system. On this view the contradictions, gaps, obscurities and ambiguities commonly found in the *Dialogues* may be safely ignored since they do not contain Plato's true doctrine which he taught only to his disciples in the Academy and tried to withhold from the multitude. This esoteric doctrine may be reconstructed by recourse to Aristotle and other ancient sources. The most ardent Esotericists (as Tigerstedt calls them) have thus 'discovered' a highly systematic, hierarchical metaphysics of Being, very similar to Neoplatonism. Tigerstedt has thoroughly dealt with[5] the Esotericists. In as far as they show their low thoughts of the *Dialogues* their view would lie beyond the scope of a modern commentator of any of the *Dialogues*. The latter might humbly content himself with a detailed search for that ever-fluctuating picture that the *Dialogues* are supposed to offer of Plato's esoteric doctrine, which was the same from beginning to end and was presented without ambiguity and deviation in his oral teaching to a select audience of his most faithful disciples. However, there is still the risk that under the influence of the straightforward Eso-

[4] Cf. Tigerstedt's severe criticism [22–3] of Robinson's approach to Plato and Sprague's excellent reply to Bocheński's criticism in an Appendix ('Fr. Bocheński on Plato's logic'), 88–97. An instructive case of a (supposed) lack of correct thinking on Plato's side is commonly found in the *logos* conception in the *Cratylus*, but Gerold Prauss (1965) has successfully pleaded Plato's cause; see below, nr 15.2.

[5] [1977], 66–91. See also his *The Decline and Fall of the Neoplatonic Interpretation of Plato*: (Societas Scientiarum Fennica, Commentationes Humanarum Litterarum (52); 1974).

tericists such as Kraemer and Gaiser[6], interpreters who take the *Dialogues* reasonably seriously will become too ready to join those who make an easy habit of explaining difficult passages in the *Dialogues* by supposed parallels found in Neoplatonic writers, as if any doctrinal development were so linear and genetically determined that retrogressive reasoning could provide any real conclusions. In the case of the *Sophist*, the Neoplatonic hierarchy of Being is drawn into the debate in order to explain away some of the main problems of that dialogue[7].

1.2. *Tigerstedt's 'Fair Risk'*

Tigerstedt, after rejecting the various approaches mentioned above and those which he has labelled 'The Genetic Approach' (25–51) and 'The Search for Unity' (52–62), arrives at his own view of 'The Fair Risk'. He follows Socrates (*Phaedo*, 114D) who, having just before his death related the myth about the underworld, winds up this section by saying (114D1–6): "Well, to insist that these things are just as I have told them would be inappropriate for a man of good sense; but that either this or something like it is true about our souls and their dwellings, given that the soul evidently is immortal, this, I think, is suitable and worth risking ... and a noble risk it is ...". So, Tigerstedt thinks (107–8), that in interpreting Plato we can never be absolutely sure that we are not mistaken and that we have all of us to take that risk. He goes even so far as to recall Kierkegaard's saying about the subjectivism of Truth. This modest proposal is preceded by a modest view (93):

> After all has been said, it seems reasonably sure that there is something, whatever it may be, which must be called Platonic philosophy, ... that this philosophy is to be found in Plato's written works and nowhere else, and that the author of these works was a very intelligent man.

Tigerstedt's view is devoid of any preconception or self-confident conviction which is drawn from private knowledge of *arcana* which are inaccessible to those who are unable to understand them[8] that one is able to read anything beyond what the text reveals. As such his view calls for sympathy and agreement. However, it has something rather vague about it, especially when it associates this risk with the one mentioned in the *Phaedo* passage. Why does Tigerstedt not refer instead to the numerous other passages in the *Dialogues* in which Socrates beginning in no less a way with his innate modesty and well-considered Ignorance, confesses to his companions that he firmly, even passionately believes in a great many things, passages, to be sure, which lack any suggestion that such beliefs are only speculative. Tigerstedt (107) rightly stresses that "we are in duty bound to do our best to ascertain (*sic!*) in accordance with the rules of historical and philological criticism what Plato's words mean — even and especially when meaning something contrary to our own beliefs and tastes".

Again one readily agrees, but might we not do better to drop the term 'Risk' and stop associating it with Socrates' evaluation of an underworld story, which, we should remember, is called a *mythos* rather than a *logos*?

1.3. *Is A 'Fair Risk' The Only Option Left?*

It seems that Tigerstedt's choice of 'The Fair Risk' and his simultaneous support for a real body of Platonic doctrines, accessible to all those who apply the severe rules of historical and philological criticism to the best of their ability, are not easily reconciled. His inconsistency in this has something to do with his own reluctance to join in however small a way the common approaches including that of the searchers for the Unity of Plato's Thought, but derives also from his scruples concerning the still prevalent method of discerning different stages of Plato's thought.

No doubt Tigerstedt's criticism of those who have searched for the "Unity of Plato's thought" either by picturing him as the great moral teacher, and playing down as far as possible the logical, metaphysical and other technical aspects of his philosophy (Paul Shorey, see Tigerstedt, 55), or by neoplatonising (Léon Robin) or even kantianising him (Ernst Hoffman and Paul Natrop). However, he himself recognises (52) the ambiguity of the term 'Unity'. As well as referring to some close-knit system of thinking, well-ordered according to a set of hierarchic principles with a fixed terminology as reliable as the Bank of England, it can, he concedes, simply mean the recurrence of certain fundamental problems solutions to which however may vary greatly, indeed change, radically, or it can mean the constant profession of some general ideas, a *Weltanschauung*, which does not even exclude important variations, contradictions and inconsistencies.

The latter kind of Unity cannot reasonably be denied to Plato's thought by any unprejudiced reader of Plato's works. Ultimately it is the kind of unity or, if you like, basic coherence of thought, which is the privilege of any thinker who is profound without being scatter-brained; that is all. To use R.E. Allen's striking formula [1970:157]: "There is, of course, a unity to Plato's thought; but it is not the unity of a monument. It is the unity of growth and development, the unity of life".

Yet it is easy to agree with Tigerstedt (103), as the present author is ready to do, that an unprejudiced study of Plato's work establishes beyond reasonable doubt "that he believed firmly, even passionately, in a great many things: God,

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[6] Tigerstedt is right in stating (63 f.) that today many scholars accept it as an unquestionable fact that Plato had such an esoteric philosophy, as is clear from the evidence adduced in his note 8 on p. 131. See also Guthrie V, 418–42. Von Fritz passes masterly judgement on the Esotericists and rightly pleads [1966:153] that this useless debate be abandoned and that attention be paid instead to the interesting real problems raised by the works of Kraemer and Gaiser. For a sound evaluation of Plato's *Seventh Letter* on this score, see Levinson, 283–4, quoted below, our 13.32.

[7] See above, nr. 0.1. Into the same pattern of thought fall all attempts to christianise Plato. St. Augustine's example (*De vera religione*, cap. 6) has inspired many others. For example more than a century ago, Friedrich Michelis, *Die Philosophie Platons in ihrer inneren Beziehung zur geoffenbarten Wahrheit kritisch aus den Quellen dargestellt*, 2 vols (München 1859–60); De Vogel [1970], 210–42 and Luigi Stefanini; *Platone*, 2 vols (Padova, 1932–35; [2]1949), I, 55; II, 45–6; 453 ff. and other passages mentioned by Tigerstedt [1977], 106. For some more criticism, see Verdenius [1954].

[8] One, indeed, of the most naive tautologies of self-confident, radical views.

the world of Ideas, the eternity of the Soul, Reason, Virtue, etc.", and that (see *ibid.*, 102) he had "the unshakable conviction that there is an objective, immutable, eternal Truth, which it is Man's duty to search for, even if he may unable to attain it". However, this cannot possibly be done without seeing that those basic beliefs are found throughout Plato's writings and are never contradicted. Does not such a coherence in basic philosophical matters truly represent Unity of thought? Of course, such Unity — as has been remarked more than once — surely does not exclude the possibility of a certain evolution in one's thinking. Since the days of Karl Friedrich Hermann[9] many scholars have considered it to be reasonable, as many modern students of Plato still do, that since Plato was active as a thinker and writer for a long period, it would be contrary to common human experience if he had remained unchanged for so long a time. This seems indeed to be quite a reasonable assumption in spite of the opposite view held by scholars such as Schleiermacher[10] who was of the opinion that from the very outset Plato had fully developed his philosophy but that, for pedagogical and didactical reasons, he expounded it step by step in the *Dialogues*. The latter assumption is however quite odd in that it makes clear that, even in Schleiermacher's mind, the *Dialogues* give evidence of a progressive unfolding of the Platonic doctrine and thus do incorporate some evolutionary aspects, so self-evidently indeed that Schleiermacher finds it necessary to explain this away underlying pedagogical motives which he arbitrarily ascribes to the Master.

It would, then, be very unwise to exclude such an evolution or development at the very outset, and when considering the various genetic approaches, we should not reject the good with the many bad ones which presuppose all sorts of rather problematic, and mostly extrinsic, factors[11]. To sum up, a coherent development is unmistakable, especially in Plato's mature years when the profound dialogues, *Parmenides*, *Theaetetus*, and *Sophist* were written. Not even Tigerstedt was able to deny this, but he regards (99) them as the exceptions to the 'rule' of the discontinuity of the *Dialogues*. Yet on the whole, it may be remarked that the very observance of the rules of historical and philological criticism, or to use the formulation of Leo Strauss (351–2) of which Tigerstedt highly approves (107): "the rules of exactness governing the interpretation[12] of Plato's books (which) are much stricter than those governing the interpretation of most books" will inevitably lead

[9] His pioneering work *Geschichte und System der platonischen Philosophie* dates from 1839 (Heidelberg); see Tigerstedt, 25–31.

[10] Or Paul Shorey who firmly asserted [1904:88; quoted in Tigerstedt, 52] that "Plato on the whole belongs to the type of thinkers whose philosophy is fixed in early maturity (Schopenhauer, Herbert Spencer), rather than to the class of those who receive a new revelation every decade (Schelling)".

[11] Such as "the anti-democratic practical spirit of Plato's family, Socrates' death and Plato's long travels" (Hermann), or just *one* non-philosophical factor, whether sexuo-psychological or socio-economical. See Tigerstedt, 27–36. — Franz Susemihl describes (II, 696; cf. 558) Plato's evolution as a ceaseless changing of his views which all tend to reject 'Becoming' but end in a tragical self-destruction; see Tigerstedt, 26.

[12] He must mean 'the correct understanding as searched for'.

us to discern some often remarkable developments in Plato's thought, and not only with regard to smaller issues. The evolution of his doctrine of Forms is a far from minor source of evidence for this[13].

1.4. *On Logos As The Interpreter's Guide*

A final point should be made in this connection. In (rightly) rejecting any suggestion to turn Plato into a Kierkegaard or other existentialistic thinker, Tigerstedt points out (101–2) that any pathetic subjectivism or irrationalism is wholly alien to Socrates and Plato, as the latter's adamantine faith in the power and the rightness of the *Logos* separates him from all ancient and modern sceptics and irrationalists. As unshakable Truth should be the aim of all our disputes and form at the same time the solid basis of our persuasive force (see especially *Symposion*, 201C and *Phaedo*, 91C), so all genuine discussion is guided, even constrained, by *Logos*[14] and it is Man's duty to render in any dispute a well-reasoned account of his views (*logon didonai*).

Tigerstedt's correct evalution of the function of the *logon didonai*[15] as stipulated by Socrates and Plato is connected with the recognition that in this way *Logos* is also a valiant companion and guide at the interpreter's side.

The role of the logical approach in Plato's thought about the world is commonly acknowledged. First of all one should recall Socrates' strong warning against *misologia* (= 'hatred of intellectual treatment') in *Phaedo*, 89C8 ff. Indeed, supposing that somebody assumes an account[16] (logos) to be true without knowing how to assess it and that then a little later he feels it to be false (which it sometimes is, sometimes is not) and that then the same process recurs with one account after another, he would in the end be easily inclined to think that he had attained the height of wisdom in reaching the insight that there is nothing whatsoever secure either in things or in accounts, but that they both fluctuate and never remain at rest for a moment (*ibid.*, 90B6–C6).

Socrates wants to follow quite a different way, however. He was afraid, he confesses (*ibid.*, 99E1 ff.), that his mind might be completely blinded if he looked at things through his bodily eyes and tried to grasp them with one or other of the senses. It seemed therefore to him he should take refuge in accounts (*logoi*) and *in them* consider the true nature of things. And, he adds, studying things in true accounts is an even safer way of obtaining knowledge about them than examining

[13] See below, Chs VI-XII.

[14] Tigerstedt (102) rightly refers to *Rep.* II, 349D; 365D; X, 607B, and *Crito*, 48C as well as to Socrates' defence of logical reasoning in *Phaedo*, 89B (see below).

[15] This notion is put into its natural framework in Marten's profound study [1965], esp. 30–44. His own treatment of the problem of the *Sophist* (188–228) suffers mainly from a failure to closely follow Plato's detailed exposition. For this reason his discussions often end in contemplations which are interesting enough in themselves but unhelpful in elucidating the Platonic texts.

[16] For my rendering of this as 'account', (rather than as 'statement', though the latter rendering can sometimes not be avoided), see below, 13.13.

them *in concreto* by sense-perception. Socrates could not have given a more impressive eulogy to the role of the logical approach[17].

Levinson has made a fine study of Plato's use of language as the "didactic and diacritic tool" of thought (284). He has rightly observed (267) that "one very conspicuous use that Plato made of "word" ... was to seek to define them, or rather to ask what the things were which they denoted". What he claims (*ibid.*) in regard to the *Euthyphro*, holds good for the dialogues in their entirety: Socrates and Plato are not thinking *about* words but *with* them.

Obviously the conclusion cannot be escaped that our interpretation of Plato's thought as presented in the *Dialogues* should pay the closest attention to Plato's manipulation of language as the natural vehicle of *logos*, and to his exploitation of the range of its possibilities. Whoever tries to do this cannot help observing at the very outset that following the lines of language is not only the method of Plato's philosophical inquiry, it forms the central part of his didactics as well[18]. Plato's

[17] See also Nehring, 33–4, Derbolav [1972:21–2; 66; 146] and the excellent exposition in Rudolf Rehn [1982:26], who has tried to clarify the important role of language and speech in Plato's philosophy. I fully agree with his main thesis but cannot concur with him on many details, especially as far as the *Sophist* is concerned. It is most unfortunate that he has failed to see the basic correctness of Gerold Prauss' interpretation of *logos* in the *Cratylus* (see below, 15.2).

[18] Generally speaking Tigerstedt does not seem to be entirely fair to Plato when he asserts that there is so much which is unclear in his expositions. The absence of a rigid system does not quite justify his talk of 'Discontinuity' (99). There is also something strange about the way he follows (15) Heinrich von Stein in the latter's "vivid and still valid" description [I, 5 ff.] of the bewildering and contradictory impression that a *first* acquaintance with Plato is likely to make on an *Unprepared reader* (italics mine, I have to confess). Briefly, the sober scholar seems quite unexpectly to fall victim to Stein's stirring effusions: "Such a reader", Stein goes on, "cannot but feel disappointed and vexed when confronted with a philosopher he has heard so highly praised... A disappointment which, however, ... leaves the reader astonished and upset. For he feels (*sic!*) that the ambiguities, obscurities, gaps and contradictions that perplex him could easily have been avoided by Plato, if only he had chosen to do so. However, he seems to pay no attention to our legitimate claim for clarity and coherence but rather to derive a malicious pleasure from eluding it". However, the possession of such "feelings" should, it seems, imply a clear and mature insight into the matters discussed by the malicious Master. — I am afraid that here lies the weak spot of Tigerstedt's view. In stating the Problem (13–8) he had asserted (14) that generally speaking, even to the philosophical layman Plato is "far easier (sic!) to *understand* (my italics) than many other great thinkers, e.g. Aristotle, or Kant or Hegel. It is seldom difficult to make out what Plato is saying. But it is often difficult to be sure of what he really means". What on earth is the difference between 'understanding' and 'being sure of what he really means'? — Yet Stein seems to have made disciples in our days. Oehler in an astonishingly similar way writes (*Zeitsch. f. philos. Forschung* 19 (1965), 415: "Man sollte sich lediglich daran erinnern, was man selber empfand, als man zum erstenmal Platonische Dialoge las, oder was man empfindet, wenn man nach der Lektüre Aristotelischer Texte wieder in Platons Dialoge liest. Es ist das Gefühl des Genarrten, das Gefühl dasz man von jemand, der das Ganze weisz, mit absicht in dem Zustand dessen gehalten wird, der nur ein biszchen mehr als gar nichts weisz, ... mit anderen Worten, dasz hinter den Dialogen eine grosze Konzeption steht, die alles in den Dialogen gesagte umklammert und umgreifend zusammenhält" (quoted in Pester [1971], XIII–XIV).

approach is thoroughly semantical, as we shall have the opportunity to observe on very many occasions[19].

[19] See below, *Index*, s.v. *semantics*. In *Charmides*, 159A5–6 Socrates says: "you know your native language and therefore you must be able also to express just what you think" (*auto ho ti soi phainetai*). It should be emphasised that his approach is said to be semantical, and not just linguistic, since his interest is mainly focussed on *what is meant* by the linguistic expressions, rather than on the expressions considered as merely linguistic entities. What counts for Plato is the significative force of words. — It should be noticed in this connection that in Plato's dialogues, we find logical, epistemological, and ontological strands almost inextricably intertwined; see Calvert 37, n. 15. For Plato's linguistic sensibility in general, see Loriaux [1955:158] and Classen, esp. 13–8; 72–84; 151–64. The latter's treatment, however, of philosophical terms in Plato is rather superficial; see 158 (*ousia*) and 162 (*ontôs, tôi onti*). — Kapp's claim [1942:36] that there was less genuine dependence between the logical part of Plato's philosophy and his developed doctrine of Forms than he himself (*sic!*) believed is basically vitiated by his own failure to recognise the interlacement and mutual interference of logic and metaphysics in Plato. The same holds good for his rejection [^{2}1942:149] of the "wide-spread opinion that in this latest period Plato modified his doctrine of Ideas so as to come nearer to modern logical or epistemological conceptions". He is certainly quite right in rejecting such conceptions, but Plato was capable enough of correcting himself in refining his logical and epistemological views and of following the lines of his *own* thought in doing so.

Chapter two

THE EVOLUTION OF THE DOCTRINE OF EIDOS

2.0. The main aim of the present commentary on Plato's *Sophist* is to show what exactly are the concerns of Plato's novel metaphysics which this dialogue is the most explicit in introducing, particularly inasmuch as the doctrine of Forms is in order. It will be argued that, in the final analysis, its novelty reduces to a reappraisal of Matter and, through this, of the immanence of the Forms, or of their *presence in* the transient world of particulars.

It is self-evident that it is of paramount importance to such an argument to settle the question of whether there are different stages of the doctrine of Forms and, if it is seen that there are, investigate them. Any opponent of my special thesis, or indeed of the broader one which argues for the existence of such a development, will readily admit the usefulness of this investigation to his own argumentation for the opposite view.

2.1. *Is The Socratic Eidos A Separate Form?*

Some thirteen years ago the Canadian scholar, Reginald E. Allen argued for the following view of the *eidos* discussed in the earlier dialogues (I quote his own summary [1970] 165–6):

> that Plato's early dialogues, and specifically the *Euthyphro* contain a theory of Forms, and further, that that theory is not to be identified with the theory of Forms found in the *Phaedo* and *Republic*. In the early dialogues, the theory of Forms is the foundation of Socratic dialectic, which assumes the existence of a distinct class of entities as objects of its search. In the middle dialogues, however, the theory of Forms is offered to provide an account of ontological status unlike anything the early dialogues can show; the questions it is meant to answer are not questions which arise *in* Socratic dialectic, but questions *about* Socratic dialectic — specifically, about its possibility, as a search for real definitions ... The theory of Forms found in the middle dialogues, then, is neither the same theory found in the early dialogues, nor a different one. Not different, because it contains the earlier theory as a part. Not the same, because it is directed to issues the earlier dialogues do not raise.

In this way, Allen took his own position in the scholarly battle which centers on the controversy of whether the theory of Forms, or indeed *any* theory of Forms

at all is traceable back to the group of so-called Socratic dialogues'. He gives (130) this survey:

> Three main views have been maintained. One is that the early and the middle dialogues are here the same: in both, Forms exist and are separate from the things which have them; there is a theory of Forms in the *Euthyphro* and it is essentially the same theory propounded in the *Phaedo* and *Republic* and later criticized in the *Parmenides*. A second view is that, though there are Forms in the early dialogues, they are not separate, being 'in' things and not 'apart' from them. A third view is that though the language of Forms is found in the early dialogues, Forms themselves are not: the theory propounded in the *Phaedo* and *Republic*, and criticized in the *Parmenides*, is wholly new and Plato had invented no part of it — except its vocabulary — when he wrote the *Euthyphro*.
> There is also a fourth view, which for present purposes may be treated as a variant of the third. It is that, in both the early and the middle dialogues, what have been called Forms are merely linguistic predicates, not independent universals or essences.

A first thing to be noted is that there seems to be some confusion in Allen's treatment of the problems at issue in that he tries to dispose of the 'third view' by refuting (105–18) it in its special variant which he takes as 'a fourth view'. In point of fact he is trying to refute the first view ('one and the same Theory of Forms in the early and the middle dialogues'; 149–64), the second ('Forms, immanent, not separated; 130–47), but not the third one in its own right ('the language of Forms is found in the early dialogues, Forms themselves are not'). However when he narrows his own interpretation of the earlier doctrine in reducing it to a theory of meaning which clearly is at work in the Socratic discussions of those dialogues (and to my mind, he is perfectly right in doing so), he seems to entirely reduce the third view to the immanence issue of the second. Yet not a shadow of a proof is supplied for the view that the semantical approach (starting with the earlier theory of meaning found in those dialogues) is bound to lead us to either a rigid 'yes' or 'no' as far as the immanence issue is concerned, or indeed to exclude any other options. To my mind, what Allen propounds as 'a third view' deserves some more attention. In the following sections, I shall argue that an accurate inventory of Plato's usage in the earlier and middle dialogues will be helpful to settle the question at issue.

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[1] The 'Socratic dialogues' are those of the earliest period of Plato's activity as a writer: *Crito*, *Laches*, *Lysis*, *Charmides*, *Euthyphro*, *Hippias minor* and (?) *major*, *Protagoras* and *Gorgias*, whose relative order is still disputed. The middle dialogues are *Meno*, *Cratylus*, *Phaedo*, *Republic*, *Symposion*, *Phaedrus*, *Euthydemus* and *Menexenus*; the late or critical dialogues are: *Parmenides*, *Theaetetus*, *Sophist*, *Statesman*, *Timaeus*, *Critias* and *Philebus* (there is much more agreement about the relative order of the members of the last group). See Guthrie IV, 50–4; Ross [1951], 2–10. — Even Tigerstedt who seems to condemn any assumption of a developmental thesis as if this came down to arguing for some detailed continuous evolution of Plato's thought, and happily states that such an undertaking is impossible since we have no absolute certainty about the chronological place of each dialogue required for that, has to concede [1977:92], that there exists a general agreement concerning the chronological order of the different groups of dialogues (although the relative position of each dialogue within its group is less certain).

2.11. *Some Notes On The Various Senses Of 'genos' And 'eidos'*

It seems useful to pay some attention, first, to the common usage of '*genos*' and '*eidos*' including their non-technical senses[2].

The basic sense of '*genos*' is 'race', 'stock', 'kin'. This is the sense in *Phaedo*, 82B7; *Rep.* V, 473D6; *Symp.*, 189D3 and *Timaeus*, 75B5, where it is used to mean the human race; that of *animalia* is referred to in *Theaetetus*, 153B2, while the mortal race in general is intended in *Timaeus*, 70E5 (cf. 71D7; 72E5; 73A1 and B5). Hence the sense of *sort, type* (as characteristic of a certain race, stock or kin). This is the sense in *Phaedo*, 82B5–7; *Rep.* VI, 501E3; *Sophist*, 226A1; 260A5; 261A4 and 7; 264E1; 265E5; 268C9: 'of the appearance-making breed' (*tou phantastikou genous*) and *Statesman*, 260B1 and 285B6.

Its counterpart *eidos* is more than once used in a similar sense, and sometimes in a parallel fashion in the same context, e.g. *Timaeus*, 39E10–40A2: "There are four such. One of them is the heavenly race (*genos*) of gods; another the race of birds ...; a third the watery sort (*eidos*) ... etc." A similar sense is to be found at 48E3–4. Sometimes *genos* stands for a main type embracing certain *eidê* (or if you like, *genos* = 'type' and *eidos* = 'sub-type'); so *Sophist*, 264E1 and 267E5–6. The plural *genê* may mean 'kinds of thing', 'things'; this is the sense used in our dialogue, 263D7, as Cornford correctly remarks [1935:302, n. 1]. The latter use allows an easy transition to the next one.

From the foregoing use follows that of 'domain', 'area' meaning, in a manner of speaking, the container of all things of a certain sort. This is the sense in *Rep.* IV, 434B3 ("class of soldiers, that of counsellors and guardians"); VI, 507C13 and D9; *Timaeus*, 17C4; *Theaet.*, 206B7; *Sophist.*, 235B5. In this sense it is also indiscriminately placed alongside *eidos*, e.g. *Rep.* V, 477C1–4 ("faculties, powers, abilities are a class (*genos ti*) of entities ...; ... if it so be that you understand the class (*eidos*) that I am trying to describe"); *ibid.*, 477D8–E2 ("in what class (*genos*) do you put true knowledge?; ... and opinion?; shall we assign it so some other class (*eidos*)?").

The technical use of *genos* for Platonic 'Kind' ('Form', 'Idea') is to be viewed as being of the same order as the third use mentioned above ('domain') in so far as the Forms' extensional sense is concerned ('to wit, the Form as being at the head of all things of a certain quality'). Its (by far most important) intensional meaning, Kind = the Characteristic *par excellence*, goes back to the use of *genos* for 'sort', or 'type'.

The basic sense of *eidos* is 'shape', 'outward appearance'. This sense is found in *Phaedo*, 73A1; 76C7 and 92B5 ('human shape' = body). *Phaedrus*, 246B8 speaks of the everchanging shapes of the soul (cf. 249B1) and 251B6 has 'everywhere under the surface of the soul' (lit. under the outward appearance)[3].

[2] See also Ross [1951], 12–6; Guthrie III, 430 and V, 97, n. 2; 175; Bluck [1961], 224–5, Allen, 28–9, and Gallop [1975], 93–7. Brommer gives a useful survey but has not succeeded in arguing for any clear-cut distinction between *eidos* and *idea*.

[3] See Verdenius [1955], 281.

This is the derivation of the sense of 'character', 'nature', which is quite common in Greek, e.g. Herodotus VI, 94 ("the nature of games"); Thucydides II, 50 ("the nature of the disease"). For examples in Plato, see *Meno*, 72C6 ('some common character of virtues'); *Rep.* IV, 435B2 ('the very character of justice and so on'). A similar use is found at *Phaedrus*, 249B7 and *Sophist*, 264C1–2 (and 4): "our previous division (of Image-making) by types" (*kat' eidê*); some lines further on (264E1) the type which embraces these *eidê* is (quite naturally) called *genos* ('main type'). There is an easy transition from this to the technical use of *eidos* for 'Form' or 'Idea'. However, as always, prudence is here the mother of wisdom: not every use of formulas such as '*the eidos of*', or even of '*auto to eidos*', should be taken as referring to a transcendent Platonic Form. So *Cratylys*, 440A9 has *auto to eidos tês gnôseôs* for 'just that which makes something *knowledge*', rather than 'the Form KNOWLEDGE'; among others Kahn [²1973:171] fails to see this. Kahn has himself correctly observed (*ibid.*) that "when Socrates speaks of the *knower* at 440C4–5 (*to gnôsomenon, to gignôskon*) it is hard to believe that he is still referring to a Form". It should be noted further that *eidos* is still found in its non-technical use in the middle and later dialogues, for example in *Phaedo*, 100B; *Rep.* IV, 434B; 440D–441A; 441C (where *eidos* is used synonymously with *genos*); *Laws* X, 963C; for *Timaeus* 39E–40A and *Sophist*, 264E and 267E, see *ad loc.*

Eidos has also the extensional sense of 'domain', 'class', 'category'. This is the sense in *Phaedo*, 79A6 ('two classes of beings'); cf. *Cratylus*, 386E8; *Phaedo*, 97E5 ('another kind of cause'). *Cratylus*, 389D1 has 'several types of webs' and at 418E7 *idea* is similarly used. (In *Rep.* II, 357C5 there is talk of 'a third class of good under which fall exercise and being healed'). Another example is found at *Sophist*, 227D11 ('two kinds of evil') and 236D2 ('a class that baffles investigation'). Plato's use of *eidos* and *genos* to signify 'domain' or 'class' indiscriminately has already been mentioned.

It is easily seen from this survey that the development of the diverse uses of *genos* started with the extensional usage ('race' as the aggregate of a certain offspring), whereas the development of the several uses of *eidos* proceeded in just the opposite fashion, from intensional to extensional use, since the basic meaning is a 'quality' (either shape or characteristic nature) which determines an individual's being.

2.12. *On Eidos As It Occurs In The Early Dialogues*

I think that Allen's view that the main interest of the *Euthyphro* lies in its dialectic, rather than in any doctrinal result, can hardly be questioned. One may also readily agree with his thesis that the middle dialogues try to give answers to some basic questions that are bound to arise about Socratic dialectic as such, and about its pretentions and shortcomings in particular. Nor should one deny its impact on the different roles accorded to *eidos* by Socrates and Plato. However his view of the precise nature of those different roles and the corresponding distinct status to be assigned to the *eidos* may well raise some doubts.

Allen is of the opinion (109) that the commitment to *eidê* (he has: 'Forms') in the earlier dialogues is not merely 'a matter of language': it is a matter of meta-

physics — a metaphysics of essence. But to him it is a metaphysical theory which essentially continues from common sense, "being, in one sense of that overworked word, a theory of meaning", he adds (*ibid.*). Indeed, it is not only in the early dialogues that Socrates is eagerly hunting after the precise meanings of the key-words of the actual discussion; rather it is typical of all the Platonic discussions, including those of the critical period where Socrates' role is fairly modest. Allen gives a clear description of the situation (110):

> Plain men had talked of holiness long before Socrates came to ask them what it was exactly that they meant. His inquiry was distinguished by the precision of it. He did not want synonyms of holiness, or examples of it, or distinguishing marks of it but an analysis of the essence of it .... It is a question to which common sense may surely be led, and the dialectic of the *Euthyphro* is in fact a record of such leading, as Socrates works throughout to make Euthyphro see the real nature of his question. The progress of dialectic involves passage from the respondent's naïve existence assumption that there is such a thing as 'holiness' to his acceptance, if dialectic is successful, of the highly sophisticated existence assumption that there is an essence of holiness, and that it can be defined. But if the latter claim is true, the passage is continuous: for a commitment to essence is then latent in our ordinary use of words. The essence of holiness is what the word 'holiness' means; to the degree that we do not understand that essence, we do not understand the meaning of our words.

The decisive question seems to be: are Forms taken as *separate* Entities involved here? Such a metaphysical assumption is commonly denied and assertions stating or hinting at the existence of some *eidos* which may be defined, are sometimes even taken to be 'a mere matter of language'. Allen wants to oppose such opinions and firmly asserts (112) that questions about Forms in the early dialogues are not reducible wholly and simply to questions about the meaning of words, because the primary questions about the meaning of words themselves reduce to questions about Forms.

Let us start by agreeing that there is indeed an ontological commitment in the early dialogues and that Socrates' talk of *eidê* is not just a material mode of speech and accordingly cannot either be simply explained by the tendency of ancient Greek to personify abstractions in forms, such as 'the holy', 'the just' and so on. There is indeed a wealth of evidence in the earlier dialogues that, to Socrates' mind, the names involved, '(the) holy', '(the) just', '(the) brave' and so on, do in fact refer to something specific which cannot be identified with the particular things that are holy, just, brave *etc.* No doubt, to Socrates' mind this 'something' had a certain ontological status, in that his search for definitions primarily concerns that which is *present in* the particulars and is really the cause of the being so-and-so ('holy', 'just', 'brave') of the particulars. So Allen is quite right in characterising (115) Socratic dialectic as an inquiry into the characteristics inherent in things which should form the basis of our use of words, rather than merely an inquiry into the ordinary use of words.

It is however easy to pay this tribute to Allen of agreeing with him. So far his view does not substantially differ from those of well-known scholars[4], who also

[4] E.g. Guthrie IV, 212 and 114–41; 150–3 and 188–91. Ross [1951], 11–21 and De Vogel [1970], 112–51. See also below, no. 2.2.

recognise truly metaphysical tenets as early on as in the earlier dialogues. Therefore nobody will object to Allen's claim that there is some commitment to the 'existence' of *eidê* in the early dialogues, with, of course, the proviso that *eidê* is not rendered *Forms* (with a capital letter), since such a rendering seems to jump to the conclusion wanted. The acceptance of this proviso, again, would be to only increase further the scholarly unanimity if, that is, Allen would only allow the preliminary question of whether Socrates' *eidos* must be taken as a *form* in the genuinely Platonic sense to precede his next statement ("It remains to ask whether such *eidê* in the early dialogues are 'in' things or 'separate' from them, 'immanent' or 'transcendent'). Again, one fears, the 'third view' mentioned above (nr. 2.1) has pushed itself to the fore.

Allen, quite sharply and learnedly, argues for the existence of 'separate' Forms as early on as the earlier dialogues. The first thing for him to do is, then, to dismiss Aristotle's claim for the opposite view.

2.13. *Aristotle's Testimony*

Much has already been said by modern scholars about Aristotle's reliability as a historical source when he is reporting on, or interpreting, earlier philosophers. It is commonly acknowledged that he sometimes provides evidence that is clearly confirmed by several other sources, including the Platonic *Dialogues*; an example of this is the Platonic *chôrismos* ('separation'). Sometimes, he provides evidence of views that cannot be found in the *Dialogues*, yet which are not discounted there either (e.g. the theory of the 'Ideal Numbers'). Sometimes, again, Aristotle's claims are bound to provoke perplexity on our part since they directly conflict with what Plato says most explicitly in the *Dialogues*, e.g. when at *Metaph.* A9, 992a29 ff. he (implicitly) denies that Plato knew of efficient and final causality[5].

However, it would be as unsound to dismiss Aristotle's evidence merely because he sometimes provides mistaken reports or erroneous interpretations of earlier philosophers, as it would be to think that all his claims are true because he sometimes does in fact provide information that is confirmed by the *Dialogues* or some other sources. We would do better to take each of Aristotle's claims in its own right, meticulously scrutinise it, and be as ready to accept it as to reject it after close examination.

To begin with, Aristotle's claim about the *chôrismos* is commonly held to be correct (and for solid reasons), as far as Plato himself is concerned[6]. However, Allen argues for Aristotle's radical inaccuracy once it comes to the man's account of Soc-

[5] See Allen [1970] 139–40; his entire discussion (136–45) of Aristotle's authority is worth reading. For the latter item, see also Cherniss [1944], and [1945], *passim*; Ross [1951], 142–224.

[6] Allen says [1970:133]: "In claiming that Plato separated the Ideas, Aristotle was surely correct" and refers to Cherniss [1944:203–11 and nn. 121–5] for a review of ancient evidence for separation, drawn from Plato and the testimony of Xenocrates as well as Aristotle's.

rates' doctrine of *eidos*, where Aristotle denies that Socrates made them exist separately (Allen of course has (133): "that Socrates separated the Ideas")[7]. Since Aristotle's knowledge of the historical Socrates was presumably drawn mainly from what Plato says about him in the earlier dialogues, it seems reasonable to confine oneself to the early Platonic Socrates, leaving aside the question about the historical Socrates (cf. Allen, 133). Thus Allen's claim should imply that Aristotle misrepresents what Socrates-Plato taught in the early dialogues.

Aristotle actually makes a clear distinction between Plato's thought and that of Socrates as far as the *chôrismos* is concerned[8].

Metaph. A6,987b1–9: Socrates was however occupying himself with ethical matters and neglected the world of nature as a whole. Yet he sought 'the common thing' (*to katholou*) in these ethical matters, and fixed thought for the first time on definitions (*horismôn*). Plato took this over but held that that ‹common thing› has a bearing, not on sensible things but on entities of another kind, — for this reason, that the common definition (*koinon horon*) could not be of any sensible things as they were always changing. Things of this different kind, then, he called Forms (*ideas*), and sensible things, he said, were all named after these and according to them (*para tauta kai kata tauta*).

Ibid. M4,1078b17–34: But when Socrates was occupying himself with ethical virtues, and in connection with them became the first to attempt to give universal definitions (*horizesthai*[9] *katholou*) ‹.....›: it was natural that Socrates should be seeking the essence (*to ti estin*); ‹....› but he did not make those 'common things' (*ta katholou*) or the definitions separate (*chôrista*; i.e. 'exist apart'); they[10], however, separated them and this sort of entities they called Forms (*ideas*).

Ibid. M9,1086a32–b11: For they[10] at the same time make the Forms (*ideas*) 'common' (*katholou*) as essences (*hôs ousias*) *and* also individuals[11], as separate (*hôs chôristas*) ‹....›. The reason why those who take universal essences combined these two characteristics in one thing, is that they did not make them[12] identical with sensible things. They thought indeed that the individual things in the sensible world were in a state of flux and none of them remained, but that the 'common thing' (*to de katholou*) was beside these[13] (*para tauta*) and something different. And Socrates gave the impulse to this theory ‹....› but he did not *separate* ‹those essences› from the individuals; and in this he thought rightly, in not separating them ‹.....›. His successors, however, holding it for necessary, if there are to be any substances (*ousiai*) beside the sensible and transient ones, that they must be separate (*chôristas*), had no other ‹at hand›, but put those substances (essences; *ousias*) commonly assigned (*katholou legomenas*) apart, so that it followed that the common natures (*physeis*) and the individual ones were almost the same sort of thing.

What Aristotle says about Socrates is quite unambiguous: (1) Socrates did not effect the 'separation' of the Forms whilst Plato did; (2) Aristotle apparently understands by 'separation' what might be called the 'existential assumption', i.e. the object of a real definition must *exist* apart from its sensible instantiations (and thus its instances) as an entity of another i.e. non-sensible sort.

Of course, this does not amount to a failure by Socrates to *distinguish* between an instantiation of say 'holiness' (or 'being-holy') and its instance (i.e. the *thing* which possesses it). For that matter, Socrates' whole argument is focused on exactly that distinctness. Nor does Aristotle deny that Socrates assumed such a definitorial 'common thing' to be some specific entity, (called 'essence' or 'nature'): he merely insists that Socrates kept locating this entity *in* the sensible world, as he considered it the essential cause *present in* the particular sensible involved. Now, this is precisely the picture we get from the early dialogues.

2.14. *The Basic Passages Involved*

Let us now go on first to read the relevant passages of the *Euthyphro*. From 5C onwards Socrates concentrates his efforts to discover what exactly 'the holy' is[14].

Euthyphro, 5C7–D4: So ‹...› tell me ‹...›: what sort of thing (*poion ti*) do you say 'the pious' (*to eusebes*) and 'the impious' (*to asebes*) are, both with reference to murder and all other cases. Is not the holy taken by itself (*to hosion auto*) self-identical (*tauton hautôi*) in every action, and ‹is not›, on the other hand (*au*), the unholy ‹in every action› the precise[15] opposite of the holy, but taken by itself (*auto de*)[16] self-identical (*hautôi homoion*)[17]. And does not everything which is to be unholy have a certain single character (*mian tina idean*) inasmuch as it is unholy (*kata tên anosiotêta*)[18]?

Ibid., 6C9–E1: Try to answer for me more clearly the question which I have just asked you, for, my friend, you had not yet sufficiently taught me when I asked you what the holy is (*to hosion ho ti pot' eiê*) ‹...›. Do you recall that I did not ask you to teach me about some one or two or the whole collection of holy things, but about that very characteristic (*ekeino auto to eidos*) by which all holy things are holy? For you said, I believe, that it is by one single character that unholy things are unholy and holy things holy.

Ibid., 14C2–6: Had you given the answer, I would now have learned from you what holiness is (*tên hosiotêta*; *lit.* 'the holiness) ‹...›. But again what do you say that the holy (*to hosion*) is and holiness (*tên hosiotêta*)? Is it not knowledge of how to pray and to sacrifice?

Ibid., 15C11–E7: Let us begin again from the beginning and consider what the holy is (*ti estin to hosion*) ‹...›. If you did not know the holy and the unholy (*to te hosion kai to anhosion*) distinctly, you could not possibly undertake to prosecute your aged father ‹....›. But as it is, I am sure that you think you do know distinctly what is holy and what is not (*to te hosion kai mê*). — Another time, then, Socrates ‹.....›. — What are you doing, my friend? You

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[7] The capital in 'Ideas' should be noticed, again.
[8] I follow Ross' translation for the main part.
[9] The verb (whose active and middle forms are used indiscriminately) has the literal sense: 'to make off the limites (*horoi*) of a (semantic) field from cognate or contiguous ones'.
[10] I.e. the Platonists.
[11] *kai tôn kath' hekaston* (*lit.* 'also belonging to the class of the individual things'). I think that Ross' rendering "and again treat them as separable and as individuals" is not correct.
[12] I.e. those essences.
[13] I.e. the individual things.

[14] Greek *to hosion*, the primary meaning of which is 'sanctioned by divine law'; see Allen [1971], 25–6. I render *to hosion* in the absence of anything better, 'the holy' (Socrates uses also *eusebês* as a equivalent ('pious').
[15] Reading *pantôs* instead of the common reading *pantos*. As is well known, a MSS reading such as *pantos* is ambiguous in this respect. For the rest, this sentence seems to be commonly misunderstood; see below, note 19.
[16] I.e. taken apart from its instances.
[17] I.e. in all its instances. For *homoion* as a stylistic variant for *tauton*, see Guthrie IV, 115.
[18] *Lit.* 'according to its unholiness'.

leave me and cast me down from my high hope that I should learn from you the holy things and the unholy (*ta te hosia kai mê*)?

Throughout the dialogue Socrates' request to be told the nature of 'the holy' is put off by Euthyphro who instead gives questionable examples of holiness or incorrect definitions of it. What he is looking for apparently is that which is the same (*tauton*) in every holy thing or action (5D) or that characteristic precisely (*ekeino auto to eidos*: 6D10–11) by which all holy things are holy.

As Socrates is clearly after that very characteristic, it is quite reasonable that he should assume that *eidos* does exist. However, the *auto* formula refers to our way of thinking or discerning it, and not as such to any way in which the *eidos* should exist. On the other hand, it *is* clearly located *in* its instances (e.g. *in* every action; 5D1), such that the *auto* formula only means that it be *considered apart* from that instance *in* which it still exists. Hence it unavoidably follows *both* that the *eidos* is a real thing, not just an imaginary entity, *and* that this real thing is *in* its instances, not somewhere outside them.

Guthrie rightly says (IV, 116) that "in all probability Socrates went no further in delimiting the mode of existence of such entities, save to insist ... that they must have an independent, constant nature of their own, unaffected by our opinion on them". He rejects (117–8 and especially 118, n. 1) Allen's opinion that Plato here also speaks of *eidos* as existing outside the instances. Guthrie is most explicit in his repudiation of that idea: "Of this there is no trace". Indeed, nothing of the kind is asserted by Socrates nor is it implied in his expositions. Allen's optical error is due to the fact that he misinterprets the *auto* formula, which constantly refers to a device of our conceiving of the *eidos* involved, not to its ontological state. What Socrates is actually asking Euthyphro to do is to consider the *eidos* apart in spite of the fact that it is immanent in its instances. So Ernst Kapp was perfectly right in emphasising (67) that in the *Euthyphro* it becomes strikingly evident that attributes (of course he has the usual term 'predicates') like 'pious' and 'impious' are different from their many possible but very often problematic subjects, and that their essence cannot be adequately expressed in terms of such subjects. In a very simple way they *are* something *besides* the subjects and it is easy to understand that in order to know what they are we must take them by themselves and not confound them with their usual or possible subjects. (See also *ibid.*, 106–8).

So 'the unholy' is not 'a negative Idea' either but just the opposite characteristic which is no less *immanent* in things. The parallelism is particularly emphasised at 5D1–5[19]; 'the holy' is always the same common characteristic in all holy things

[19] For the text, see above. Guthrie calls (IV, 120, n. 2) 5D1–5 a tricky sentence. However, he follows the misinterpretation which is commonly given. Plato does not say "not only is the pious always the same and the impious likewise always its opposite and the same as itself but the impious (and of course the pious, too) has a single *idea* in respect of its impiety". Indeed, such a statement would be rather puzzling. But (1) *pantos* should be read *pantôs* (see above n. 15); (2) the conjunction *de* at D3 which corresponds to *men* at D2 is used adversatively, not connectively, and the meaning of D2–3 is: the unholy, though it is the very opposite of the holy, is however also self-identical (just as is the case with the

and the unholy is its very opposite in all its instances, but taken apart from these instances (*auto de*) it, too, is self-identical. And thus, as far as unholy *things* are concerned, they also have a single character of 'unholiness'. It is obvious that Socrates is speaking of *immanent characteristics*, either good or bad ones, which should be considered as such in order that they be correctly defined. There is no trace in Socrates' arguments of any separate existence of the looked-for *eidos*.

In the other early dialogues[20] Socrates uses the same pattern of argument: he strives, but rather unsuccessfully because of his respondents' bluntness, to arrive at real definitions of courage, justness, friendship, and so on. Thus in the *Laches*, though the technical term 'eidos' ('idea') is absent, what one is striving to find is 'what courage is' (190D7; E3), 'that which by its nature runs through all the instances of courage' (192C1) and what is being investigated is '*being what* courage is the same in all the examples mentioned'. Finally, at 197E3–4 the semantic approach comes to the fore when Socrates wants to know what Nicias has in mind when he uses the term, 'courage'.

The *Lysis* seems to be, at first glance, a little problematic in that one finds here not only the harmless notion of *presence in* (*parousia*; so 217D–E) but also that of the primary *philon* (= 'primary object of love'). The latter is paraphrased at 220B1–2: "that precisely (*ekeino auto*) to which all these so-called friendships are directed as their ultimate end[21] seems to be the thing which is truly the object of love". However, the description of this primary object as precisely that which is *in* any particular instance of love objects comes quite close to the formulas used in *Euthyphro* and *Laches*: 'that precisely which is the same in all instances', except that in the *Lysis* (where the imperfection of love constantly takes the special form of 'not being desirable for one's own sake'[22]), the formula is primarily framed teleologically. However, it is also the *Lysis* to which we owe an effective explanation of the peculiar kind of 'presence' intended in Socrates' arguments:

holy) when taken by itself; (3) *auto* (at D2 and D3) is used in opposition to *en pasêi praxei*; (4) *kai* (at D3) should be preceded by a full stop, as it introduces another sentence which further says about every unholy *thing*, that it also has just one single character, inasmuch as it is unholy. Of course, the subject of the last sentence is 'every particular unholy *thing*', not, 'the unholy' as such; the latter *has* no character but *is* it.

[20] See the lucid expositions in Guthrie IV, 124–212; also Kapp [1942':83–5]. — It should be remarked that the *eidos* as an immanent characterisation is still found in later dialogues. So e.g. *Gorgias*, 497E1–2 and 498D2 and E1 where there is indiscriminately spoken of the *parousia* of good or bad characteristics. For *enousia* and *eneinai*, see *Charmides*, 158E–159A; *Cratylus*, 413C3; *Rep.* III, 402C5; *Phaedo*, 73A7; *Parm.*, 150A2; 158C2; 159D8; *Timaeus*, 39E8–9; *Philebus*, 16D2. For *pareinai*, see *Rep.* VI, 507D12; *Theaet.*, 186B1; *Laws* I, 647E4; *Hipp. maior*, 294A1. For *eggignesthai*, see *Lysis*, 216D4; *Euthyd.*, 280B2; 301A4; *Rep.* VI, 509B7; *Phaedo*, 105B9; C3; *Parm.*, 132B6; 133D7–8; *Sophist*, 247B3; 248C4; 249A1; 263D8; *Statesman*, 309C7; *Philebus*, 24D1; 60C2. For *paragignesthai*, see *Gorgias*, 506D3–6; *Meno*, 70A3; *Phaedo*, 71A5; 86D2; 99E6; 100A1; *Sophist*, 247A8; *Laws* II, 653B2.

[21] Plato uses the verb *teleutân* 'to end', 'to be accomplished', 'to find one's completion'.

[22] See Guthrie IV, 152.

Lysis, 217C3–E1: Some things are themselves such as that which is present in them, other things are not. For example, if you dye some thing, no matter what, with any colour, the colour dyed in 'is present in' the dyed thing. ..... If anyone were to dye your locks, fair as they are, with white lead, would they, after the dyeing, *be* or only *appear* white? — Appear. — And yet whiteness would, at any rate, be present in them. But still they would not, as yet, be at all the more white, but though whiteness is present in them, they are neither white nor black. But when, my dear boy, old age brings upon them this same colour, then they will have become really such as that which is present in them, white as they are *by the presence of the white* (*leukou parousiai*).

It is obvious that in the *Lysis*, too, the 'presence in' metaphor is put to work to clarify what it is to be a thing's true characteristic, or something which truly affects something's condition as opposed to something which only affects its appearance superficially.

Again, the *Charmides* tries to define what 'temperance' (*sôphrosynê*) is (159A; 160D–E). The whole enterprise ends in failure (175A–176D). Two points may be of some use for our purpose. At 159A5–6 Socrates remarks that Charmides knows his own native language and must, *for that reason*, be able also to say precisely what (*auto ho ti*) you think temperance is. Accordingly, at 175B2–4 he complains that they have failed to discover upon what in the world (*eph' hotôi pote*) of things that are (*tôn ontôn*) the name-giver imposed the name, 'temperance'.

At 160E a fresh start is made to discover what exactly temperance is by trying to find out the effect which temperance has on somebody in whom it is present: this, thus, offers a first hint at the link between 'presence in' and essential cause. However, it should be noted all the same that the effect involved is not synonymous with its cause, whereas such synonimity is characteristic of any eidos theory, be it of the Socratic or of the Platonic type.

Charmides, 160D5–E1: Then, once more Charmides ..... fix your attention more closely and look at yourself. Consider what is the quality which temperance makes you have by its presence (*parousa*) and of what quality being itself it could render you such. Think over all this, and tell me truly and courageously what you think it is.

The language of the *Hippias Maior*[23] is very similar to that used in the *Euthyphro*:

287C1–E1: Is it not by justice (*dikaiosynêi*) that the just are just? .... Yes, by justice. — Then, this, namely justice, *is* something. — Certainly. — Again, is it by wisdom (*sophiai*) that the wise are wise and by 'the good' (*tôi agathôi*) that all good things are good? — Quite so. — While *being* those things *something?*; one could scarcely say, I think, while being nothing! — Yes, indeed. — Then, are not all beautiful things beautiful by the beautiful (*tôi kalôi*)? — Yes, by the beautiful. — While being that, too, something? — Yes, what else do you think? — Then tell me, ... what is that thing, the beautiful (*to kalon*)? — Whoever asks this question, just wants to find out what a beautiful thing is? — No, I do not think so; he wants to know what the beautiful is, Hippias. — What is the difference between the former ('beautiful thing') and the latter ('the beautiful')?

At 288A it is explicitly stated that if 'the beautiful' taken by itself (i.e. apart from its instances; for example, Hippias' 'beautiful maiden') is something, then all

[23] For its authenticity, see Ross [1951], 3–4 and Guthrie IV, 175.

beautiful things will be beautiful by the beautiful[24]. This 'presence in' is repeated at 289D; 292D and 293E–294A. Again it is not likely that Platonic Forms in any sense are involved; all these passages are perfectly comprehensible without them, just by taking the things which are said to be present in their instances as immanent characteristics, in the same way as in the other early dialogues. At 292C–D the *qua tale* formula is pressed forward by Socrates. But here again, whilst he emphasised that the *eidos* should be *considered* apart from its instance, there is no suggestion that it *exists* apart from it. The only thing which Socrates demands is that one closely considers what precisely is 'the beautiful' *present in* all the instances mentioned:

Hippias maior, 292C9–D4: Are you incapable of remembering that I asked about the beautiful itself (*to kalon auto*), that by which everything which it has entered into happens to be beautiful — to stone and wood, and man, and god, and every action and every branch of learning? I am asking, mister, what is beautifulness (*kallos*) as such (*auto*).

In summing up the contents of the Socratic dialogues Guthrie is right in saying (IV,212) that "Plato gives an affectionate but candid portrait of Socrates as he knew him, and his way of going to work, but at the same time shows himself puzzled, or not fully satisfied, by the philosophical implications of some Socratic tenets".

As will be seen later on (see below, 2.3; 13.2–13.3) the development of the Socratic doctrine of *eidos* into a fully-fledged (Platonic) doctrine of Forms should be explained in terms of the very shortcomings which Plato could not help but see in his Master's approach to the matter.

2.15. *The Varying Shades Of Meaning Of 'eidos'*

The first thing to do is to identify and examine each of the different uses which may be taken by a common name (such as 'holy', 'beautiful') which is (and this should be noted well) from the lexicographical point of view unequivocal[25].

The Greek common names of the type under discussion[26] such as *to hosion*, *to kalon*, shows many shades of meaning which together form a sliding scale, so to speak, of more or less coherent senses, which like light and dark are sometimes different enough, and sometimes are hardly discernable one from another. I have

[24] No doubt one should supply *toutôi* before *taut'* at 288A9, as may be seen from the next sentence where the suggestive question is answered by Socrates' confirmation that 'the beautiful' is that by which all those beautiful things are beautiful.

[25] Allen's analysis [1971:24] seems to be not wholly adequate in ascribing to expressions such as *to hosion* ('the holy') or *to kalon* ('the beautiful'), *to dikaion* ('the just') just three different functions; (1) that of a singular referring expression; (2) a generic noun, or (3) an abstract noun. Their function seems to be more complicated. See my survey, below, no 2.15.

[26] I.e. adjectival names (nouns) signifying properties in the strict sense, excluding substantial ones such as 'stone', 'man' *etc.* Their use as a predicative noun of a sentence is also excluded here.

made an attempt to survey such different uses by drawing up the following scheme.

Legendum

"F"	any property designated by a common name such as 'holy', 'beautiful' ('holiness', 'beautifulness')
"(x), (y), (z)"	any particular suppositum (or instance) which *both* has F *and* is named after it[27]
"instantiation of F"	F as occurring in (x), (y), (z)[28]
EXTENSIONAL (or INDICATIVE) use	(x), (y), (z) are referred to
distributive use	some (any) particular(s) (x), (y), (z) is (are) referred to
collective use	the class of all (x), (y), (z) is referred to
definite use	some definite particular(s), (x), (y), (z) is (are) referred to
indefinite use	any particular(s), (x), (y), (z) is (are) indiscriminately referred to
INTENSIONAL (or DESCRIPTIVE) use	some 'nature' (*ousia* or 'being') is signified
integral use	the complete nature ('being') of (x), (y), (z) is signified
partial use	(the special characteristic) F is signified

The uses involved may be differentiated as follows:

I. EXTENSIONAL (or INDICATIVE)

I.1. DISTRIBUTIVE

I.1. *definite*

I.1.11. (some definite instance(s) of F is (are) referred to) 'this (these) holy *etc.* particular(s)';
E.g. *Euthyphro*, 11A9 (*touto to hosion)*;
Phaedo, 74C3 (*tauta ta isa*); *Symp.*, 210D1 (*to kalon ... to par heni*);
Meno, 84D4 (*to men tetrapoun touto*); D7; D9; E2 *etc.*

[27] It is self-evident that only those uses are involved where some particular(s), (*x*), (*y*), (*z*) meet(s) both conditions, i.e. that it be some 'thing' (including actions *etc.*) that both (1) has (or is supposed to have) *F*, and (2) is named after *F*. To take the examples of the *Euthyphro*: prosecuting murder or any other 'thing' dear to the gods may be called 'holy'. But only in as far as they are called 'the (a) holy (thing)' are they involved here and not when they bear other names such as 'the prosecution of a murderer' or 'this deed dear to the gods', and so on.

[28] The difference between *instance* and *instantiation* should be well noted (and Allen constantly fails to do so). An instance (*x*) of property *F* is a suppositum 'having' *F*; an instantiation is the particular case of 'being *F*' occurring in the instance (*x*). The expression 'a case of holiness' *etc.* is ambiguous in that it may stand for an instance as well as for an instantiation of holiness.

I.1.12. (some definite instantiation(s) of *F* is (are) referred to) 'this (these) particular holiness (being holy)' *etc.*;
E.g. *Phaedo*, 102E6 (*to smikron to en hêmin*)

I.1.2. *indefinite*

I.1.21. (any instance of F whichsoever is referred to) 'any holy *etc.* particular(s) whichsoever';
E.g. *Euthyphro*, 5D7; 6D10 (*tôn pollôn hosiôn*); 6D11 (*panta ta hosia*); 6E1; 7A7–9 (*to men theophiles .... to de theomises*);
Protag., 356B1; *Symp.*, 206E1; *Rep. VII*, 540B4;
Phaedo, 74B6; 78D10; 103A7–9;
Timaeus, 64A3;
Laws IX, 854C2

I.1.22. (any instantiation(s) of *F* is (are) referred to) 'any particular holiness (being holy) *etc.* whichsoever';
E.g. *Euthyphro*, 7A10; 7D1–2 (*to dikaion, to adikon* etc.);
Gorgias, 474C13; *Symp.*, 210C3–4; *Phaedo*, 74C1; C4; 102D8; E1

I.2. COLLECTIVE[29]

I.2.11. (the class of all particulars, (*x*), (*y*), (*z*) is referred to) 'the holy etc.' = 'all holy things', where the singular *to hosion* (etc.) is equivalent to the plural *to hosia* (etc.), when collectively used: 'the holy (etc.) things';
E.g. *Phaedo*, 65C2 (*tôn ontôn*); 79A6; 101E3; 102E7–8 (*tôn enantiôn*)

I.2.12. (the class of all instantiations of F is referred to) 'all occurrences of 'holiness' etc., where, again, *to hosion etc.* is equivalent to '*ta hosia*' etc.

I.3. QUASI AS A PROPER NAME

(the PROPERTY hypostatised is referred to) 'the individual transcendent HOLINESS'
E.g. *Symp.*, 211B7; C3; C9; E1; E3; *Sophist*, 257D11; *passim* (*to on* etc.)

II. INTENSIONAL (or DESCRIPTIVE)

II.1. INTEGRAL

(the nature of some instance of F is signified[30]) 'the nature of the holy *etc.* things' ('the nature of holy *etc.* things')
E.g. *Euthyphro*, 5D7 ('the holy thing is just what I am doing now').
Also *to on*, *ta onta* for the thing(s) being, taken as such; *passim. Gorgias*, 497E1–2; *Meno*, 74D2: 'which as just as much colours as 'white' (*tou leukou*) is'

[29] This use, of course, is always a *definite* one.

[30] Not, *referred to*, of course, as the name is here used intensionally (or descriptively).

II.2. PARTIAL

II.2.1. (the nature of some instance *as having F* or actually 'being F-ed' is signified) 'the nature of a (some) holy *etc.* thing'. E.g. *Euthyphro* 6D2; *Lysis*, 217E1; *Hipp. maior*, 287C12; *Phaedo*, 102E6 *etc.* (see above, n. 20).

II.2.2. (the nature of a (the, some) instantiation of *F* is signified) 'the nature of something's holiness ('the nature of something *being holy*'); E.g. *Euthyphro*, 5C9; 5D6; *Symp.*, 204E2; *Sophist, passim*

II.2.3. (the nature of any instantiation of *F* as such is signified) 'the nature of 'holiness' ('being holy') taken as such'.
E.g. *Euthyphro*, 5D1–2 (*to hosion auto hautôi*); 6D10–11 (*ekeino auto to eidos*); 15E6; 'learn from you 'the holy things' (= 'what is holy') and 'the not-holy' (where the use of *mê* should be noticed)

II.2.4. (the nature of '*F* existing by itself' is signified) 'HOLINESS etc. ITSELF conceived of as existing independently of all its instances' = the Platonic Forms of HOLINESS etc.
E.g. *Phaedo*, 74C5 etc.
Symposion, 211E1; *Parmenides, passim*; *Sophist, passim*; *Philebus*, 14C4.

2.16. *On 'to hosion' etc. In The Early Dialogues*

What can we now say about the precise meanings of expressions such as *to hosion* etc. as used in the early dialogues, and the corresponding uses of *eidos*, *idea* and the formula '*auto to*' ('.... itself')? We may observe the rule of thumb which was later expressed in the adage *Entia non sunt multiplicanda sine necessitate*[31], rather loosely ascribed to a famous mediaeval philosopher under the striking label of 'Ockham's Razor'.

Yet for our present purpose such an economy requires we do not assume a distinction of a sharper kind where the text may be quite well understood with a weaker one. I think that in opposing the common view that Socrates does not yet know of 'separate Forms', Allen fails to make clear his main point that as early on as in the early dialogues, and specifically in the *Euthyphro*, a theory of *Forms* (where the use of the capital should be noted) occurs, which is not to be identified with the theory of Forms found in the later middle dialogues. One should certainly not question the important difference between the Socratic and the Platonic doctrines. What really raises serious doubts is Allen's view of the Socratic *eidê* as such, particularly the kind of 'existence' which he seems to assign to this 'distinct class of entities' as the objects of definitorial enquiry.

It is easy to see from the texts quoted above (nr 2.14), that Socrates' arguments do not require any other meaning for expressions such as 'the holy', 'the holy itself', 'the holy taken by itself', 'the holy being the same in every action' than

[31] "Plurality is not to be assumed without necessity", or "what can be done with fewer means is done in vain with many". See Julius Weinberg, 239; or *Philosophy in the Middle Ages*. The Christian, Islamic, and Jewish Traditions, edited by Arthur Hyman and James J.Walsh (Indianapolis 1974), 606–7.

either the characteristic of holiness present in some particular thing but taken apart from that particular, i.e. the instantiation as distinct from the instance — our items I.1.12; I.1.22 *or* our items II.2.1; II.2.2; II.2.3 (see above 2.15).

An additional proof that though there is surely some question of logico-epistemological priority, yet no isolated metaphysical entity is intended is to be found in the fact that examples of bad (or negative) *eidê* are also given; see 2.11–2.12.

2.17. *R.E. Allen's View Of The Socratic eidos*

One should note further that Allen's own qualifications of the Socratic *eidos* are such that for an adequate interpretation no item other than those just mentioned is needed:

p. 67–8: Socrates' aim in the *Euthyphro* is to obtain an answer to the question, 'What is holiness?'. He assumes, in pursuing his inquiry, that there is an *idea*, or *eidos*, a Form, of holiness, and that this Form is a universal, the same in all holy things (5d; 6d–e). He further supposes that that Form may be used as a standard, by which to judge what things are holy and what are not (6e); that it is an essence, by which or in virtue of which holy things are holy (6d); and that it is capable of real or essential definition (11a; 12c–d). These assumptions constitute a theory of Forms.

That theory is both logical and metaphysical. Logically, Forms play a regulative role in dialectic .... They define the conditions for deciding when dialectic has succeeded, and when it has failed. Metaphysically, Forms affect the career of the world: they are the real natures of things, and the world is what it is because they are what they are.

On the other hand the (Platonic) doctrine of Forms of the middle dialogues (esp. *Phaedo*, *Symposion*, *Republic*) is portrayed by Allen as:

p.68–9: .... an ontology of Two Worlds, separated by a gulf of deficiency. The World of Knowledge, whose contents are the eternal Forms, stands to the world of Opinion, whose contents are sensible and changing, as the more real stands to the less real, as originals stand to shadows and reflections. The visible world is an image unknowable in its deficiency, of an intelligible world apprehended by reason alone. If the seeds of this view are sown in early dialogues such as the *Euthyphro*, they have not there yet been brought to harvest.

So far so good, but what, then, is the exact difference between the Socratic and the Platonic *eidos*? The different functions are quite clear: the former acts as an essential cause *present in* the particulars, the latter is a Transcendent Cause existing outside the particulars which (deficiently) share in it. But what about the existence of the Socratic *eidos*? Can it be assigned any *separate* existence, as Allen never tires of declaring.

The fact that Socrates assigns some kind of *being* to the *eidos* is beyond all reasonable doubt, as many passages in the early dialogues prove[32]. One must ask, however, *what* kind of being is assigned. Allen's description runs as follows (106–7):

[32] See also the clear expositions in Allen [1971:105–7], where there is constant talk of the 'existence' (of the Socratic eidos). I prefer to speak of 'being', as the English 'existence' is mainly used to mean 'being part of the outside world' and thus its use tends to beg the question. And so surely does Allen's use of the modern label 'existential import' (81: "existential import is taken for granted" and 82: "a Form is rather the nature of something

The assumption of existence plays a role in dialectic. The aim of dialectic is real definition; the existential assumption is precisely the assumption that real definitions may be found. A true account of holiness is not arbitrary or subjective, and does not rest on such content as Euthyphro, or anyone else, happens to hold in the forefront of his mind, or on the way he uses words: the true account is an account of the nature of things.

What he has in mind is implicit in what he says about Protagoras (107–8):

Surely it is significant that Protagoras, whom Plato himself portrayed as a conventionalist in morals, is made to agree without hesitation that justice 'is something'. Protagoras can hardly have meant thereby to embrace *an ontology of abstract entities* (italics mine); his agreement is more likely to have been prompted by the ordinary uses of language.

Again (109):

It is true that Protagoras, in thinking that there is such a thing as justice, did not thereby conceive it as a Form; but .... the commitment to Forms in the early dialogues is not 'merely a matter of language'. It is a matter of metaphysics — a metaphysics of essence[33].

It is obvious that Allen must have in mind what we nowadays call the 'significate' (*significatum*) of a common name such as 'holy', that is 'holiness' or 'being holy'; see our item II.2.3. This seems to be confirmed some lines further on (110):

The essence of holiness is what the word 'holiness' means; to the degree that we do not understand that essence, we do not understand the meaning of our words.

On the other hand he emphasises that the Socratic *eidos* is an essential cause (in point of fact *the* cause of being such-and-such or of having such-ness', so to speak). He writes (121):

But in Plato's early dialogues the Forms are not the being of that of which they are Forms[34] .... The *Euthyphro* does not imply that holiness is the being of any given holy thing or action as holy; it implies only that holiness is that *by* which holy things are holy. It implies .... that holiness is a cause[35].

The *presence* of such a cause *in* a particular is accurately described in *Lysis*, 217C; see above, 2.14 and Allen, 122–3. Allen is right in distinguishing (123) this kind of immanent causality from that "commonly associated with the banging of billiard balls" and instead thinks of "a sense analogous to that in which Aristotle speaks of a formal cause".

However, it goes without saying that the two qualifications of Socratic *eidos*, (1) 'characteristic (as an essential cause) present in' and 'significate' (or, to use Allen's label '*the meaning of*'), e.g. 'holiness', 'being holiness', are definitely not one and the same thing, as may be seen in our scheme where they stand in opposition to one another as 'any instantiation of holiness' *etc.* (item I.1.22) and 'the nature of any instantiation' (item II.2.3). Therefore we have to think of some semantic field for the Socratic term '*eidos*' in which the two senses, which are really quite compatible, are combined. Our texts can best then be understood as at one instant requiring the former sense and at another the latter, to the extent that whenever Socrates refers to something (e.g. 'the holy as such') which is the same (*tauton*) in every instance and which all instances possess in themselves as an essential cause, he must mean 'any instantiation of holiness' *etc.* (our item I.1.22). On the other hand, when he appeals to the common agreement that, in view of the many particular instances of holiness, there must be some *eidos* of holiness signified by the word '*the holy*' ('*holiness*'), he means the *eidos* as 'significate' (our item II.2.3). No doubt, it is the latter sense of eidos which Socrates has in mind more specifically.

There remains the question, then, of whether the formal and undeniable *distinctness* of that *eidos* (in both the senses just mentioned) from its particular instances means that it also is a *separate* Entity. The latter assumption flatly conflicts with Aristotle's explicit testimony.

2.18. *Aristotle's Testimony Maintained*

Allen is of the opinion that Aristotle's claim that Socrates did not 'separate' the Forms comes down to the assertion "that Socrates did not distinguish Forms from their instances" (133) at all and that he "identified the objects of definition with sensibles, which is another way of saying that he did not distinguish Forms from their instances" (134). As we have already seen (above, nr. 2.17), Allen is entirely mistaken in thinking so. Aristotle certainly does not *say* that Socrates did not *distinguish* an *eidos* (read: an *instantiation*) from its instance and he could not have *meant* it either since this would conflict with his explicit assertion that Socrates was not only seeking the 'common thing' (*to katholou*) but did in fact find it as well, though he did not accord it separate existence as Plato did. How could Socrates be said to 'find' (discern) something but fail to distinguish it? What makes Socrates' approach different from Plato's is that, for the former, distinctness did not include separate existence, that is, existence in another than the sensible world, whereas for Plato such distinctness when properly considered, with all its epistemological import, had metaphysically to imply separate existence.

I am afraid that Allen's expositions contain a good deal of confusion on this score[36].

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which is, and existential import is therefore built into the very notion of it"). It should be recalled in this connection that the Greek text uses either the formula '*esti ti* or *esti pragma ti* (= 'is something', i.e. is not an idle notion), or *ousia* (= '(a) being'). The technical term used later on for 'existence' ('*hyparxis*, e.g. in Arist., *De plantis*, 817b17; and the philosophers Philodemus; first cent. B.C., and Ammonius; fifth cent. A.D.) is nowhere found in Plato. See also below no 14.73. — For the proper sense of *ousia* ('being'), see below, 5.2; 5.4.

[33] Allen [1971] is quite right in observing (109–10) that Socrates could apply his metaphysical theory — and indeed take it for granted — in conversation with other people because his theory was "essentially continuous with common sense". "Plain men had talked of holiness long before Socrates came to ask them what it was exactly that they meant. His inquiry was distinguished by the precision of it" (110).

[34] I.e. 'the holy' as an instantiation differs from the holy thing as an instance; see our items I.1.12 as distinct from I.1.11.

[35] He rightly points to *Hippias maior*, 287C–D: see above, 2.14.

[36] For Guthrie's rejection of Allen's view of the separateness of the Socratic *eidos*, see IV, 118, n. 1, and 250.

(1) Identifying the objects of definition with 'sensibles' can be maintained, with Allen, as "another way of saying that he did not distinguish Forms from their instances" if, and only if, one takes 'sensibles' to stand for 'instances' rather than 'instantiations'. In point of fact Socrates did identify the objects of definition with sensible instantiations ('holiness'), and *not* with sensible instances ('the (holy) *things* "having" holiness').
(2) Allen's expositions (131–6) on numerical distinctness as a condition for 'separateness' involve some begging of question because, as with his use of capitals (*Idea, Form*), some *ontological* status is assigned *a priori* to the Socratic *eidos* even when it is only regarded as something distinct from the *eidos* present in its instance as an essential cause. Indeed Allen takes it for granted that distinctness means *numerical* distinctness. However, numerical distinctness only holds between two things having the *same* status, whether ontological (as between *this* and *that* tree) or merely conceptual (as between *this* and *that* chimera), but not between some imaginary guilder and the one in my pocket, which are 'really' distinct, but not numerically distinct.
(3) The distinctions made by Allen (69–79) between 'Forms as Universals', 'Forms and Standards' and 'Forms as Essences' are highly confusing. "As universals", he says (70), "Forms play a regulative role in dialectic", and "Epistemologically, Forms are standards for detecting their instances" (71), where one should read *instantiations*, most certainly not *instances*. Again (76): "As essences, Forms play a regulative role in dialectic". It is obvious, not only from the striking similarity between the formulas used, that all of the three functions reduce to one and the same, namely that of playing, as a universal standard, a regulative role in dialectic. In particular, the heading 'Forms as essences' is misleading in that it, in Allen's explanation at least, only relates to its logical function, rather than its ontological status on which this function is based.
(4) Allen's view of immanence is not very clear either. He fully recognises that the Socratic eidos is *present in* its instance (as its essential cause), yet pointedly refuses to speak of its 'immanence'. That is because he thinks (145) that the fact that *eidê* in the early dialogues are not identical with their instances and prior to them militates against the claim of immanence ("that they are 'in' their instances"). However, how should he make clear that the fact that the Socratic eidos is *present in* its instance (and that as an essential cause!) does not mean that it is *immanent*? For, of course, he is steadfastly confusing the *eidos* as an instantiation present in an instance (our items I.1.12; I.1.22) with its being the proper significate of the word 'holiness' *etc.* (our item II.2.3). The former is immanent, no doubt about that; the latter is as such not present in any instance and for that reason cannot be called 'immanent'. No doubt here either. However, it should be stressed time and again that, though the modern label 'immanence' here designates an ontological status (of being a sensible instantiation *present in* a sensible instance), its counterpart 'non-immanence' only means the absence of that ontological status, rather than referring to some other *ontological* status.

It should be remarked in this connection that Allen tries (146) to explain away

the 'present-in' formulas by saying that the use of such expressions is metaphysically neutral, because those expressions are quite ordinarily used in Greek. Though it is undoubtedly true that in Greek such expressions as 'there is justice in that action' are often used as mere metaphors for 'that action is just', Allen's reference here to Greek usage is most strange, or rather inconsistent. First, he has (rightly) been most explicit in declaring (123) that "though these expressions are tied to ordinary language, they are often used by Socrates *in an unordinary way*" (my italics); "these expressions are causal", he adds, "in a sense analogous to that in which Aristotle speaks of a formal cause". Well, to speak of an essential cause as *present in* something is most certainly not metaphysically neutral; rather it implies an ontology of 'immanence'. Second, he quite rightly rejects (107–10) the view that Socrates' talk of *eidos* is merely a matter of language, as that view seems to confuse language with what language is used to affirm. However, in the case under discussion, namely the *presence* of some eidos *in* something, he seems to be doing what he reproaches others for doing, not taking the language seriously enough.

In brief, Allen has a habit of failing to discern the two main senses of the Socratic '*eidos*', the one where it stands for 'immanent characteristic or nature' (our items I.1.12; I.1.22) and the other for 'logical significate' of the corresponding term (our item II.2.3).

2.2. *The Specific Nature Of The Socratic eidos*

As Aristotle rightly observed, Socrates based universal definition on the presence of a 'common thing' *in* particular instances and thus considered the object of universal definition as not existing separately in some non-sensible (i.e. intelligible) world (as Plato did). *Ergo* he persisted in locating it on the level of sensible things.

On the other hand, it is irrefutably true that Socrates held the object of universal definition to be not subject to change or the vagiaries of human volition, as Aristotle also recognised when he understood this Socratic 'common essence' or 'common thing' as a *to ti estin*. Thus Socrates must have thought that the unchangeable 'significate' signified by the (ethical) terms under discussion ('the holy', 'the just', and so on) was to be based on the presence of something unchangeable both *common to* and *present in* the sensible things of the outside world. It goes without saying that in doing this he could expect Aristotle's approval (see *Metaph.* M9, 1086b4–5; above, 2.13).

Allen is quite right in observing that Socrates' arguments in the early dialogues, far from being merely questions of language, involve a 'metaphysics of essences'. No reasonable doubt about that can be raised. Although the fact that Socrates sets this eidos *apart* from its instances is only understandable as an important move in the logical operation of universal definition, it should be borne in mind that, in Socrates' view, the dialectical operation is itself grounded in the ontological presence of an unchangeable common nature *in* sensible things. Socratic dialectic is entirely rooted in Socratic metaphysics. The Socratic common nature of

essence, which is the proper object of universal definition, may be *discovered* in the significate of the terms involved, but this significate ultimately appears to be the logical device which naturally represents the common nature as *present in* things. To use a later expression, the logical significate is *cum fundamento in re*[37].

Indeed, the ultimate aim of Socrates' investigations was to establish a theory (which we may safely call a 'metaphysics')[38] of *stable* natures (though *immanent* they are) and thus to counterbalance the horizontalism of Sophists such as Protagoras. However, this surely does not imply that he considered his (stable) *eidos* to be no part of the (unstable) sensible world. On the contrary he apparently considered the *eidos*' stability to be quite compatible with its presence in the sensible world.

This is in fact precisely what Plato held to be the basic shortcoming of the Socratic doctrine. For him, no stability whatsoever was to be found in our unstable, everchanging world. Aristotle is most explicit about that. Plato and the Platonists, he says (*Metaph.* A6,987b4 and M9,1086a37–b2; see above, 2.13) thought that the stable 'common thing' must itself be a non-sensible entity, an entity, that is, existing by itself, in an unchanging World (and that is why they were bound to be separate the *eidos*). Plato apparently felt it to be his own historical task to correct his master on this most fundamental issue, and proposed to do this by developing the Socratic line of thought through to its ultimate consequences. That led Plato to his doctrine of the Two Worlds, one of Becoming, the other of True Being.

An additional point should be made. It appears to follow *a contrario* from his exposition of Plato's doctrine of the Two Worlds (149–54), that Allen takes the putative Socratic 'separation of Forms' to be non-identity, independence and priority[39]. Now, by 'non-identity' one should understand the logico-semantical distinctness of instantiation and instance, and not any difference of ontological status (see above, 2.18). Again, the *eidos* as 'significate' *may* certainly be considered (logically) *prior to* any particular instantiation. However, the precise meaning of the *eidos*' independence cannot easily be explained, I am afraid, without slipping into formulas which precisely concern Platonic Separation. The latter is indeed a separation of an ontological nature, a division of 'the things that are' (*ta onta*) into two domains, the 'visible-perishable' and the 'invisible-eternal'. From the *Phaedo* onwards (see esp. 78D–80A) the Forms are not only *in* things, imparting their character by their presence or association 'or whatever it may be'; they also

[37] So it is correct to call a Socratic *eidos* a 'hypostatised meaning', a view which is, however, rejected by Allen [1971], 82. He thinks that such a characterisation is incorrect "for there may be expressions which mean but have no application — 'goat-stag' and 'squared circle', for example". Such an objection is anachronistic, because Plato does not assign any meaning to 'goat-stag' *etc.* and, accordingly, know of 'empty Forms'. See below, 11.4.
[38] See above, no 2.12.
[39] See [1971], 149: "Separation here [in the *Phaedo*, De R.] plainly involves something more than the non-identity, independence, or priority. It involves the claim that instances [one should rather read: 'instantiations', De R.] of Forms are deficient imitations or resemblances of Forms".

exist *separately* and 'by themselves'[40]. Unlike in the early dialogues, expressions such as 'alone by itself' no longer refer to *our way of taking an eidos apart* from its instances, but rather to *its own existing separately*, alone, by itself as an unshakable source for their being and unmistakable standard for our knowing them. Indeed, the separation "in a strong sense of the term" as conceived by Allen (147) is bound to *either* be entirely the same as that characteristic of the middle and later dialogues *or* to bear on no more than the logical- semantical distinctness of the immanent *eidos* ('instantiation') from the instances that 'have' it. When Allen remarks (*ibid.*) that the difference "does not consist in the fact of separation, but the way in which separation is conceived", he is perfectly right: the 'separation' of the early dialogues is an improper one, indeed rather a man-made (logical) distinction than the ontic separation which is found from the *Phaedo* onwards.

It should be noted that Allen is only able to explain the difference by appealing to a concomitant phenomenon, i.e. the deficiency of the sensible world with respect to the Intelligible Domain and their differing epistemological status. Thus he defines 'transcendence' (as a counterpart of 'immanence') in a most strange way (147): ".... Forms are only deficiently exemplified by the instances which imitate them; and there is no reason why that state of affairs should not be called 'transcendent' if one chooses". In fact, there *is* a very good reason why that state of affairs should *not* be so called, namely the requirement to properly define important key-notions. 'Transcendence' has as such no connection with 'imitation' or any kind of deficient relationship as its counterpart. It rather refers to the intrinsic state of eminence characteristic of a certain ontic domain (including its inhabitants), namely that of 'being exalted beyond changeability'[41].

Summing up, it may be stated that the Socratic *eidos* is the immanent characteristic of a sensible thing, preferably as considered by itself apart from any actual occurrence in things. As it is represented conceptually by a word's 'significate', *eidos* may also stand for this significate. Thus they are two aspects of the same 'common thing' (*to katholou*), which are distinct but not 'separated', since they belong to different levels, namely, that of real existence and that of human thought, respectively[42].

[40] Cf. Guthrie IV, 350, and Allen's own description, [1971], 148–54.
[41] where 'transcendent' is defined as 'going beyond, or surpassing, finite, ever-changing being'.
[42] Several scholars have emphasised the non-transcendent (or rather not-yet-transcendent) character of the 'permanent natures' intended by Plato throughout in the *Cratylus* (explicitly at 386D9–E4; 389A5–390E4 and 439B10–440D7), for example Kapp (131–42), Ross (18–21) and especially Luce, who says (36) that the argument in the *Cratylus* "is epistemological rather than ontological, and as 'objects' they [i.e. permanent natures such as 'the beautiful' en 'the good'] have not been decisively detached from the world of common experience". (See also below, Ch. XIII.) — On the whole, I think that the argument is primarily ontological, (as one should always assume with thinkers such as Plato who are preeminently metaphysicians), since what is primarily involved is the *ontic* permanent nature *in* transient things, as some '*thing*' really different from its perishable subject. (See also

It has been said more than once before that even though Plato's sympathies were surely with Socrates in the latter's attempt to give a firm foundation to man's moral behaviour, he could not, however, approve of Socratic dialectic, as, to his mind, it did not go to the heart of the matter. Plato was absolutely sure that no real foundation whatsoever could ever be discovered unless the Socratic *eidos* were set apart, or rather recognised as existing, in its own Intelligible Domain, free from any change. Thus the Socratic doctrine of the *eidê* developed into Plato's Theory of transcendent Forms[43].

The strong opposition between the Realm of the Forms and the domain of every day things can safely be taken as the most characteristic feature of Plato's own earlier metaphysical theory in contrast to Socrates' doctrine of the *eidos* sketched in the foregoing sections. The dialogue *Cratylus*, probably written about 388, seems to belong to an early phase of this stage of Plato's thinking (before the *Phaedo*, indeed). There he makes Socrates expound the doctrine of the so-called Ideal Names (389C–390A), saying that they belong to things by nature (*physei*), whose correctness has been produced by nature, and which are the same for both Greeks and barbarians. The single Ideal Name 'horse' cannot be identified, of course, with the later, truly Platonic Form (Eidos) HORSE, which is a metaphysical entity rather than just a linguistic (logical) one, or significate. Therefore it must be the correctly framed concept 'horse' of which the linguistic signs 'hippos', 'equus', 'horse', 'cheval', 'Pferd', 'paard' etc. are possible, and equally acceptable notations. Kretzmann rightly remarks [1971:361] that to say that the concept is framed correctly is to say that it is the concept of the *eidos* rather than of individuals participating in it; to say that the Ideal Name's correctness has been produced by nature is to say that it somehow resembles that common nature. Plato's view that the Ideal Name resembles the later Transcendent Form is part of his anthropological doctrine that the human mind, if only detached from inferior influences, is able (or rather: is bound) to frame its concepts in accordance with the nature of things. Or to use his later formulas: 'to divide the whole of Being according to its natural articulations', as he says in the *Phaedrus* (265E): and in the *Sophist* the task of philosophy is regarded as mainly "the mapping out of the Realm of Forms in all its articulations by Division", to use Cornford's formula[44].

Kapp (67), referred to above.) As early as 1888 (*Journal of Philology* (34), 213; quoted by Luce, 31, n. 36) D.D. Heath, in his article 'On Plato's *Cratylus*', wrote: "I think the *Cratylus* proves that he (*sc.* Plato) did conceive there is stability or definiteness enough in sensible things to enable men to discover their qualities and classify them accordingly, with, at least, the sort of accuracy which belongs to a painting". Kahn [1973[2]:168] rightly takes the earlier phase of Plato's literary production as the one "in which he is elaborating the ontological basis for the concept of *idea* and *eidos*, the concept which was earlier presented as the goal of definition and the model of true predication [where I would prefer to say 'appellation'], in the *Euthyphro* and *Meno*". For his view of the *Cratylus* in this regard, see below, 14.2.

[43] See Guthrie IV, 250–2.

[44] [1939], 183. For further discussion of the *Cratylus*, see below, Chapter XIII.

However, we have to wait until the *Phaedo*, which most probably dates from shortly after Plato's first sojourn in the West (387 B.C) to read the first unmistakable mention of *Transcendent Forms*. In the course of maintaining that the philosopher must strive even in this earthly life for the release of the soul from the body, he raises a question with which the reader of the earlier dialogues is quite familiar[45]: "Do or do we not maintain that the just taken by itself [i.e. apart from the great variety of its instances] is something or nothing?; and the same for the beautiful and the good?" (65D3–5). But unlike in the earlier dialogues, after Simmias has given his consent, Socrates goes on to elicit Simmias' agreement that he has never seen any of these entities with his eyes and never attained them with any other bodily sense (D5–8). Next he leaves no shadow of a doubt that he has in mind the same entity that was earlier dubbed as the special characteristic of things, but which now unlike then, is located in a domain beyond all sensibility and 'adulteration': the metaphysical dualism here closely responds to the Soul-Body dualism:

Phaedo, 65C7–E5: ‹.....› the philosopher's soul utterly despises his body and tries to flee from it, seeking to be alone by itself. — And now a further question, Simmias. Do we maintain that the just taken as such *is* something or that it is nothing? — Yes indeed, we certainly do. — And so with the beautiful and the good? — Quite so. — Well, have you ever seen anything of that sort with your eyes? — Of course not. — Then have you reached at them with some other bodily sense? What I am talking about, concerning them all (largeness[46], health, and strength for example and, in short, all other such things), is: ‹did you ever reach at› their being (*tês ousias*), that which each of them precisely *is*[47]) (*ho tynchanei hekaston on*): is it through the body that their most genuine character[48] (*autôn to alêthestaton*) is viewed, or rather thus: whoever of us has trained himself to most fully and precisely conceive, concerning the objects in question, that which each of them on itself is (*auto hekaston*) will come closest to knowing each? — Yes, certainly.

According to the theory of Forms which was put forward from the *Phaedo* onwards and never abandoned[49], the existence of all kinds of things in the every day world can only be explained if there exists a Transcendent, separate World of Real Things that are as many paradigms of the every day things. Unlike our ephemeral world of pure appearance, the World of Forms is timeless and immutable, apprehensible by the intellect alone, the only Being capable of exact definition and as such the only firm basis for true knowledge (*epistêmê*) and correct action. Thus the

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[45] Cf. Guthrie IV, 358–9.

[46] All the examples given refer to large *things*, healthy *things* etc. The concrete senses of *megethos*, *hygieia* ('large *thing*', '*somebody*'s health') are quite common in Greek.

[47] *Lit.* 'that which each one happens to be', taking (with Gallop [1975:227]) *ho* to be complement of *on*, which is here a participle dependent on *tynchanei* and corresponding to the English 'to be' which depends on 'happens'.

[48] The translations given by both Hackforth and Bluck ('the full truth of them' and 'the truth about them') are not only implausible from the grammatical point of view (the Greek text reads *autôn*, not, *peri autôn*), but also logically as what is involved is their natures rather than any state of affairs. The genitive *autôn* refers to all the *things* mentioned, not the corresponding Forms, *pace* Gallop [1975:227], and the formula *autôn to alêthestaton* to their Forms.

[49] See below, nr 11.6.

theory of the Forms lies at the basis of all being, knowing, and acting. Far from being just general concepts ("Begriffe") or 'regulative ideas' (in Kantian parlance) the Forms are themselves Real Entities, the constituents of the being of all every day things and at the same time normative of true knowledge and correct action. In fact, general concepts, or universals, are nothing but the logical side of the ontology of the Forms.

However true all this may be, after, in the *Parmenides*, a new Socrates emerges, a very young man and unsure of himself, everything which we had learned to regard as the cornerstone of Platonism, the Two Worlds doctrine and the all-important role of participation, is now made itself the object of critical examination. So in the later dialogues (*Parmenides*, *Theaetetus*, *Sophist*, *Statesman*) it is precisely the separate existence of the Forms, so passionately introduced as an indispensable improvement on Socrates' doctrine of the eidos, that creates the major problem.

In the later dialogues, it is the separate reality of the Forms that presents the major question at issue. For that matter, the later development of Platonism in Antiquity was also to be marked by the everlasting problem of knowing how those separate Forms were related to every day things; in other words: 'what exactly is meant by 'participation' (*metochê, methexis*)?', or 'how does the separate Intelligible Form communicate its nature to the sensible world, without being compromised by the inferior world?'. If Plato has already pointed out in the *Phaedo* (99E–100A) the metaphorical way of speaking which lies behind the statement that a sensible thing (e.g. something beautiful) partakes of a Form (THE BEAUTIFUL), it is in the *Parmenides* in particular that Socrates is faced by the aged Parmenides with the very problem of participation itself. Indeed, participation by relating the immutable True Forms to the ever-changing world of appearances, is bound *either* to weaken the unassailability of the Forms *or* to be nothing but a metaphor that fails to explain the most characteristic feature of the sensible world, its mutability.

The consequence of Parmenides' severe criticism of the concept of 'partaking' (130E–133A) is that any attempts to take refuge behind metaphors need not be taken seriously. There is, however, a kindred problem of whether or not the separate Ideas (i.e. the Forms separated from matter) are themselves related to one another. Of course, this question is different (but not completely different) from that of whether a sensible thing of our every day world can have two contrary characters. The latter question had been discussed by Socrates in an earlier section (128E–130A). There he had asserted that if the Form of LIKENESS and another contrary Form, that of UNLIKENESS, are contradistinguished with the many every day things that are said to be like or unlike by virtue of partaking in the one or the other Form, there is nothing strange in saying that things which have a share in both are shown to have both characters; not yet in proving that all things are one by having a share in unity and, at the same time, many by sharing in plurality. What *would* indeed surprise him, he continues, is if it could be shown with regard to the Forms themselves that, say, simple UNITY itself is *many*, or that PLURALITY itself is *one*. And the same holds for all similar cases: if, that is, the Forms themselves are shown to have these contrary characters with regard to each other

(129B–C). It would be extraordinarily interesting to me, he goes on (129E), if anyone who starts by distinguishing the Forms themselves from one another could then show that these Forms themselves can be combined with, or separated from, one another and that the same perplexities found with every day things are everywhere involved in the Forms themselves.

As is well-known, it is in the *Sophist*, 251C ff. that the surprise is cleared up. There the so-called Eleatic Visitor clearly argues that if one holds that no thing has any capacity for communion with anything else, one must face up to most inextricable problems. For that matter, the 'communion' involved is discussed in two ways:

a) there still remains[50] the old question of how one particular every day thing can partake in several Forms (the question is discussed in *Parmenides*, 128E–130A and as early as in *Phaedo*, 103E–105B, see below, 15.6).

b) on the second level, which seems to be what is more specifically treated in the *Sophist*, our basic issue of the capacity for communion with one another *seems* to concern the Forms themselves.

2.4. *The Different Statuses Of The Platonic Form*

2.41. *The Dispute About The 'Immanent Forms'*

There is some discussion about the 'immanence' of Platonic Forms[51]. If we start with Plato's explicit assertion (e.g. *Phaedo*, 102D–103A) that Forms (viz. Tallness and Shortness) *are in* their instances, it cannot possibly be denied that in his own theory of the Two Worlds, too, Plato holds that Forms are *present in* their instances as well:

Phaedo, 102D5–103A2: Now it seems to me that not only is Tallness by itself (*auto to megethos*) never willing to be tall and short simultaneously, but also that the tallness in us (*to en hêmin megethos*) never admits the short (*to smikron*) nor is it willing to be overtopped. Instead one of these things must happen: either it must retreat and withdraw whenever its opposite, the short (*to smikron*), advances towards it, or else, upon that advance, it must perish. But what it is not willing to do is to endure and yet also (*kai*) admit shortness and so to be another than what it was[52] (*heteron ê hôsper ên*), in the same way[53] as I have admitted and endured the shortness (*tên smikrotêta*) and without ceasing to be what I am, this same individual, me, now is short. No, that thing [*ekeino*; the tallness in us is meant], can never bring itself, while still being tall, to be short. In just the same way the short that is in us (*to smikron to en hêmin*) is not willing ever to come to be, or to be, tall. Nor will any other of the opposites, while still being what it was, simultaneously come to be, or be, its own opposite, but should this crop up, either it goes away or it perishes.

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[50] As is rightly observed by Bluck [1975], 110.

[51] Clearly summed up by Guthrie IV, 353–5. See also Fujisawa, 30–58.

[52] I.e. to lose its self-identity.

[53] *hôsper* introduces a sentence that aims to clarify the difference between characteristics ('instantiations') and a 'thing' ('instance') having characteristics; the former *cannot* receive their exact opposite because they would then lose their self-identity; the latter can receive *an* opposite character since their self-identity is not then involved.

The decisive question now is: are these immanent forms a separate ontological class, or simply the well-known Platonic Forms inasmuch as they have entered (in being partaken of) into particulars? Guthrie is right in following Denis O'Brien's view[54] that the latter is correct. Bluck takes[55] the immanent form to be a copy of the Transcendent Form, and rightly objects to their identification because they are spoken of by Plato as 'either withdrawing or perishing', whereas a Transcendent Form cannot perish. He is wrong, however, in thinking that this non-identity is a serious objection to the assumption of immanent forms. Bluck's 'copies' should be indeed identified with 'immanent forms' leaving aside consideration the appropriateness of his label 'copy'.

However, there is some dispute about the state of perfection of such 'immanent forms'. It can be best explained by a quotation from Guthrie (IV, 354–5):

> *Parmenides* 130b (often cited as a parallel instance) simply draws the familiar distinction between Forms and particulars: 'the distinction you speak of', says Parmenides, 'that there are on the one hand Forms themselves and on the other the things that share in them'. The explanation that follows can only be an explanation of this *twofold* classification, and 'the likeness that we possess' corresponds to the approximate equality between the two apparently equal sticks, where no one has suspected a third ontological level. Here [in the *Phaedo*, De R.] the 'tallness in us' is purely tall, admitting of no mixture of its contrary, and so (one would think) in no way imperfect. Ross however supposed[56] the immanent qualities to be themselves immanent copies, and more recently Rist has written[57] that the largeness in the particular is 'of an ontologically defective kind'. He adds later[58] that 'Whiteness is the cause of white in white particulars; it is not itself the whiteness in those particulars'. Yet the *Phaedo* says it is by its *presence* in particulars that the Form can act as a cause.

I am afraid, that Guthrie is a little cavelling. Of course he is perfectly right in rejecting any notion of a third level (containing a class of putative 'intermediates'). But when the 'tallness in us' is called 'purely tall, admitting of no admixture of its contrary', its degree of perfection is not under discussion at all. Guthrie's cautious "and so, one would think" is fallacious all the same, in that 'admixture of its contrary' would indeed imply imperfection but 'admitting no admixture' is by no means a guarantee of perfection; on the contrary, 'tallness shared in' is, by definition, imperfect tallness. I think, therefore, Ross and Rist are right. As to the notion that the Form is a cause, there is another optical error, it seems, on Guthrie's part. The Transcendent Form *is* the Universal Cause of all its instantiations but each instantiation (= 'immanent form'), in its turn, acts as a particular cause in the particular case involved, and so the *Phaedo* can assert that by its presence in particulars (as an immanent form, that is) the Transcendent Form acts like that many particular causes.

[54] [1967], 201–2. O'Brien gives (201, n. 1) a list of all those scholars who have regarded immanent forms as a distinct class.
[55] [1955], 17–8; 192.
[56] [1951], 30.
[57] [1964], 221.
[58] *Ibid.*, 223.

It should be added that Guthrie's final picture is basically correct and quite illuminating (355):

> With the proviso that Plato himself may not yet be quite clear on this point, the nearest approximation to his thought at the present stage seems to be as follows. Whiteness is an Intelligible (not visible) Form. When it enters a material object (say a face) its *combination with* body produces visible whiteness, an imperfect imitation of the transcendent Form in the only medium in which material objects can reflect it. The face, which was never perfectly white, may turn red by 'receiving' (*Phaedo*, 102d–e) Redness instead of Whiteness, but Whiteness, whether 'by itself' or in us, will always be itself and nothing else.

What about the label 'immanent form'? I think that O'Brien is right [1967: 201] in not favouring this confusing term. Yet Plato still speaks quite explicitly of 'the tallness *in us*' (*to en hêmin megethos*), and so on. I think that we could better speak of different statuses of one and the same Transcendent Form, the so-called 'immanent form' being rather 'the Form in its immanent status'. This usage has the additional advantage of not suggesting any distinct ontological class for the so-called 'immanent forms'.

2.42. *The Threefold Status Of The Platonic Form*

The ambivalent origin of the theory of Forms is at the root of the question of the different statuses of the Forms. As is well-known[59], Plato's own words justify the assumption that his theory was intended to face three types of problems, the ontological, the ethical and the logico-epistemological.

It is easy to predict that the various functions of the Platonic Forms would entail a certain ambivalence concerning the ontology of the Forms themselves. Indeed, the Socratic method of inquiry into the definition of moral concepts, such as those of 'justice' and 'beauty', was the most likely to lead to knowledge of ontic forms, the Socratic *eidê*, but it could not help stressing in particular their logical (i.e. definitorial) aspect. For that matter, what Socrates had in mind was the immanent ontic eidos in as far as *it is known* by (or is *knowable* to) the human mind, rather than the eidos as an ontic value as such. Socrates had never made any more specific inquiry into the ontological status of the *eidê* common to some groups of sensible things and referred to by a common name.

Admittedly, in Plato's view their separate existence in an invisible, intelligible World must be postulated, as we cannot stress too often[60]. Nevertheless, given that it is the practical (ethical) side of the Socratic *eidê* which is dealt with by his spokesman Socrates, it is the forms in as far as they are known that form the real focus of the latter's interest. One could point to his approach to the matter as support for the present view: it is the group of sensible things *bearing the same name* that share an eidos, on the assumption that every common name should have a fixed meaning (*significatum*) referring, as a quasi-proper name, to one and the same 'object' which both the speaker and his partner in a discourse have in mind.

[59] See Guthrie IV, 174; 516, and V, 120.
[60] See above, 2.2 and 2.3.

This is clearly still the view put forward in the famous passage of the truly 'Platonic' work, *Republic* X, 596A–B:

Rep. X, 596A5–B11: Shall we, then, start the inquiry at this point *with our customary procedure*? We are *in the habit* of positing (*tithestai*) a single form (*eidos*) in the case of every set of things to which we give the same name ..... In the present case, then, let us take any multiplicity of things you please; for example, there are many couches and tables ..... Well, these utensils imply, I suppose, only two forms (*ideai*), one of a couch and one of a table ..... Are we not also *in the habit* of saying that the craftsman who produces either of them fixes his eyes on the form (*idean*) and so makes in the one case the couches and in the other the tables we use; and similarly in the case of other things? For surely no craftsman makes the form itself; how could he? — By no means.

So we may expect *a priori* that Plato should still pay some attention to the logico-epistemological side of the Transcendent Forms, i.e. the Forms *in as far as they are known* by the human mind, — despite, of course the fundamental interest he shows in their transcendent nature as such, which is quite independent of any human understanding.

It should be noted, at the outset that the distinction between the different statuses of the Platonic Form has nothing to do with the opposition of one kind of Form to another. *Multum absit.* What *is* involved in such distinction is the opposition of the Form *considered* in its transcendent status to the same Form *considered* in its embodied or immanent status, and the analogous opposition of such a Form *considered* in either of these two statuses, on the one hand, to the same Form *considered in as far as* it is known by the human mind. In this way a threefold status *of one and the same Form* emerges:

— that of the Form considered in its transcendence, i.e. as existing separately in the Intelligible World, quite immaterial and independent of human thought.
— that of the same Form considered in its immanence, i.e. as existing embodied in the material world, but as independent of, and not impinged upon, by the human mind.
— that of the same Form as considered, apart from both its separate existence in the Intelligible World and that in the material world, solely as *conceived of* by the human mind.

Two remarks should be made.
(a) The formulations of the first two items are ambiguous, in that, in speaking of 'the Form as considered', one involves the human mind's activity, which seems to be explicitly excluded by the same formula. As can easily be seen, the referents, or *denotata* of the phrases 'the Form as considered as .....' are meant, and not their senses or *connotata*. It goes without saying that such distinctions are made from the Platonic point of view, i.e. in the belief that such entities as the Platonic Forms are existent. Sometimes the historian has to make the sacrifice of disregarding his personal view of the matter under discussion.
(b) My second remark concerns the third item and can be regarded as the counterpart of the previous one. The phrase 'considered ..... only as conceived of by the human mind' does not mean, of course, that the Form *is supposed* by the adherents of the theory of Forms *to be* nothing but a mental product — a view most energetically rejected by Plato in *Parmenides*, 132 B–C. They see it rather as the separate consideration of just one aspect of the theory of Forms, viz. a Form as conceived of by human thought.

2.43. *The Form Considered In Its Transcendent Status*

Of course, this aspect of the Platonic Form is most overwhelmingly present in Plato's exposition of his doctrine. Indeed, the notion that the real existence of the objects of the soul's knowledge (which should be clearly distinguished from the objects of mere opinion, *doxa*) constitute a World of Intelligible Forms which exist separately from the every day things perceived by our senses, is to be considered the most fundamental pillar of Plato's doctrine. Aristotle is likely to have nearly always given a polemical account of Plato's views which does not seem to do full justice to them. We must always bear in mind, however, that Aristotle had been an intelligent associate of Plato in the Academy for about twenty years; he must have known what he was talking about. And, in his eyes the separate existence of the Platonic Forms (*chôrismos*) was the most outstanding characteristic of Plato's theory of Forms, which he never tired of opposing. Similarly, it was by stressing the transcendence and the immaterial character of Being that, beginning with Eudoxus of Alexandria (d. A.D. 19), Platonism intended to reinstate the Old Master's original doctrine.

To be more specific, it was as early as in the *Meno* that Plato, by putting forward his doctrine of Recollection, effected a complete break with current views on the sources of knowledge, which, in fact, reduced to an empiricist view that these are present as such in every day things and that our knowledge of them is conveyed by the senses, which in one view took place throught the medium of a kind of image radiated out by the material phenomena. In his view, on the contrary, knowledge (*epistêmê*, not, *doxa*) is acquired by a recollection (*anamnêsis*) in this life of True Being which was contemplated and known by our souls before their incarnation. In the *Phaedo* Socrates tries to confirm this view using all his resources of persuasion. The upshot of both dialogues is that the doctrine of the separation of Intelligible Forms from our world of material things is most intimately connected to the view of the soul's detachment from any influence by the flesh. As far as the ontological side of the theory is concerned, the *Phaedo* (esp. 78C–D ff.) quite clearly speaks of *two* orders of things, the invisible and unchangeable one, and the visible that is in a permanent process of change.

It is true that the separate existence of Forms created a basic problem in the later dialogues, and one that was more explicitly felt than before (in certain passages of the *Phaedo*, for instance, discussed below). As a matter of fact, Parmenides' criticism is directed against the very chorismos on which the *Phaedo* had laid so much stress. In the *Sophist* the Eleatic Visitor severely criticises the so-called 'Friends of Forms' who hold precisely the views defended in the earlier dialogues, more specifically that of the chorismos.

However, it is of the utmost importance to bear in mind that, even after all

these criticisms mentioned above which Plato took quite seriously, he still stuck to the view that all Forms must be immaterial Entities, existing in a separate Intelligible World. The pattern of Forms which the dialectician (of the *Sophist*) has to divide in order to acquire any true knowledge of Being, is that which is called there 'the perfectly real' (*to pantelôs on*), or 'the All' (*to on te kai pan*); it is still the changeless totality of unchanging, *transcendent* Being, and excludes any kind of multiplicity[61].

Finally, a passage from the *Timaeus* can be adduced (51E–52A), where Plato places the transcendent status of Forms in clear opposition to the physical world of appearances:

> *Timaeus*, 51E7–52A9: This being so, we must agree that there is, first, the unchangeable Form, ungenerated and undestructible, which neither receives anything else into itself from elsewhere nor itself enters into anything else anywhere, and is invisible and otherwise imperceptible; that, in fact, which thinking has as its proper object. Second is that which bears the same name and is like that Form; is sensible; is brought into existence; is perpetually in motion; comes into being in a certain place and vanishes again from it; and is to be apprehended by belief involving perception[62].

2.44. *The Form Considered In Its Immanent Status*

There are several passages in Plato's work which turn out to involve the embodied (immanent) status of Forms. (See Guthrie IV, 151; 189; 212; 350; 353–6; V, 60; 150; 166). Moreover, there is a famous passage in the *Timaeus*, where the nature and the activities of the Forms are discussed. At 50C the inhabitants of the physical world of appearances are spoken of indirectly when Plato discusses the things that pass in and out the Receptacle (*hypodochê*) as 'copies of the eternal things', impressions taken from them "in a strange manner that is hard to express". What these things are appears from 49E: those qualities which are "always coming into being in the Receptacle, making their appearance, and again vanishing from it". In the same passage we are taught that only when speaking of that in which those things are always coming into being and passing away, may the demonstrative pronouns 'this' or 'that' be used. Thus there is a definite contrast between that stream of fluctuating qualities and the ever lasting element in which (*en hôi*) they make their transitory appearances. However, it is not 'the in which', the Receptacle, that is constitutive of that which is named by the term 'the bodily' (*to sômatoeides*), a term occurring in a previous passage (31B) together with its associates 'visible' and 'tangible'.

Unfortunately Plato is not quite explicit when speaking of the nature of those "things that pass into and out of" the Receptacle; in fact they could not be identified solely as the qualities (*poiotêtes*) mentioned above, since they cannot be regarded as the "copies of the eternal things" (*homoiômata tôn ontôn aei mimêmata*) which are spoken of in the same connection (50C5). His fifth century commentator Proclus seems to be quite right in assuming that in interpreting this *Timaeus* passage we have also to think of "the forms embodied in matter" (*ta eidê ta enhyla*), as (in this case) copies of the eternal Forms of Fire, Air, Water and Earth. To Proclus' interpretation of the *Timaeus* passage one may add a remark from the commentary on Aristotle's *Physics* written by Simplicius (*In Arist. Phys.*, 539,10) that in the *Timaeus* matter is called "the space and the place of the *embodied Forms*". It is clear from 540,13 ff. that the phrase 'embodied Forms' was partly based on *Timaeus*, 53B4 (*dieschêmatisato eidesi te kai arithmois*, which, in fact, seems to refer to geometrical shapes) and partly on *Timaeus*, 51A7 (*metalambanon aporôtata pêi tou noêtou*)[63].

The same dialogue seems to contain another clue. Speaking about the composition and structure of the World Soul we are told by Plato (*Timaeus*, 35A) that it is compounded of three ingredients, to the extent that in between Indivisible, Intelligible Being and *divisible being* that is found in bodies, there is compounded a third form of existence the Demiurge composed of both; next follow, he continues, two other, additional, mixtures[64]. The upshot of the whole passage is that the soul has a sort of existence which cannot be simply identified with the Real Being of immutable and eternal things, nor yet with the 'becoming' of physical phenomena, but has some of the characteristics of both these sorts of existence (see Cornford, *loc. laud.*).

However, as far as I can see, the opposition put forward in 35A1ff. is not a matter of Real Being *versus* the physical world considered as unreal being, but rather of Real Being (= the World of Forms) in its transcendent status *versus* Real Being *as distributed among bodies* (Plato has: *peri ta sômata gignomenês meristês*; 35A2–3), i.e. the same Forms considered in their embodied status. So this passage, too, seems to contain an implicit allusion to what was later called (by Proclus, among others) the *eidos enhylon*.

Another clue seems to occur in the well-known passage in the *Parmenides*, 129B–130B, where the likeness we have is distinguished from the Form LIKENESS. Here the distinction between the Forms themselves as considered in their purely transcendent nature, on the one hand (*chôris men eidê auta atta*), and every day things partaking in one or more Form(s), on the other (*chôris de ta toutôn au metechonta*), is found in a most explicit form (130B2–3). Some pages further on the immanent *eidê* are mentioned side by side with the transcendent ones when Parmenides argues (135B6–C3) that all thought and discourse is impossible once the existence of (transcendent) Forms has been rejected or one refuses "to discern something as the form of each individual", where the immanent form is obviously intended.

No doubt, this is to be ranked with the *Phaedo* passage (102D ff.) discussed above, 2.41, where Plato is obviously speaking of Forms as embodying themselves in matter. The opposition of the Form's transcendent status to its immanent one is quite manifest when he says that there are some cases in which we find that

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[61] For what Plato did concede to his critics from the doctrinal point of view, see below, Ch. VI.

[62] Cf. *ibid.*, 27D–28A; 35A and *Philebus*, 16B–18D.

[63] See Cornford, [1948], 183–4.

[64] See Cornford, [1948], 59–62.

it is not only the Form itself (i.e. the Form in its transcendent status) that is entitled to its own name *for all time*, but also something else which although it is not that Form, yet always bears that Form's character *as long as it exists*. The subsequent part of this passage is clear enough to illustrate that when he deals with that 'something else' (which is, no doubt, a physical phenomenon), Plato regards it as having a certain *nature* (103D2: the "nature ('what it was') of snow"; 103E10: "the nature of something odd"; 104A7–8: "the very nature of three and five"), and it is this *nature* that is an embodied Form. It should be noticed, further, that the first passage under review speaks of 'the hot' *being admitted* (103D7), *the approach* of 'the hot' (D9), or of 'the cold' *approaching* fire, and of 'coldness' being *admitted*. Likewise a previous passage in the same dialogue distinguished 'the tallness in us' from 'Tallness itself' (102C–103B). No doubt, 'the hot' *approaching*, 'the coldness' *admitted* as well as 'the tallness *in us*' (as contradistinguished with 'Tallness itself', i.e. Tallness in its transcendent status) must be identified as Forms in their immanent status[65].

Finally, some attention must be paid to *Theaetetus*, 156D ff. It is true that there Plato's concern is with the domain of sense-perception. A distinction is made between the sensation 'whiteness' which is what is produced by the conjunction of the stream of light from the eye and the influx of colour from the object perceived, and, on the other hand, the status of the object itself after that conjunction has taken place, which status is called 'a white thing', "be it stock or stone or whatever else may happen to be so coloured", Plato clarifies (156E5–7). Thus a distinction is involved between a quality, such as 'colour' or 'whiteness', and the 'embodied qualities'. When the situation has been transferred from the level of sense-perception to that of intellection, the latter entity, viz. 'embodied quality' (*dynamis*), may be equated with the Form in its immanent status, while the former entity, viz. 'colour' (or 'whiteness') may be considered to be the Form as a mental entity, i.e. the Form as conceived of by the human mind.

This quite naturally leads us on to the next section.

[65] See Hackforth's note on *Phaedo*, 103D (p. 149, n. 4): "'The hot' (*to thermon*) is here not a substance nor yet an expression in which, as in Ionian science, substance and quality have not yet been distinguished; it is a character immanent in a substance, a 'form', we might say, using the small initial letter .... to distinguish it from *auto to thermon*, the transcendent Form hotness (heat)". As a matter of fact he concludes (143–4) from the fact that at 102D the transcendent Form is distinguished from the immanent form "that in the *Phaedo* itself, whatever be the case in other dialogues, the Forms are not themselves immanent". Of course, the Forms (notice the capital letter, referring to the Forms *in their transcendent status*) are not as such immanent. However, *as* partaken in by particulars they are immanent characters. Whoever takes participation as a serious thing, *must* assume an immanent status for the Forms *as partaken in*. So Hackforth quite consistently accepts the immanent status, but is decidedly wrong in thinking this a special feature of the *Phaedo* stage (unlike *Parmenides*, 131A–E). The doctrine of the different statuses is found throughout Plato's works from the *Phaedo* onwards. Unlike Verdenius [1958:232] I take the indication of the distinction at 102D (and elsewhere) as sufficiently clear and logically unavoidable at the same time and find Verdenius' view of (233) the Forms as 'not absolutely transcendent' to be really strange. He is fortunately inconsistent, it would seem, in correctly assuming that ".... a direct apprehension of the Forms [in the case of knowledge] is facilitated *by their being present in a sense in the visible world*" (my italics). Indeed, they are, and have an immanent status, accordingly.

2.45. *The Form Considered In Its Mental Status*

This section aims to collect some evidence of instances where Plato speaks (whether implicitly or explicitly) of the Form *as being known*, i.e. as *conceived of* by the human intellect.

In an earlier section (2.42) it was remarked that, for Socrates, inquiring into the basic moral values, it is Transcendent Forms *as they are known* (or *knowable*) that form the focus of his interest. Thus the mental status of Forms is here also of vital importance.

The first catch of evidence is comprised by all those passages where the Recollection theory is discussed. This theory accords a central position to the human mind (soul) which only when it withdraws from the flesh to think 'by itself' and is set free from all bodily influences, including those of the senses, is ready to carry out its proper function of thinking, reflecting and contemplating True Being. In all this, however, what is really involved is 'True Being', or the 'World of the Forms' *as known* (or '*contemplated*') by the soul.

Another cluster of evidence is found in Plato's doctrine of the so-called Ideal Names put forward especially in *Cratylus*, 389C–390A (see above, 2.3). Just inasmuch as those names, e.g. 'horse', are distinguished from the transcendent Form (HORSE), a degree of stress is laid on the form as a mental entity. Indeed, it is the correctly framed concept 'horse', which is itself the correct concept of the Transcendent Form, with which the Ideal Name should be equated; accordingly, the latter is nothing but a Form itself *considered in its mental state*. This doctrine is expounded more specifically in *Cratylus*, 386E ff., where the analogy between the separating operations of weaving and dialectic is elaborated, and has a counterpart in a passage in the later dialogue, *Statesman* (305E ff.) where a parallel is drawn between the combining operation of weaving and statesmanship. There, too, we are told that there is a correct way of naming things by means of words which somehow express their natures (i.e. the Forms shared by those things), where any name has the function of distinguishing the nature of things. The natures involved come up here for discussion *inasmuch* as they are the meanings ('significates') of those names. Again, the Form in its mental status seems to be implied[66]. Finally, we discussed in our section 2.42 the passage from the *Republic X*, 596A–B which contains the assumption that every common name's fixed meaning should refer to one and the same mental object which is present in the minds of both the speaker and the hearer. This mental object cannot be anything but what we have called the transcendent Form *as known* by the human mind.

[66] See also nr 13.31.

A third way in which the Form in its mental status seems to appear, may be seen in some lines of the *Phaedrus*. There Plato speaks of the "living speech" that is "written in the soul" (276A5–6; 278A3) and "accompanies knowledge" (276A5). In section 274B–278B Plato discussed the superiority of the spoken word over the written one. Socrates is of the opinion (278A) that written compositions are, at best, a means of reminding those who know the truth, but that lucidity and completeness and serious import belong only to those lessons that are truly written in the soul of the listener. What is being opposed to written discourse is spoken discourse which is held as being written in the soul, "no dead discourse, but the living speech, the original of which the written discourse may fairly be called a kind of image" (276A9). It is not written "in water nor in that black fluid we call ink" (276C7–8), but is written down by the true philosopher (dialectician) in a pupil's soul of the right type (276E) which is able to accept his "words founded on knowledge" (E4). The dialectician's words are such as to fulfill the conditions which make a discourse a product of art: first one must know the truth about a subject about which one speaks or writes; that is to say one must be able *to isolate it in a definition*, and having so defined it one must understand how to divide it into kinds until the limit of (ontological) division is reached; next, one must discover the type of speech appropriate to each nature under discussion (277B1–C1). Now, it is quite obvious that that type of speech which defines and determines a thing's real nature (the 'truth about it' as Plato calls it) is nothing but the Transcendent Form *as considered in the mental status* which is received when people correctly frame concepts, i.e. correctly conceive of those natures.

No doubt, all those other passages belong to this group in which Plato describes thinking as "unspoken discourse": *Theaetetus*, 189B–190A; cf. 196A and 206D; *Philebus*, 38C–E where unspoken discourse is vividly described by Socrates; finally *Sophist*, 263E, where thinking (*dianoia*) and discourse (*logos*) — both terms used in a larger sense to include all forms of thinking and speech[67] — are said to be "the same thing, except that which we call thinking is, precisely, the inward dialogue carried on by the mind with itself without spoken sound".

One may also adduce two other passages from the *Theaetetus*. First the one already discussed in the previous section, where the contradistinction of the transcendent status of the Form with the mental one seems to be implied. A parallel to the doctrinal side of this passage seems to be offered by *Timaeus*, 61D ff. Another passage in the *Theaetetus* which is of some importance here, is 195D–196B, which forms part of the famous section of the dialogue where Plato is trying to define 'false judgement'. A distinction is made between real (physical) things and entities which one merely thinks of. Now, as the latter category does not allow any false judgment, we must identify these entities with transcendent Forms *as conceived of* by the human mind. I give the relevant passage in full:

[67] See below, nr 13.13.

195D6–196B7: 'On the other hand', he[68] will continue, 'you also say that we can never imagine that *a man whom we merely think of* and do not see is *a horse which again we* do not see or touch but *merely think of* without perceiving it in any way?'. I suppose I *shall* say 'Yes' to that. And rightly. 'On that showing', he will say, 'a man could never imagine that *11 which he merely thinks of*, is *12 which again he merely thinks of*'. Come, you must find, the answer now. Well, I shall answer that if he saw or handled eleven things, he might suppose they were twelve, but he will never make that judgment about *the 11 and the 12 he has in his thoughts*. — Well now, does a man ever consider in his own mind 5 and 7 (I don't mean five men and seven men or anything of that sort, but *just 5 and 7 themselves* (*auta pente kai hepta*), which we describe as records in that waxen block of ours, among which there can be no false judgment), does anyone ever take these into consideration and ask himself *in his inward conversation* how much they amount to; and does one man believe and state that they total 11, another that they total 12, or does everybody agree they total 12? ..... Now consider what happens in this case. Is it not thinking that *the 12 itself* that is stamped on the waxen block is 11? — It seems so.

The same holds good for all those passages where Plato is using the word '*ennoia*' in order to indicate the notions considered in as far as they are stamped on the memory. In a passage preceding the one discussed above Plato speaks of those *ennoiai* as *things* which we conceive of in our own minds (*autoi ennoêsômen*; 191D5); in our passage we read of a man (and a horse) whom we merely think of (*hon dianooumetha monon*). All those *ennoiai* are clearly opposed to things we see and touch (195D8).

Finally in *Phaedo*, 73C7–10 Socrates makes a distinction between the situation where some every day thing is perceived by somebody and 'something else' besides that, something that is the object of a different piece of knowledge. The latter, no doubt, is to be identified with the Transcendent Form. However, in continuing his exposition, Socrates describes this something else that somebody *comes to know* (*kai heteron ennoêsêi*; 73C7–8) as an *ennoia* (C9); and, this *ennoia* is, again, the correctly framed concept of the Transcendent Form. Also in *Philebus* 59D, where Socrates speaks of the names of Reason and Intelligence as precisely appropriate to thought whose object is True Being, this thought is indicated by the term '*ennoia*' (59C4: *en tais peri to on ontôs ennoiais*). Again, Plato is clearly speaking about the Transcendent Form *as considered in its mental status*.

2.5. *The Sophist To Be Reconsidered*

The problems concerning the interpretation of Plato's *Sophist* have been impressively set out by Gordon Neal in his *Editor's Introduction* to Bluck's Commentary [1975:9–29]. He rightly starts (9) from the fact that a modern student of Plato cannot claim to understand Plato without being able to relate what Plato says to his own view of things. However, the dangers of distortions inherent in this approach are obvious. Neal translates Kamlah's comment [1963:40]: "Here too the difficulty of interpretation consists in the fact that the contemporary commentator

[68] Somebody introduced by Plato (195C6–7) as an anonymous discussion-partner who addresses himself to Socrates.

cannot always deny himself refinements and distinctions which Plato either does not draw at all or does not draw explicitly".

Next Neal illustrates the problems, and indeed dangers, by indicating a number of modern approaches to the dialogue, starting with Ackrill's sagacious analysis [1957] which could not avoid, however, some obvious distortions of hindsight (in claiming that Plato had already distinguished all three of the major senses of 'is'). He pays special attention to three recent discussions (13–21).

I.M. Crombie like Bluck diagnoses [1962:492 ff.] what he and many others (wrongly) think to be the apparent confusion between predication and the identity-statement as the basic difficulty of the entire dialogue. On the one hand he claims (510) that Plato distinguishes predication from identity but, at the same time, that Plato was not fully and explicitly conscious of the fact that *einai* has certain special uses. Neal seems to be right in reducing (13) these obscurities to "the perennial problem of keeping Platonic and modern terminology far enough apart to avoid confusion".

Michael Frede [1967] seems to keep them far enough apart and only distinguishes two applications (*Verwendungen*) of 'is' in Plato, rather than different uses, let alone those corresponding to a modern distinction. However, as Neal has rightly observed (15–7), Frede nonetheless applied over-sharp logical distinctions to Plato's language, for instance, the distinction between class and property. Besides, he comes to (wrongly) accept self-predication of Forms without supporting his view with any explicit textual evidence. As will be shown below (15.5) the view taken by him (and others) of 'predication' in Plato's semantics lies at the root of his wrong interpretation.

G.E.L. Owen [1971] supports the claims advanced by others before him that no separate existential sense of the verb 'to be' is marked off in the *Sophist*. Neal rightly objects (18–9) that he interprets the *Sophist* on the level of logic rather than metaphysics. Plato is discussing Being, not uses of the verb 'is'. The decisive point here is [cf. Neal, 19 and Marten, 1965:207] that to Plato Being is not simply a source of predication or attribution; it rather is the main characteristic of things or their power (*dynamis*; see also *s.v.*). No doubt, Plato *is* a marvellous logician, but his sincere intention is to be a metaphysician. As a Transcendent Form, Being is even an all-pervasive Kind and the metaphysical cause of the being of all other things. Indeed, Plato clearly parallels language and logic (particularly name-giving) with the ontological conditions of 'things that are' (*ta onta*), but he has not the character of a logician who sets up theoretical models which need not as such have any bearing on things which are. So Plato should not be pressed into a strict logical straitjacket (cf. Neal [1975:21]).

Neal's remarks (14) about some of Crombie's ventures are of general application to modern approaches to our dialogue. Perhaps from a laudable concern to contribute something new to Platonic scholarship, one occasionally ignores the simple interpretation. The simple, even *à propros* the *Sophist*, is not necessarily wrong, he warns.

I think that the best thing we can do is to take Plato's text just as it stands.

Even if he does not make the same distinctions we moderns would like to make, he tends to hold together what we usually split up. To admit no distinction between *A* and *B* does not necessarily amount to confusing them. Plato's special point of view may render our modern distinctions, however excellent they are, inapposite.

Again, let Plato be his own spokesman and the real guide to the discussion. The efforts required from the modern reader are impressive enough. And in the actual situation the fact that he tries to get free from all modern distinctions may make the interpreter out-modern the Moderns.

RECONSIDERING PLATO'S SOPHIST

Chapter three

THE DIALOGUE'S MAIN THEME AND PROCEDURE

3.1. *Introductory*

In his excellent editor's Introduction to the late Richard Bluck's commentary on Plato's *Sophist* Gordon C. Neal rightly points[1] to the twofold task of modern study of that dialogue: to be faithful to Plato's understanding of the problems involved but, at the same time, to relate that understanding in some meaningful way to our own conceptual framework. The forging of new conceptual tools, therefore, is almost inevitable required, that is — as Neal is right to underline —, neither those in common use in Plato's days nor those of our own may be entirely suitable.

Modern investigation[2] has certainly been conducted along these lines, to some extent at least. Given the fact that modern scholarship has usually interpreted Plato's *Sophist* as an exploration of the verb 'to be', the modern distinction of existence, identity and predication was bound to come up for discussion. Most scholars, however, were unable to trace an explicit reference to this triple analysis of *einai* in the dialogue. To be sure, it is generally acknowledged that Plato was clearly attempting, especially in the *Sophist*, to resolve some of the confusions about the notions of 'being' current in his time. However, the decisive question to the modern interpreter is: did this attempt amount to a clear-cut distinction of its meanings (or its uses, at least) or did it not go beyond a remarkably good intuitive choice of examples? Ackrill has argued that Plato distinguished all three major meanings of 'is'. Michael Frede, on the contrary, dropped any claim of the kind and only found two different applications (*Verwendungen*) of the verb 'is', not two different meanings (*Bedeutungen*). The other modern interpreters seem to take a middle position between Ackrill and Frede[3].

[1] [1975], 10.
[2] See especially Ackrill [1957] 1–6; Moravcsik [1962]; Peck [1962]; Runciman [1962]; Marten [1965]; Malcolm [1967]; Owen [1971]; Pester [1971]; Seligman [1974].
[3] An intelligent survey (with some clear criticism) of the most important interpretations is given by Neal [1975], 9–21.

A question preliminary to the foregoing should be asked first: is the exploration of the verb 'to be' Plato's main theme in the *Sophist* or rather an admittedly important item within its proper theme? Well, the choice of the second alternative may not be ruled out at the outset.

However, methodological caution induces us to start our interpretation of Plato's dialogue while leaving this whole question unanswered for the moment. Let Plato be his own spokesman.

3.2. *'What is' (to on) As The Subject Proper Of The Dialogue*

The ancient tradition of commenting upong the *Sophist* will not seem quite favourable to our purpose. Indeed, some of our oldest manuscripts, bearing the title *Sophistês ê peri tou ontos, logikos*, apparently took the dialogue to be a discussion *peri tou ontos*. But should this phrase be translated by 'about being' or 'about what is'?

Neal has some serious doubts (22) that the dialogue should be an analysis of the verb 'to be' at all. He means this in two senses: (1) it is not Plato's main purpose to clear up the ambiguity of 'is' (*estin*) in Greek; (2) he does not in fact offer any distinction between senses of the verb; to Neal's mind there is some linguistic analysis but it centres around the negative[4], not the verb 'to be', and even then it is analysis employed as a means to an end rather than 'pure' analysis. He gives five arguments for his view (22–4):

— no examples are discussed of positive statements of identity, but only negative statements of non-identity
— at *Soph.*, 257B–C the problem of 'what is not' is explicitly subsumed under the general problem of negation; Plato's main problem is discussed in terms of the analysis of what in general the negative particle (*mê* or *ou*) signifies
— in analysing non-identity 'is not' statements Plato reduces the 'not' rather than the 'is' to other terms (so at 255E ff.)
— Plato never uses the expression 'the Same' for positive identity statements concerning the relationship between two terms (or descriptions) referring to the same entity, but 'the same' always refers to the self-identity of a single thing (e.g. Change at 256A)
— in the second of the four contrasting pairs of attributes predicated of Change (at 255Eff.) Plato specifically refers to the ambiguity which is involved in calling Change both the Same and not the Same ("when we say it is the same and not the same, we are not using the expression in the same sense", 256A11–12). So Plato is here concerned with the various meanings of the words 'the same' and 'not the same', rather than with that of the verb 'is'.
Again, it is not the word 'not' in the phrase 'not the same' that is analysed (viz. as 'other than').

[4] Cf. John Burnet, *Greek Philosophy. Thales to Plato* I, 278 (quoted by Cornford, [1939], 202, n. 1).

Should the dialogue really be taken as a treatise on negation rather than on the different meanings of 'is'? To my mind Neal has certainly been successful in throwing serious doubts upon the common view of the *Sophist* as an exploration of the verb 'to be'. However, his own thesis does not seem to be completely convincing either. It is true, in the major part of the dialogue negation and non-identity are in the focus of Plato's interest and admittedly more so than the verb 'to be' as such. But Neal himself recognises some serious difficulties for his view, especially when Plato's analysis of negative 'predications' (257Bff.; the term is Neal's) is concerned (26–9). He holds (in opposition to Bluck) that Plato himself was not aware of the difference between negative identity and negative predication. In the end he has to concede (29) that the problems he has been discussing exist only as long as one insists on treating negative predication as a separate thing. Well, let us abandon, then, the view that Plato dealt with these items as separate things. Both his exploration of the different senses of 'is' and his treatment of negation and non-identity apparently serve another purpose and are only important elements — and quite remarkable ones, from the viewpoint of twentieth-century thought — in the main philosophical discussion.

The different modern approaches to our dialogue have been thoroughly criticised by Rosen [1983], especially that of the analytic school. He starts his interesting study of our dialogue from quite un unusual viewpoint, which he calls the 'dramatic perspective'. It regards the dialogue as a unity, and more specifically, as a work of art. "From this standpoint, he says (1), it is not finally satisfactory to dismember the *Sophist* into a collection of fragments and to study just those fragments which seem to contain "technical discussions of a 'philosophical' as opposed to an artistic nature. A comprehensive understanding of the 'technical' passages, to the extent that such is possible at all, depends, according to the partisans of the dramatic perspective, upon grasping their function within the organic dialogue" (*ibid.*). The primary concern of the 'ontological perspective', on the other hand, is with the technical content of the dialogue, which is in Rosen's view (3) understood as a theory of 'being', in one sense or another of that term. He inspects (4) the two main schools of the ontological perspective, the phenomenological and the analytical schools (*ibid.*) and thinks (7) it of striking interest that both ontological schools have been decisively influenced by Aristotle's science of being *qua* being and his doctrine of predication "as one of the pivotal features of how we talk about being". (*ibid.*).

Rosen's option for the dramatic approach does not block the way to a meticulous analysis of the work including its narrowly technical themes (12). His own reading of the dialogue, then, is characterised as 'dramatic phenomenology', "the artistic reformulation of phenomenological descriptions of speeches and deeds within the context of a unified statement about the good and philosophical life, and hence about the noble as distinct from the base" (12–3).

For that matter, he takes (14–5) the version of Platonism that is implicitly read into the dialogues by "the analytical ontologist who assimilates being into the linguistic function of predication" as 'unofficial Platonism', whose thesis he does not hold as indefensible though. However, "the thesis becomes defensible, not by

a close study of the Stranger's narrowly technical doctrines, but rather from a reflection of the nature of the dialogue" (15). He is even of the opinion (28) that the analytical version (though most fruitful) errs in disregarding the dramatic context of the narrowly technical passages.

His criticism of the analytical school, then, focusses on the question of whether the Eleatic Visitor is "fundamentally concerned with reference and predication" (29). He agrees with Cornford [1935:259; 268–9] in rejecting the analytical reading of the *Sophist* as developing a doctrine of predication (see also Lafrance [1979:33–4]), but rejects his view of 'ontological combination' as opposed to 'logical predication', and, in general, the strict opposition of logic to ontology (31).

Rosen's main objection to what he calls 'the Predicationalists' is their "failure to distinguish between atomic forms and the parts of speech in true and false statements. The atomic forms are not predicates; but this does not exclude the normal use of what we now call 'predication' in the construction of statements about empirical objects or events". I can only agree with him on this score. Further, I can go the whole way with him when he rebukes (35–8) Vlastos' [1973] introduction of 'Pauline predication', on account of *Sophist*, 252D and 256B and, generally speaking, with all attempts at directly applying concepts from modern logic and set theory to the task of explicating Platonic doctrines. "Needless to say, he remarks (38), if one proceeds in this manner, one will quite naturally discover a theory of predication in the transformed Greek text".

Let us have a look at Rosen's own discussion of some pivotal issues in the *Sophist*. First, 249D9–252E8. There he provides (230–40) a thorough criticism of Frede's 'predicationalist' interpretation (and that of Owen). Moving to an attempt to provide a sound interpretation of its own (240), he rightly starts from the conviction previously uttered (232) that "predication is a fundamentally wrong term to use in discussing statements about forms". He has well observed (242–3) that at 251A–C, the problem of the difference between identity and predication is not in order, as the Eleatic Visitor does not speak of predication but of 'naming' (*eponomazontes*). Rosen rightly remarks (243) that "we must distinguish the nature of man (discussed at 251A–C) from the procedure of combining names; it is this procedure that actually plays a role in the following discussion".

However, Rosen quite soon leaves this fruitful perspective of the semantic character of the procedure (of combining *names*) by shifting all intention to the *combining* as such. "We are not discussing predicates, *not even names* (my italics), but what will shortly be identified as greater kinds" (244). The semantics of 'nomination' which is so predominant throughout the Eleatic Visitor's expositions (see *Index*, s.v. *appellation*), plays no role in Rosen's interpretation of what the Eleatic Visitor puts forward. Thus he seems to ignore what clearly is quite a dramatic feature of our dialogue.

When discussing *Sophist*, 259D6–264B8 Rosen rightly sees "no reason to attribute a doctrine of predication to the Stranger" (300). He has well observed (*ibid.*) that "in Aristotelian predication, there is a substratum that 'receives' or 'dispenses with' properties .... In Platonic combination, the ultimate constituents of intelligibility are atomic forms, which stand together or apart, but which do not 'receive'

one another within themselves, despite the terminology of 'sharing' and 'participating'."

My own interpretation of the dialogue will show that I can fully agree with Rosen's criticism of the predicationalist approach (and the great number of mutually rival theses it has led to). However, he has failed to see that the "narrowly technical" doctrines expounded by the Eleatic Visitor are completely sound if they are taken *as they are put forward* in the dialogue, that is, along the lines of Plato's own semantics of 'naming' (not, predication). Leaving *this* dramatic setting out of consideration Rosen could come to his conclusion (307) that the doctrines of the *Sophist* do not represent a new and crucial stage in the evolution of Plato's thought, but rather are 'a technical failure'[5].

I rather think it cannot be denied that the discussions in our dialogue give ample proof that Plato is making an important step towards the solution of the problems that had worried him and the Academy during the time he prepared and wrote the *Parmenides* and *Theaetetus*. These dialogues testify to Plato's self-criticism, especially his critical reconstruction of the theory of Forms, the classical shape of which is found in *Phaedo*, *Symposion* and *Republic*. The critical dialogues obviously aim at a reappraisal of the world of appearances, and a more thorough investigation of what was called participation. A re-evaluation of knowledge (*epistêmê*) and opinion (*doxa*) was bound to come into the picture. Plato gradually came to recognise that the problem of participation could only be solved if the interrelations between the Forms themselves were also explicitly questioned. He did not consider it beneath his dignity to return to the great Parmenides. Well, following Parmenides of Elea in making a clear-cut distinction between what is intelligible and what is perceptible (and, accordingly, between knowledge and belief), Plato was bound to encounter similar difficulties to those of Parmenides: if the real World is one and unchangeable, how can the transient world ever partake in it? There must be some 'Communion of Forms' such as to make the phenomenon of participation in the transient world possible at all. So for Plato the basic question was: 'what is the true nature of being'?

The question of the 'true nature of being' can be considered a rather vague one. For that matter, it may become somewhat more substantial by substituting the phrase 'what is' for 'being'. Indeed, ancient philosophy did not worry itself about such questions as whether there really exists an external world. Its existence as quite independent of human thinking was always a basic presupposition of ancient philosophers. Their problem was how to know the ontological status of the external world. This amounts to answering the question of how 'what is' ('things there are', to use Aristotle's formula at *Categ.* I,1a20) should be qualified ('named' or:

[5] Of course, my defence of Plato's doctrine does not reduce to the assertion that his novel doctrine should be taken as some anticipation of Fregean or post-Fregean analysis. Plato has his own (quite modest indeed) semantics. However, to think, with Rosen (308), that the Eleatic Visitor is such a "prototypical version of Fregeans or post-Fregeans" and that Plato is showing that the EV's "technicism renders him indistinguishable from the sophists", must be entirely out of the question.

'asserted'): as 'one' or 'multiple', as 'immutable' or 'changing', as an object of knowledge or belief only? Well, man's activity in qualifying ('naming', 'asserting', 'predicating') is bound to introduce immediately the problem of truth and falsity.

So the true nature of 'what is' — taken materially as 'things there are' including things of the transient world of becoming and ambiguous appearance, revealed by the senses — was involved, that world of doxa which had been severely condemned by Parmenides as totally unreal (as a result of human misconceptions) but which was considered the sole reality by a man like Protagoras.

In qualifying some 'thing' as 'real' (or indeed as 'totally unreal') it is our linguistic activity (not 'what is' or 'the things there are') that gives rise to serious problems. Should one thing be called more 'real' than another? In speaking about two 'different real things', are we to take them as the same (for being equally 'real') and as different at the same time? Thus problems concerning 'naming' ('attribution') and negation as well as the different uses of 'is' inevitably come up for discussion, and 'Being' and 'Non-Being' will prove to be equally puzzling. (Cf. *Sophist*, 243C2–5 and 250E6–7.)

We seem to be on the right track, therefore, in assuming the *Sophist* to be dealing with *to on*, indeed, as the ancient title suggests (*peri tou ontos*), but we have to understand the phrase as 'about what is', 'about things there are'. So 'what is' is the subject matter proper of our dialogue. As will be seen presently, the formal approach, however, is the semantic one: how are we to qualify ('name') things ('being') and what is involved in our way of naming (attributing, asserting, denying)? So there is nothing awkward, it seems, in following Plato's semantic moves, as long as they are Plato's, not ours.

But as usual, Plato does not get down to business at once, and frames the doctrinal contents in a well-written story. Four people are in search of the true nature of the sophist, who turns out to be most successful in finding, again and again, 'impenetrable lurking-places' (239C7). The hunters are hampered by a true thicket of *semantic* obscurities. Finding the damned sophist in the end will mean clearing up those obscurities as well as possible. For that reason, Plato's semantic approach is really a pivotal element in the dramatic setting of the *Sophist*. Accordingly, *some* "analytic" approach to what Plato is actually doing, need not be out of order. But, again let Plato be his own spokesman.

3.3. *'Searching For The Sophist' As The Thematic Issue*

So the purpose of the dialogue is to catch the Sophist by defining his true nature. As Cornford has remarked [1935:170][6], here, at the threshold, we are to cross the boundary between the sensible world, to which the *Theaetetus* was confined, and the World of Forms. Indeed, the Sophist's profession is to dance on the tight-rope between being and not-being. His opportunities are found in the domain of not-being, but his arrogant claims aim at the sincere Realm of being. The dialogue

[6] Cornford [1939]. Of course, I am much indebted to Cornford's work as well as to Bluck's outstanding commentary [1975].

seems to fit in very well into the general framework of the search for 'what is' (or for 'what appears' or even for 'what is not really').

How is this search to be conducted? The Eleatic Visitor (the EV henceforward) recommends (218B7–C1) beginning by studying the Sophist and trying to bring to light his nature in a clear formula (*logos*). What the interlocutors already have in common is the use of the same name, but it is the thing (*ergon*, *pragma*) meant by the name that should be sought out and stated by means of an explicit formula (218C). It is easily seen, now, that Plato is attacking the problem by an exploration of the true sense of the name 'sophist' (cf. 217A1–8). He tries to find it by means of a definition consisting of genus and specific difference. The procedure of finding that definition has been described by A.E. Taylor in a well-known passage in his book on Plato[7].

> If we wish to define a species *x*, we begin by taking some wider and familiar class *a* of which *x* is clearly one sub-division. We then devise a division of the whole class *a* into two mutually exclusive sub-classes *b* and *c*, distinguished by the fact that *b* possesses, while *c* lacks, some characteristic β which we know to be found in *x*. We call *b* the right-hand, *c* the left-hand, division of *a*. We now leave the left-hand division *c* out of consideration, and proceed to subdivide the right-hand division *b* on the same principle as before, and this process is repeated until we come to a right-hand 'division', which we see on inspection to coincide with *x*. If we now assign the original wider class *a* and enumerate in order the successive characters by which each of the successive right-hand divisions has been marked off, we have a complete characterization of *x*; *x* has been defined.

As a matter of fact the well-known seven divisions defining the 'Sophist' all take them under a special aspect, which is indicated by some genus (generic concept, e.g. 'Hunter' (hunting), 'Salesman' (selling), 'Contention', and so on). Again and again the genus originally chosen is dismissed and a fresh start is made with a new one. The tiresome procedure may clarify the EV's remark (at 217B3–4) that it is not so short and easy a task to define the 'Sophist' (cf. 217E2–3). Modern interpreters, such as Taylor, Skemp, Gulley (see Bluck, 35) seem to be right in holding that, unlike Aristotle (*Prior Analytics*, I 31, 46a31 ff.), Plato did not think that by a definition a thing's true nature could be demonstrated in the strict sense of the term. To his mind, there was a certain correspondence between the interrelated structures of the World of Forms and of the transient word of appearance and it is the dialectician's experience (*gnôsis*) reached after many years of contemplating the Ideal World (see *Rep.* VI, 502C–VIII,541B) that enabled him to use the procedure successfully[8].

Well, since (1) the procedure is considered to be a method of arriving at a name's 'true content' ('proper meaning'), and (2) the 'things' meant by different names are taken as interrelated ('cognate', *syggenê*; see e.g. 221D7–8; cf. *Statesman*, 279A–B), it is quite obvious that the interrelationships of the Forms themselves are involved. From the viewpoint of ontology Plato is trying to describe the Forms

[7] Taylor [1926], 377 also quoted by Bluck [1975], 34.
[8] No doubt, the practice of the procedure has much to do with Recollection. See Bluck [1975], 36–8 and 36, note 1 and below, 8.3 and 8.4.

by stating their (mutual) relations, such as, so to speak, to plot the position of a Form on a map, as Skemp calls it [1954:74][9]. Thus Bluck quite fortunately described (39) the whole procedure as one of clarification, rather than discovery; it is a systematic attempt to actualise pre-existing latent knowledge.

So the main theme of this first part (216A–231B) may be expressed this way: Plato is in search of the various senses of the name 'sophist' (either current or possible ones) by means of a procedure which presupposes that the interrelated items of the semantic tableau involved should correspond to the interrelations occurring in the World of Forms. The view is quite in keeping with the one which was held in the earlier dialogues, esp. the *Cratylus*. As we have seen before (2.45), it is the correctly framed concept "horse", being itself the correct concept of the true nature, the later Platonic Transcendent Form (HORSE), with which the Ideal Name should be equated. The doctrine is clearly expounded in the *Cratylus* (386Eff.; see also below, 13.3). There the analogy between the separating operations of weaving and dialectic is elaborated. Its counterpart is found in the *Statesman*, where a parallel is drawn between the two combinative operations of weaving and statesmanship (305Eff.). There, too, the procedure for naming things by means of words somehow expressing their natures is recommended.

3.4. *The Semantic Character Of The Procedure*

The procedure is often described as the method of Collection and Division. This is surely a correct characterisation. So Cornford is right in attempting (1935:184–7) to gain some more insight into the procedure by contrasting Plato's method of Collection and Division with the Socratic method known from the earlier dialogues.

Whilst the aim of Collection is to fix upon the genus to be divided, Division is a downward process from that genus to the definition of its nearest species, which goes on in the same way down to the lowest species. The Socratic method, however, intends to arrive at a clear vision of the form (*eidos*; see above no Ch.II) of the definiendum, and its true account after the rejection of various other definitions. From the outset just one single form partaken in by many particulars is in the focus of interest and its vision is reached as a result of continuously undertaking fresh 'upward leaps' (as Plato calls it). Collection and Division, on the contrary, are in fact concerned with the interrelations of Forms, not in their own rights, but inasmuch they are 'interwoven' in the definiens of a specific particular, which is a *rendez-vous* of participations.

Cornford is surely successful in arguing that the Socratic method approaches the Form to be defined from below, whereas the method of Collection and Division descends to it from above. However, he seems to oppose the groups of objects with which the two methods are severally concerned too strictly. It is true, at the level of the forms the Socratic method pursues only one form, starting again and again from the particulars in the transient world which are supposed to partake

[9] J.B. Skemp, 74, quoted by Bluck, 38.

in it and the marking out of the form is achieved by a survey of its particular instances. But although, especially from the *Parmenides* onwards, Plato's attention is transferred from the group of particulars all partaking of a common, transcendent Form to the interrelations of the Forms (Kinds) themselves, yet it is not the relations of a whole group of Forms — which are clarified in the Collection-Division procedure — in which Plato is interested, but just those special Forms[10] (Kinds) that are fundamental for the existence of particulars and come together in the definiens of the final, successful definition[11].

Again, Plato approaches the matter from a semantic angle[12]. In fact it is our use of the name 'sophist' that is scrutinised. That name had been applied to various types of people [see Cornford 1939:187]: rhetoricians, like Gorgias and Protagoras, teachers of advanced subjects, like Hippias, professional disputants, like Euthydemus. The definitions gained in the first six series of Divisions (for the greater part without an explicit account of the corresponding Collections), are only analytical descriptions of the nature of people to whom the *name* 'sophist' had been attached (*ibid.*). Cornford may be right in suggesting that the first six Divisions actually, though not formally, serve the purpose of a Collection preliminary to the seventh, final Division, which intends to isolate the really fundamental character of the Sophist. In the first six Divisions Plato has familiarised the reader with the method of Division before giving his final analysis (achieved as late as at the end of the dialogue, 264D–268D) of the true meaning of the *name* 'sophist' and, by the same token, the true nature of the Sophist.

After Theaetetus' complaint that the Sophist has appeared in so many shapes that he is puzzled as to what description one is to offer as truly expressing his real nature, the EV suggests that the Sophist's embarrassment as to how he is once more to evade their argument is no less (231B10–C5). Before starting a fresh attack a short recapitulation is given of the many shapes in which the Sophist had hitherto appeared: as the hired hunter of rich young men, as a kind of merchant of learning, as a retailer of soul-nourishment, as a seller of his own products, as an athletic disputant and, finally, as one who purifies the soul from conceits that

[10] For the famous question of whether or not the 'Kinds' (*genê*) of the Sophist are to be identified with the Forms, see below, 9.21.

[11] A more serious error is made by Cornford (and many others) when he asserts that the method of Collection and Division practised in *Parmenides*, *Sophistes* and *Statesman* is wholly confined to the World of Forms and that the specific question of the *Parmenides* should be: 'can many Forms partake of a single *Form*?'.

[12] Loriaux [1955:158] correctly evaluates the role of language in Plato's metaphysical discussions found in the later dialogues. "Tout philosophe se doit d'examiner la valeur du language et de ne pas s'y fier sans aucune critique; Plato l'a fait, dans ses derniers dialogues, plus peut-être qu'auparavant. Mais il reste qu'il a continué de prendre ce language, dûment critiqué, comme la base de son étude. Les nombreux emplois qu'il fait encore de termes tels que *prosagoreuô* et *eponomazô* suffisent à le prouver. On peut donc très bien voir, avec Mgr Diès, l'origine des théories platoniciennes concernant la communauté des Formes dans les développements consacrés par le philosophe à la question du language".

block the way to understanding (231D1–E7)[13]. As appears from the next passage the EV considers the first six attacks to grasp the true nature of the Sophist so many attempts to give him his proper name, the correct account of which may clarify what the Sophist really is. The interlocutors seem to have fallen short so far in correct name-giving:

Sophist, 232A1–3: Do your realise that, when someone *gets his name* (*onomati prosagoreuêtai*) after a single art but yet appears to be master of many, that image (*phantasma*) is not genuine?

Bluck seems to be definitely mistaken in suggesting that there is a hint in the word *phantasma* that all the Kinds of knowledge which the Sophist seems to possess are only 'appearances'. As a matter of fact his (and Cornford's) rendering of '*phantasma*' by 'appearance' should be rejected. The word certainly refers to people's having just one image (representation, notion) of the Sophist's various abilities, which is a defective notion[14], indeed, and an unavoidable result of incorrect name-giving. It should be connected with the phrase *ho paschôn auto* ('the one to whom *this* occurs', i.e. a non-genuine phantasma resulting from incorrect name-giving), found in the next sentence. It should be noticed that this person is not the 'some one' of 232A1 who is wrongly estimated, but the unfortunate name-giver. The word '*phantasma*' has nothing to do with the (admittedly undeniable) fact that sophists only have 'seeming' knowledge[15]. So Plato continues in exposing the incorrectness of such name-giving:

232A3–6: ‹do you realise ... not genuine; *see above*› and that the one to whom this occurs [viz. getting such a notion][16] regarding any art [such as Sophistry in our case] evidently (*dêlon hôs*[17]) is unable to recognise that special (*ekeino*) feature of it which all these forms of skill are looking to (*blepei*)[18], through which in fact (*dio kai*) he names their possessor by many names instead of one.

By his concluding remark Plato has already indicated the new starting-point: looking for one particular feature in the Sophist that might be such a central characteristic (232B1–4). The EV thinks he has found it in the view that the Sophist is a 'controversialist', a 'disputant' (*antilogikos*). Hereby Plato quite naturally

[13] Bluck seems to be right in arguing (40–6), after G.B. Kerferd that the description of this kind of sophistry should not be applied to Socrates' activity. On the contrary, the label 'sophistry of noble family' (231B9) may be taken as indicating that, unlike other aspects of kinds of sophistry this procedure is related (as an imitation) to the noble art of true philosophy (Bluck, 46; cf. Taylor, 381).
[14] The same neutral sense of '*phantasma*' ('image', 'notion') is found at *Soph.*, 223C2 and 234E1); at 236B7 ff. it has the (pejorative) sense of 'semblance' as opposed to 'likeness'.
[15] Bluck has to agree (58) that "all that the EV explicitly infers is that we have yet to discover the essential principle behind all the skills that have been attributed to the Sophist".
[16] Cornford has the correct translation here, 'impression', but apparently fails to see the link with '*phantasma*' at 232A2.
[17] *dêlon hôs* (as *dêlon hoti*) is simply 'evidently'. The translators' 'plainly it is because' (Cornford), 'it is evidently because' (Warrington), and 'évidemment parce que' (Diès) are not correct. Schleiermacher correctly renders 'offenbar'.
[18] Or: 'towards which all these forms of skill orient themselves'.

transfers the argument from the nature of the Sophist to the problem of reality and appearance. For one who disputes about all and everything and teaches others to do so, claims to have knowledge about anything, as is stated by the EV at 232E2–4: "the art of controversy in fact seems to claim a capacity for disputation on any subject whatsoever". But such a claim is ridiculous, as no human being is able to know everything. What, then, might be that marvelous power of Sophistry? (232E6–233A9). After close inspection the EV and Theaetetus come to the conclusion that the Sophist possesses a kind of reputed knowledge of everything without having the truth and that perhaps this is the truest thing yet said about him (233C10–D2).

So his essential feature turns out to be his ability to debate any subject and, by the same token, his false conceit of wisdom, implying false belief in himself and at least in all those who are impressed by his performances. His power, accordingly, must be one of producing a false confidence in his own wisdom and a false appearance of all-embracing knowledge. So the crucial problem in the entire investigation undertaken in this dialogue turns out to be that of explaining the nature of 'what is not' (but seems to be) and falsehood.

In fact, when undertaking the seventh attempt at defining the Sophist Plato presses forward to the heart of the philosophic question that had worried him from the *Parmenides* onwards: 'what kind of being ('existence') can the transient world have?' or: 'what is the ontological status of what is neither real nor totally unreal?' It is the Sophist's activity in producing impressive (and not totally unreal, accordingly) appearances that seems to be in close keeping with the very nature of the world of appearances as opposed to the World of Forms.

Chapter four

ON CURRENT VIEWS ABOUT 'WHAT IS NOT'

4.1. *Introductory: On The Genus Of Image-making*

The EV suggests that the feature of the Sophist which had particularly impressed him as betraying his character most strikingly, viz. his being a 'disputant' (see 232B3–6), may basically be reduced to the man's ability to produce representations bearing the same names as the corresponding real things (234B). The Sophist possesses, indeed, the art of producing 'images in speech' (*eidôla legomena*, 234C6; Bluck's translation; Cornford has: "exhibiting images of all things in a shadow-play of discourse"; Diès (Budé translation): "présenter, de toutes choses, des *fictions parlées*"). So the genus of image-making comes up for discussion.

The attempts to come to a seventh and final Division (and definition) of the Sophist start by distinguishing (235D–236C) the genus of Image-making into two forms: Likeness-making (*eikastikê*) and Semblance-making (*phantastikê*). The difference between them may be seen from the example Plato gives of Likeness-making. It is drawn from sculpture: an artist produces a copy that follows exactly the proportions of the original in length, breadth and depth, and gives each part of it its proper colour (235D). To him he contrasts such artists as leave the truth to look after itself, and give the images they make, not real proportions but such as will appear beautiful (236A); in the latter case the creation only *seems* to follow the original, since the artist takes into account perspective rather than true proportions. The first type of the art of imitation may be given the name of Likeness-making (236B), whereas for the art which creates a Semblance, not a Likeness, the best name will be Semblance- making (236C)[1].

Apparently Plato considers this division of great importance for the purpose of

[1] Bluck is certainly right in rejecting (59–60) Cornford's suggestion (*ad loc.*) that we are concerned here with different 'grades of reality' and that the whole description of the Sophist as Imitator is meant to recall the attack on fine art as 'imitation' in *Republic*, X. In fact the distinction only intends to emphasise the 'unreality' of what the Sophist says.

"arresting the Sophist on the royal warrant of reason" (235B–C). For if the fellow should find some lurking-place among the subdivisions (not accomplished so far) of the art of imitation, one must follow hard upon him by continuously quartering the area in which he lurks until he is caught (235C2–4).

However, although at 235B8–9 the EV had remarked that *without further delay* one must quarter the ground by dividing the art of Image-making, he has to agree that even after making the distinctions he cannot clearly see the solution to the question he has put, viz. in which of the two arts the Sophist should be placed, since the fellow keeps on taking refuge in a class which defies exploration (*eis aporon eidos*; 236C9–D3). For that matter it is only after a remarkably long intermezzo (237A–264B) that the EV points out that one is justified in resuming the Division that had been interrupted, in order to make a full use of it in defining the true nature of the Sophist.

This intermezzo turns out to be of paramount importance to the search for the correct definition of that 'appearance-maker', who is called Sophist. Taking into account that it is this final Division which will enable us to catch the Sophist, we have reason to expect that the intermezzo aims at scrutinising the area that "baffles investigation" (236D2) and that, accordingly, the items discussed in the intermezzo are of decisive importance for clearing up the entire problem area covered by such notions as 'appearing', 'real being', 'not-being', whose lack of clarity is supposed to yield so many lurking-places for the Sophist. Thus the subject proper of our dialogue is to clear up this problem area rather than looking for the Sophist's true nature. The fellow is only the material theme of the dialogue to which he is good enough to lend his name. The ancient tradition seems to have been quite fortunate in hinting at the proper theme of the dialogue by adding the subtitle: *peri tou ontos*: "on 'what is' ". Modern scholarship too has to pay full attention to the discussions of the intermezzo. However, not only its doctrinal outcome is of importance, but also Plato's approach to the matter, since his very procedure reveals to us his most intimate philosophical presuppositions.

4.2. *What Should Be Understood By The Phrase 'what is not'?*

The main question of the intermezzo of 237A–264B is: how can there be such a thing as an 'image' or 'false appearance'? It obviously has a bearing on the ontological status of the transient world which is basically a world of appearances. The author's approach to the question is clearly what we may call a semantic one, as can be seen from the EV's introductory words:

> 236D9–237A4: We have reached an extremely difficult problem. Indeed, the expression 'this appears [or: seems] but is not' and, accordingly, the 'speaking something' without 'speaking true things' (*alêthê*), all this is, and always has been before, full of perplexity. It is extremely hard, Theaetetus, to see in what meaning (*hopôs eiponta*) ‹of the expression 'really being'› one should say, or think, that falsehoods really *are* (*ontôs einai*), without being caught in self-contradiction by the mere use of such words. — That statement then, is audacious enough to assume that 'what is not', *is*, for, otherwise, one could not speak of falsehood [literally: 'for falsehood could not be in another way'].

As to our translation at D10 '*the expression .... etc.*' it should be agreed that Plato points here to the fact that there is sometimes 'appearing (seeming) without being' (cf. Cornford's and Warrington's translations), but his using *touto* (instead of *ti*) in the phrase *to phainesthai touto* etc. makes it unavoidable to render the article by 'the expression', instead of '(the fact) that'. For that matter, Cornford and Warrington seem to be right in translating the resuming *panta tauta* (at E2) by 'all these expressions'. As for that, the expression meant here is referred to by the phrase 'that statement' at 237A3.

So the EV proposes to scrutinise the statement in question ('to subject the statement itself to a mild degree of torture'; 237B2). He starts with an investigation of the phrase 'what is not'. It is found at 237B7–242B5.

4.21. *On The Notion Of 'what is absolutely not'*

The first part of this section (237B7–239C8) deals with the notion of the 'totally unreal' (*to mêdamôs on*). We need not wonder that the Visitor from Elea energetically defends Parmenides of Elea's view that the 'totally unreal' is simply 'unthinkable and unnameable' (*frag.* 8, 15)[2]. The argument is accomplished in three stages:

(A) — 237B7–E7

To the question what this phrase 'what absolutely is not' can be applied to the EV answers:

> 237C7–D10: Well, this much is clear at any rate: one must not apply the phrase 'what is not'[3] to anything that *is* ‹...›; and since it cannot be applied to what *is*, neither can it properly be applied to a thing (*ti*), for it is obvious to us, I would think, that that attribute 'some' (*to ti touto to rhêma*)[4] is also always used of what *is*; indeed, it cannot possibly be said just by itself in naked isolation from everything that is, can it? — No. — Do you agree because you realise that whoever speaks of 'some' (*ti*) speaks of some one thing (*hen ge ti legein*)? — Yes. — Because you will admit that the word 'some' (*to ge ti*) signifies one thing, as the word 'some ones' [the Greek has the dual *tine* and the plural *tines*] signifies two or more things?

This unavoidably leads to the conclusion that he who speaks of what is not 'some thing' must be speaking of absolutely nothing (*pantapasi mêden legein*). Even the following reply should be rejected: 'the man is still talking about some subject (*Dutch*: 'heeft het ergens over'), even though it is 'nothing'. On the contrary, we must maintain that whoever sets about uttering the phrase 'not-being' (*phthengesthai mê on*) is not even talking at all (*oude legein*).

As is well known, the Greek phrases *mêden legein* and *legein ti* are ambiguous in meaning *both* 'to say nothing', and 'to say something' respectively, *and* 'to say nothing significant' or 'to talk nonsense', and 'to say something significant or important' respectively.

However, unlike Cornford, Bluck and others, I really doubt whether Plato wants to make use here of that ambiguity. As a matter of fact, the EV's last conclusion, which is presented as a climax, opposes 'speaking/saying' (*legein*) to just 'uttering sounds' (*phthengesthai*). Besides, taking the ambiguity to be intentional might weaken the proper force of the argument. In fact the ambiguity is quite irrelevant here and paying attention to it can only lead us away from the line of Plato's argument proper.

The argument seems to run as follows: the expression 'what is not' does not apply to any thing that *is* (237C7–8). Since, then, its designate is not a 'what is', it cannot be a thing either (C10–11), the expressions 'what is' and 'thing' being coextensive (D1–2). Indeed, the latter expression ('thing') must designate something in the domain of the things that are (D2–4).

So far about the *expression* 'what absolutely is not'. Next Plato resumes the argument from the viewpoint of the *user* of the phrase 'what absolutely is not'. He who speaks of a 'thing' or 'things', is speaking of some particular 'thing' or 'things' (D6–10). He who speaks of a 'non-thing' (*mê ti legonta*) speaks of nothing at all (*mêden legein*; E1–2). Therefore, one who uses the expression 'not-being' (*mê on*), does even not exercise the act of *saying* (*asserting*); in fact he is just 'uttering sounds' (E4–6).

Plato apparently approaches the matter by putting questions from the semantic point of view: to what can the *name* 'what is not' be applied (237B10–D5), and what happens to its *user*? (237D6–E6). So we have to interpret the passage from this angle. I am afraid, both Cornford and Bluck failed to see this.

Cornford seems to have been the victim of his acquaintance with the ambiguous use of *legein ti* in Greek. He thinks (*ad loc.*) that Plato's argument is hard to translate because the phrase *legein ti* is used in two ways (see above), (1) to 'speak of something' that your words refer to, and (2) 'to express a meaning' or say something significant as opposed to 'saying nothing' or 'talking nonsense' (*ouden legein*). But, he rightly adds, the ambiguity does not vitiate the argument. However, as I have argued before, there is no single reason to pay attention to the ambiguity, just because it is not relevant at all. As a matter of fact, having the 'talking nonsense' meaning of *ouden legein* in some way or other in his mind, Cornford gets on the wrong track by continuing (205):

> The inference will be that in the expression 'to say the thing that is not' in the sense of 'to say what is *false*' (his italics), but has some meaning, 'the thing that is not' cannot be absolute nonentity[5]. We must find some other interpretation of the words. A false statement conveys meaning to another person and refers to something. How this can be, must be considered later; all that is established here is that any statement (true or false) which conveys meaning cannot refer to absolute nonentity'.

It should be borne in mind, however, that Plato is not speaking *here* about state-

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[2] For the interpretation of this important fragment, see also De Rijk [1983], 39–47.
[3] It is most important to recall that at 237B–239C the phrase '*to mê on*' ('what is not') should be taken for *to mêdamôs on* ('what absolutely is not'); see 237B7–8.
[4] For *rhêma*, see below, nr. 13.13.
[5] Cornford's "cannot be *not* absolute nonentity" must be a misprint.

ments or 'something which is false'. Of course, the expression 'what absolutely is not' (*to mêdamôs on*) is mostly used in statements and it is true that Plato had started the discussion (at 236E) with the general question about the possibility of saying or thinking falsehoods. But (1) as appears from the *Cratylus* (see below, no 15.1) Plato also knows of the truth and falsehood of *names*, and (2) the phrase 'what is not' is discussed here as an expression just taken by itself. Plato does not deal here with the bearers of the truth and falsity of propositions but with the referents ('significates') of just one particular incomplex expression, viz. 'what is not'. In assuming that the inference will concern false *statement* (see quotation) Cornford most unfortunately jumps over the true purpose of Plato's argument at 237B–E.

Bluck suggests (62–3) that the argument will be easier to grasp, though not materially altered, if we assume that Plato assimilated to each other the existential and the copulative senses of 'to be' that for him are both embraced by the term 'being'. So he assumes that 'what is not' here means 'what does not exist *or have any character*' (his italics). His interpretation of the passage is in fact quite acceptable. But his starting from a supposed assimilation of the existential and the copulative senses of 'is' seems far from felicitous. Speaking about the existential and copulative senses of 'is' ('to be') implies analysing the passage from the syntactic viewpoint. However, Plato's special point is no matter of syntax, but of semantics. What counts is not the syntactic function of 'is' but its meaning. This should be noticed at the outset, since confusing these different viewpoints may cause some more serious mistakes[6], as it did in fact as far as the famous passage on 'what is' and 'what is not' is concerned (see below, 9.1 on 251B ff.).

The passage under discussion seems to contain Plato's basic views and also allows a most fruitful penetration into his specific approach to the matter. It will be worth going through it thoroughly (cf. above):
— 'what absolutely is not' does not apply to anything that exists, that is, 'what is not' taken as a zero *intension* (Bluck's *essence* or *character*) implies 'what is not' taken as a zero *extension* or, empty class, too (237C7–8)
— zero extension implies the absence of any particular intension, such as x, y, z, and so on (C10–11), and that is because:
— 'existent' = 'thing', that is, every existent[7] exists as some 'thing', e.g. x, y, z, and so on (D1–2)
— 'thing' = 'some *being*' (D2–4).

[6] Also Gallop's view of *einai* in Plato is quite anachronistic [1975:92–3]. In point of fact all those interpreters start from the viewpoint of syntactics rather than semantics which betrays their failing to see that Plato's main concern is about metaphysics, not logic or language as such. He continually discusses Being, not different uses, or applications, of the verb 'is'.
[7] I use 'existent' for 'existent thing'.

The second part of the first argument which is found at 237D6–E6 and deals with what the user of the phrase 'what absolutely is not' gets involved with (see above, *ad loc.*) may be summed up as follows:
— 'to speak of a 'thing' is to speak of some *one* thing, as 'a thing' stands for one thing and 'things' for two or more' (D6–10), that is, using the name 'thing' (or: 'things') implies signifying one thing or more. Cornford seems to be more fortunate in translating "'something' *stands for* (italics mine) one thing, as 'some things' stands for two or more" than Warrington in rendering it as: "'something' *denotes* (italics mine) one thing ..... etc.", since in the former part of the formula, the phrase *sêmeion einai* (literally: 'to be a sign' = 'to signify') certainly does not exclude *con*notation, i.e. the signification of a Form. In other words: the intension 'thing' (to be taken, of course, as intension x, or intension y, and so on; see above, at 237D1–4) may either be some Form taken by itself (i.e. intension X, Y, and so on) or that Form as partaken of[8] and found in its particular instances, x, y, and so on (i.e. the Form taken in its immanent status)[9]. Hence it follows that Plato is here dealing indiscriminately with what is nowadays distinguished as connotation (intension) and denotation (extension)[10].
— speaking of a 'non-thing' (*mê ti*) is speaking of no thing (*mêden)* at all (E1–2). That is, using a zero intension implies speaking of an empty class (zero extension).
— using the expression *mê on* ('not being', in the sense of 'absolute not being' or 'absolute non-entity'; see above, n. 3) amounts to just uttering sounds (E4–6).

From this argument the conclusion may be drawn that Plato uses the name '*on*' ('being', or: 'what is') indiscriminately for 'existing' and 'having any nature (character, ousia)'. For that matter it is quite obvious that speaking of what has no character at all would be speaking of nothing. Bluck rightly remarks (62) that, in fact, if one tried to talk about 'it' one would be reduced to silence. However, when carrying forward his own line of thought, he seems to be slightly mistaken:

62–3: That Plato should have assimilated these two senses of 'to be'[11] is explicable if he assumed that what exists must have or be a character, and that what has or is a character must exist — that essence and existence go together; and that he is here assimilating them is suggested not only by the fact that he clearly does so later on, but also by the third of the present three arguments [at 238D4–239B3; see below, *ad loc.*]

[8] Compare the numerous passages in the earlier dialogues where Socrates in his search for the 'Immutable' asks whether virtue, justice, piety *etc.* is some thing ('*ti*'); e.g. *Hipp. maior*, 287C5; *Protag.*, 324D8; which may be compared with the specifically Platonic usage found in *Phaedo*, 64C2; *Rep.* V, 476C10, *etc.* For the different view of *eidos* with Socrates and Plato, see above, 2.2.
[9] For this important distinction, see above, 2.42 and below, 9.1.
[10] As an interpreter I prefer to speak of 'indiscrimination' ('absence of a distinction') instead of ascribing some 'confusion' to Plato. In point of fact, Plato did not need such a (modern) distinction in order to make his metaphysical views perfectly clear. Our use of that distinction may lead to confusion about Plato's proper intentions. See also below, 14.2, 14.3, n. 16.
[11] For Bluck's incorrect view on this score, see above, 11.1, n. 4; 15.5.

I must agree, I may seem hypercritical, but, in my view, one cannot go along with Bluck in assuming that Plato should have asserted that 'essence and existence go together'. What he in fact asserts is that *what is expressed* (or *conceived of*) as existent must be *conceived of* as an essence (as having or being any character). Though Plato does definitely hold the corresponding ontological views, we should remind ourselves, again and again, that he deals with the problem of not-being from the viewpoint of the *expression* 'what absolutely is not' and the *user* of that expression. The EV had chosen his starting-point for the discussion most carefully from the semantic area by inviting Theaetetus in the following words: "Tell me, do we have any hesitation in *uttering the phrase* 'what absolutely is not'? — Well, tell the company to what *this phrase can be applied*" (237B7–C2).

Now, if we assume that Plato thinks of (what was distinguished afterwards, especially in the Middle Ages, as) 'essence' and 'existence' in terms of 'what *is conceived of* (and *expressed*) as having a character' and 'what *is conceived of* as existing', the later discussion of 'what *is* but is not wholly real' (239C–242B) could be better understood. Indeed, it is not 'existence' that should be qualified, but our notion of it (rather, our use of the name 'being'). So the way of being that belongs to the world of *appearances* is bound to be discussed thoroughly.

Finally, what Bluck (61–2) takes as a possible retort to the stringency of the first part of Plato's argument (237B7–E7), is nothing of the sort. He wonders what Plato would have said about our talking about mermaids and other imaginary composite creatures. The answer is: *nothing*. For in speaking about things *named* or *conceived of* as having *any* character and having *any* existence, mermaids are no stumbling-blocks to him, for they can be *conceived of* as existing. Bluck's objection does not seem to be to the point, not to Plato's point, to be sure.

(B) — 238A5–C8

The EV's second argument runs as follows: since it seems to be wrong to attach either plurality or unity in number to what absolutely is not, how, then, can anyone *use the phrase* 'things which are not' (*ta mê onta*) or 'what is not' (*to mê on*)[12], or even conceive of such things in his mind at all, apart from number? (238B6–8). Indeed, to speak of 'things that are not' or 'what is not' is to attribute respectively plurality or unity to them (C1–5). But to attach some thing that exists (such as 'number') to what is not is not correct (C6–8; cp. A7–8). Then the EV concludes:

238C9–12: You see, then, what follows: one cannot rightfully utter the phrase '*to mê on auto kath' hauto*' or speak, or conceive of, *to mê on auto kath' hauto*; it is unconceivable (*adianoêton*), not to be spoken of (*arrhêton*) or uttered (*aphthegkton*) or expressed (*alogon*).

Cornford rightly remarks [206, n. 1] that *arrhêton* means that there is nothing for the words to refer to and *alogon* is not 'irrational' but 'incapable of being expressed in discourse'. He renders the phrase '*to mê on auto kath' hauto*' as 'that which just simply is not' and takes the phrase equivalent to the *to mêdamôs on* of 237B7–8 (see *op. cit.*, 203). No doubt, materially he is right in doing so; both phrases stand for

[12] See my remark above, note 6.

the 'totally unreal'. However, there seems to be a formal difference between the two phrases. The former (*to mêdamôs on*) refers to the totally unreal as 'in no way' (*mêdamôs*) existing. To my mind, the phrase *to mê on auto kath' hauto* means 'what *all by itself* is not', that is 'what owes, so to speak, its not-being all to itself', 'what is not, in its own right', as opposed to all those things which 'are not' in some respect, and owe their kind of not-being to something else (in *being not* something else; see below at 256D ff.). The latter are discussed at 239C–242B and can be considered, in point of fact, the proper subject of the main discussion of the *Sophist* (239C–264B).

Bluck[13] has (63): 'that which is not' all by itself'[14], without any properties'. He seems to mean by this: 'that which is not, *taken* as such, without any properties'. However, that which is not cannot have any property at all (as is explicitly put forward by Plato's argument under discussion). Indeed, to take something *as such* presupposed it having properties (accidental features).

(C) — 238D4–239C8

The EV introduces his third argument against using the phrase 'what absolutely is not' as a difficulty that is even worse than the foregoing: the very phrases he has just been using show that 'what is not' reduces even one who would refute it to such straits that as soon as he sets about doing so he is compelled to contradict himself (238D4–7). For after having stated that 'what is not' could never partake in unity or plurality, he is speaking of it as *one* thing: 'that (thing) which is not' ('*the* non-existent', *to mê on*), and of its being unmentionable *etc.*, which implies an infringement of what had been agreed upon at 238A7–8, viz. not to attach 'something which *is*' (*ti tôn ontôn*) to 'what is not'. So if we are to speak strictly, we ought not to determine it as either one thing or many or even to call it 'it' (*auto*), as the use even of that appellation (*prosrhêsin*) implies naming it with the character of unity (*henos eidei*; 238D9–239A11).

The EV concludes the three arguments in support of the view that, after all, using the phrase 'what absolutely is not' is senseless, with the remark that the Sophist cannot be chased from his lurking-place, unless someone will succeed in finding a correct formula to describe 'what absolutely is not', but without attributing to it either being (*ousian*) or unity or plurality (239B7–10).

Summing up the discussion of 237B7–239C8 (our items A, B, C) the following statements can be made:

[13] He is quite right in rejecting Moravcsik's really awkward rendering [1962:26] 'Non-existence itself'.

[14] The text on p. 63 reads: "But *to mê on auto kath' hauto* (238C9) undoubtedly means simply 'that which is not' [*notice* the closure of the inverted commas here] all by itself, without any properties", so that the phrase 'all by itself' seems to determine the verb 'means' rather than the phrase 'is not'. I suppose that the inverted commas are not well positioned, and I would close them after *itself* or *properties*. For the correct rendering of *kath' hauto*, see below, 9.4.

1. on Plato's view 'existent' = 'thing' = 'some being'; see above, *sub A*
2. the name '*on*' ('being', or 'what is') is indiscriminately used by Plato for 'existing' and 'having any nature' (character), (*ousia*)
3. accordingly, what is *conceived of* (and *named*) as having a character, and what is *conceived of* as existing go together in Plato's view
4. as 'that which absolutely is not' is, in point of fact, 'that which all by itself (*auto kath' hauto*) is not' it may be opposed to 'what in some respect is not', which is, so to speak, a '*qualified* not-being'
5. the phrase 'what absolutely is not' implies the exclusion of all kinds of qualified being (such as 'being one', 'being many', 'being unconceivable', and so on), and, accordingly, must be a zero intension, or: empty description. The descriptive force of the phrase is indeed none
6. as to its indicative force, no particular can be designated by it as a result of the strict impossibility of attaching 'what absolutely is not' as a characteristic to anything that is (Plato has *tôn ontôn epi ti* (237C7–8), literally, 'to something of the beings'). So the phrase's indicative force is none as well
7. the phrase's lack of descriptive and indicative forces is the very reason why it is bound to imply a contradiction and involve its user in contradicting himself.

Cornford (208) is quite right in pointing out that in all this section on 'what absolutely is not' Plato is confirming Parmenides and accepting his warning: 'Hold back thy thought from this way of inquiry' (*fr.* 7, 8). In fact, Plato here sticks to Parmenides' doctrine that 'what (absolutely) is not' is inconceivable and cannot be spoken of either. It should be borne in mind, however, that Plato's support for the Parmenidean thesis could only be given in that he took Parmenides' *to mê on* ('what is not') to stand for *to mêdamôs on* ('what absolutely is not', literally 'what in no way is'). In order to save the appearance of the transient world (which as we should bear in mind had been considered by Parmenides unreal and untrustworthy[15]) the Visitor from Elea must not scruple to become a 'murderer of his own father' (241D3).

4.22. *On The Association Of 'what is not' With Likeness And Falsehood*

So far the EV and Theaetetus have not been very successful in catching the Sophist. The former now remarks that if we resume the characterisation of the Sophist as a 'semblance-maker', we will be asked what on earth we mean by 'semblance' (239C9–D4). Theaetetus tries to define 'semblance' as 'another thing of the same kind, copied from *the genuine thing*' (*to alêthinon*; 240A8). The EV tries to draw a somewhat sharper profile of this definition:

240A9–C5: Do you mean by 'of the same kind' another genuine thing or what else? — No, not genuine, of course, but something like the genuine thing. — Meaning by 'genuine' *really being* (*ontôs on*)? — Quite so. — Well, what is not genuine is the opposite of genuine? — Of course. — Then, if you are to call 'what is like' *not genuine*, you call it, by implication, *not-really-being*. — Yes, but it *is* in a way, yet (*all' esti ge mên pôs*). — But not in the genuine way, you say. — No, indeed, except that it really [= genuinely, according to B3] *is* a likeness. — Therefore, although it is not *really* being, yet it really *is* what we call a likeness? — 'What is not' does seem, I am afraid, to be interwoven with 'what is' in some such way, and quite strange it is. — Quite strange, indeed. You see that our hydra-headed Sophist has us got into a fix again, this time by his interweaving 'what is' and 'what is not', compelling us to admit quite reluctantly that what is not *is* in a way (*einai pôs*).

The EV foresees that they will be involved in self-contradiction, again, (240C7–8), viz. in asserting that 'what is not' *is* in a way. So far this is considered to be a flat contradiction by the EV, in no lesser degree, indeed, than the contradictions mentioned in the previous argument (238D ff.). That this *symplokê* is quite acceptable, however, appeared as early as in this stage of the discussion. Surely the likeness *x* is not the genuine thing *X* of which it is a likeness, but it *is*, undoubtedly, since it *is* a likeness. Of course, 'x *being* (x) and *not being* (y) at the same time' is not self-contradictory, but Plato wants to stress that Parmenides' view of Being as quite massive Being-ness does not allow such subtle distinctions: to him something either *is* or *is not*. Thus, from the Parmenidean viewpoint, there must be a contradiction.

The EV explains this case of self-contradiction in terms of false opinion and one's uttering it (240D1–4). He defines false opinion (*pseudês doxa*) as thinking things contrary to the things that are, to the extent that it is, in fact, thinking the things that are not (*ta mê onta doxazein*; D6–9). If, on the other hand, we stick to our charge against the Sophist as one who effects false thinking in our minds (see 240D1–2), we cannot but insist that there *is* false opinion, and, by implication, are compelled to assert that false opinion which was defined as 'what is not', yet *is*. And in the EV's view (241A–B) that is another flat contradiction.

It seems to be useful to follow the argument at 240E–241B more closely. The EV first submits the phrase 'thinking the things that are not' to a closer inspection (240E1–241A1). Does it mean thinking that the things that are not, are not, or that the things, that definitely[16] are not, in some way are? Theaetetus replies that it must at least mean thinking that the things that are not, in some way *are*; otherwise even the smallest error would be impossible (E1–4). Besides, the phrase means thinking that the things that certainly are, are definitely not (E5–9).

Next he comes to speak about 'false account' (*logos pseudês*). It is described as 'stating that the things that are, are not', and that 'the things that are not, are' (240E10–241A1)[17].

Well, this is what the Sophist will deny. He will say that in asserting that falsehoods are in thoughts and in accounts we are compelled, again, to attribute 'what is' (viz. being somehow) to 'what is not' (viz. falsehood), and this is against the

[15] See De Rijk [1983], 30–3; 37–9; 45–7.

[16] My rendering of *ta mêdamôs onta* (240E2). The phrase cannot mean here (as at 237B–239C) 'what absolutely is not', i.e. 'sheer non-entity' (cf. Cornford, 213, n. 1). The word *mêdamôs* seems here to stand for 'certainly not' and emphasise those things *not* being.

[17] For the interpretation of this definition, see below, 15.21–15.25.

admission made earlier, (at 238A7–8; E8–9), and even amounts to a flat contradiction of it (241A8–B3).

So far the interlocutors have only been at pains to make clear what one is to understand by 'likeness' (at 239D–240C) and 'falsehood' (at 240D–241B). The attempt has proved to be abortive time and again, because of the continuous danger of contradicting oneself. So the same must be said of the association of 'what is' with likeness and falsehood.

Chapter five

ON CURRENT VIEWS ABOUT 'WHAT IS'

5.0. A fresh start should be made. It will involve a sort of parricide, as it will be unavoidable "to put to the question that pronouncement of father Parmenides and establish by main force that 'what is not', in a way, *is* and, conversely, that 'what is', in a way *is not*".

The EV sets out to return to the semantic approach proper, which had proved to be so profitable in the discussion about 'what absolutely is not'. He will look for the precise meanings of the *names* or *appellations* so readily applied to Being by different schools, such as 'is' (*estin*), 'have come to be' (*gegonen*), or 'is coming to be' (*gignetai*), 'many things' ('plurality') or 'one thing' ('unity') or 'two', and especially the name 'what is not' (*to mê on*). The last name makes the Eleatic Visitor heave an ironical sigh: "when I was younger I used to think I understood quite clearly whenever someone was speaking of that which is now puzzling us: 'what is not (*to mê on*); but now you see how completely perplexed we are about that" (243A–B).

He intends to ask the old Master, Parmenides and everyone else who has set out to state the number and quality of the things there are (cfr. 242C4–6) what they mean precisely in using their technical expressions (243B). To be more specific, what exactly is meant by the phrase 'what is' (*to on*)? He had already suggested earlier (243C2–5; cfr. 246A1–2 and 250E6–7) that possibly our minds are equally confused about 'what is' as they were about 'what is not', in spite of our claim that 'what is' does not worry us and that we understand the latter phrase whenever someone utters it. So the correct understanding of 'what is' will be the pivotal enterprise, as is clearly seen by Theaetetus, who in fact suggests (243D3–5): "Of course, it is about 'what is' that[1] we ought to start our investigation and ask what

[1] The Greek text has the phrase *to on* right at the head of the sentence; hence my emphasis in rendering it. Generally speaking the significative and material uses of words are often found indiscriminately together in Greek usage. Compare what is said about this in De Rijk [1980], 35; and below, 9.32, n. 7.

on earth (*ti poth'*) the users of the phrase 'what is' think it signifies". The EV apparently finds it a marvellous idea (see esp. 243A4–B4).

First they who posit that the All (*to pan*) is more than one thing (the 'Pluralists') are questioned, then those who assert that the All is one thing (the 'Monists').

5.1. *The Pluralists On 'what is'* (242C–244B)

The EV starts with the Pluralists. Those, for example, who say that Hot and Cold *are* all things, should be asked:

> 243D9–244A2: What exactly does this utterance convey that you apply to both when you say that both *are* or each of them *is*? How are we to understand that (use of)[2] 'being' (*to einai touto*)? Are we to suppose it is a third thing alongside the other two, and that the All is no longer, as you say, two things, but three? For surely you don't give the name 'being' (*on*) to one of the two and then say that both *are* in the same way. For in that case there would be only one thing (either one or other of the two) and not two. — Well, then, do you intend to give the name 'being' to the pair of them? — But that again, we shall object, would clearly amount to speaking of the two things as one.

Plato's point obviously is that 'Being' (*on*) has a meaning distinct from the meanings of 'Hot' and 'Cold', as Cornford rightly remarks (219). It should be noticed that he sticks to his notion of being which prevails in the earlier discussions: 'being' stands indiscriminately for 'existing' and 'having any nature' (see above, 4.21). In giving the present argument which clearly opposes the descriptive force of 'Being' to those of 'Hot' and 'Cold', Plato, in point of fact, assigns to the name 'Being' its own descriptive force. Therefore, from now onwards, we may understand Plato's 'being' as standing indiscriminately for 'existing' and 'having a certain nature'.

Of course, this semantic analysis is wholly concerned with the descriptive forces of the names 'being', 'hot', and 'cold'. Their respective indicative forces are not considered at all, since the two (or indeed three) names are supposed to indicate 'all things that there are' (*ta panta*, 243D9) or 'the All' (*to pan*, 243E3). So the whole argument is concerned with the formal relations between the intensions 'being', 'hot', and 'cold' or, ontologically speaking, those between the respective natures of 'Being', 'Hot' and 'Cold' as found in the things that there are.

If the Pluralists identify the intension 'being' with that of, say, 'hot', than there will be only one nature, viz. Being = Hot (of course, if they identify 'Being' with 'Cold', there will be only the nature Being = Cold). Further, if they identify the intension 'being' with that of 'hot-and-cold', then, the only nature will be that of 'Being' = 'Hot-and-Cold'; and, then, there will be only one nature, not two, as they hold. The only way they can avoid the fatal inference that there should be only one formal principle ('thing', taken as 'nature'), is to accept 'Being' as a third nature. Accordingly, the doctrine of only *two* principles is quite untenable as it leads to flat contradictions ('if only two, then only one'; *or*: 'if only two, than three').

I am afraid, Bluck is on the wrong track in suggesting (70–1) that Plato intends to say that if the Pluralists identify Being with either Hot or Cold, the other of the two cannot be said to *be*; for if Being is identified with Hot, for example, then to say 'Cold is' will amount to saying 'Cold is hot', which would be absurd, because Hot and Cold are *ex hypothesi* 'things' whose characters are opposed to one another. He tries to support this interpretation by referring to a similar argument (at 250A–B) but recognises that his interpretation reads more into the EV's words than could have been intended. — Well, I am sure that Bluck *is* reading too much into our text. In this stage of the discussion *statement* is not involved (as it is at 250A–B), but only the problem of grasping the true nature of 'things that there are' in giving them the correct, essential *name*. It is in fact name-giving that appears to get stuck and, by that, our capacity to give a substantial characterisation of things there are seems to be rather illusory. Predication, however, is not concerned so far.

It is easily understood that in this passage no answer is offered by the Pluralists. For Plato's sake they need not. He can make his point perfectly clear by showing that 'Being' is a nature ('intension') quite distinct from 'Hot' and 'Cold' (or some other such pair; see 243D9).

5.2. *The Monists On 'what is'* (244B–245D)

Next the Monists come up for discussion ("all those who say that the All is one"; 244B6). The EV tries to discover what they mean by the phrase 'what is' (*to on*). Of course, especially[3] Parmenides and his followers are meant here. Their view deserves more attention since their rigid notion of 'what is', which amounts to a complete identification of Being and One, has turned out to be the bottle-neck that hampered the previous discussion.

That the EV's approach to the problem is a semantic one is quite obvious; his terminology leaves no doubt at all.

The first part of his argument (244B9–D13) may be summarised as follows. The Monists assert that only the One is (244B9–10); but, at the same time, they call 'Being' ('what is') a 'thing' (B12–13). Well, one may ask, then, whether 'what is' is the same 'thing' as that which they call 'one'; if so, they would be applying two names to the same thing (C1–2). In fact the Monist's answer is to the effect that he agrees that it is ridiculous to admit that there are two names after positing that there is no more than one thing (244C9–10). For that matter, it would be definitely ridiculous to allow anyone to assert that there is some name which lacks its own reference, because to assume the name as something different from its 'thing' ('referent') is surely to speak of some two 'things'.

This passage (244C12–D4) needs closer inspection. The crux seems to lie in the phrase *logon ouk an echon* at D1. Cornford and Warrington take (*ad loc.*) it as loosely

[2] The EV's question is both about that kind of being and the Pluralists' use of 'to be'. See the previous note.

[3] The argument equally applies to any other Monist. See Bluck [1975], 82.

determining the *hôs* clause ('that there is some name') and translate: 'when that would be [Warrington: *is*] inexplicable'. Bluck rightly remarks (72) that the participle *echon* goes with *onoma* and renders 'since it [the name] could not explain itself'. I would prefer to take *echon* attributively: 'some name which would be lacking (*ouk an echon*) sense', that is, would be a name that has no referent at all. (For the sense of the phrase *logon echein*, see below, nr. 7.22, ad *Theaet.*, 201E2). For the Monist is supposed, for this moment, to assert that the name 'being' does not refer to the 'One', and accordingly, has no referent at all (the One being the only existing 'thing').

So the purport of C12–D4 seems to be this: the Monist cannot rebut our previous objection ("it is ridiculous to posit *two* names applying to only *one* thing") by asserting that the name 'being' has no referent (to the effect, indeed, that there is only *one* real name). Surely, that would imply that the Monist nonetheless contradicts himself in assuming *two* entities, again, viz. the entity, 'name' and the entity, 'one thing'. Bluck seems to be mistaken, therefore, in remarking (73) that the argument "simply suggests that if names exist they must designate things other than themselves". To my mind, the only thing our passage tries to accomplish with a good deal of logical perspicacity is to argue that the Monist would be involved in self-contradiction if he were to attempt to avoid the ridiculous assumption of 'One thing–two names' by declaring the name 'being' to be an *empty* one, for in separating, then, the 'thing' conceived of (*pragma*) from that empty name he would be faced, again, with two 'things'. To be sure, Plato *is* of the opinion that names must designate things other than themselves (see e.g. *Rep.* X, 596A5–B11 and *Laws* X, 985D ff.; see below, 14.1), but that is not the point he wants to make now[4]. Here his only concern is to make clear that whoever, as a Monist (and, accordingly contrary to Plato's own opinion) assumes (albeit just for the sake of argument) the existence of an empty name (*onoma ti logon ouk an echon*, 244D1) involves himself in self-contradiction.

The EV then tightens the knot of his argument: "if he maintains, on the other hand, that the name is the same as its *pragma*, either he will be compelled to say it is not the name of anything, or if he says it *is* the name of something, the name will turn out to be merely a name of a name and of nothing else" (244D6–9).

The Monists either must accept the view of 'two names–one thing' (244C1–2; 9–10), yet as Monists they cannot accept that there are *two* of anything[5]. *Or* they have to assume the name 'being' as an empty one, which would nonetheless make it a thing distinct from the One (C12–D4); and that is unacceptable to a Monist. *Or* they take the name 'being' as identical with its *pragma* ('the One'); but that would also be impossible, because that name being identical with its 'thing' (the One) would imply either that it had no referent (for 'things' have no referents), or that it referred to a name as its referent (the 'thing' One being identical with 'name').

[4] *A fortiori* Cornford is wrong in thinking (220) that the EV's argument presupposed Plato's own view that names refer to Forms.

[5] Of course, the objection is not to their *calling* one thing by two names, as is rightly pointed out by Bluck (72).

Thus Plato expresses the Monists' dilemma from a semantic angle. They have no satisfactory answer to his question of what they exactly mean by the name 'what is' (*to on*). So far they seem not to have the slightest idea of semantics and cannot even justify their use of their own favourite 'names'. To use Bluck's words (73): they have overlooked what our use of names implies.

The continuation of the argument is found at 244D14–245D10. Bluck is rightly in arguing (73) that this passage is better regarded as simply a continuation or second part of a single argument, rather than an entirely separate one. He suggests that misunderstanding on this score has arisen as a result of the assumption that the EV is talking about Unity, Wholeness and Being, whereas in fact he is merely continuing to talk about the *names* used in reference to what the Monists regarded as 'what is', the 'One' and 'the Whole'. The first two have already been discussed and the EV now introduces the third for a similar semantic treatment.

This part of the argument starts from the Monists' assertion that 'the Whole' is distinct from 'the One that is' (244D14–16). He thus opposed the Whole (*to holon*) to Being and One taken together. Well, he goes on, if it is a whole, it must certainly have parts. In that case the Whole consisting of parts must be affected by 'the One', to the extent that it is a *sum* or whole. But what is in this condition (*to peponthos tauta*; 245A5) cannot itself be just 'the One' (*to hen auto*), since the genuine One, by definition, must be altogether without parts, a requirement to which 'the Whole' does not answer (244E2–245B2).

For that matter, it should be noticed that the expression *to hen auto* means 'exactly the One', 'nothing but the One'. The EV points to the formal distinction between 'the Whole' and 'the One' which remains, even if one is to identify the two indicatively (denotatively) by saying that in fact the Whole is a unified whole ('sum of parts'). Cornford's 'Unity itself', Warrington's 'absolute Unity' and Bluck's 'the One itself' all seem to (incorrectly) imply that Plato is speaking about some pure Form ('....itself'). This may, however, be confronted with Bluck's (correct) remark (79) that 'to holon' never means 'Wholeness', but 'the Whole'.

Next the EV goes on to ask whether 'what is' (*to on*), since it has been affected by 'the One', will therefore be one-and-whole, or we should say that 'what is' is not a whole at all (245B4–6). This appears to be a hard question. In order to fully understand it, one should remember that in the previous discussion 'the One' has been associated with 'the Whole' (as was actually done by the Monists themselves). Thus the manner in which the argument that follows is to be made explicit is clear: when 'what is' has been so affected as to be 'one' in a way, it will evidently not be the same as the One; and, accordingly, the sum of being ('the Whole') will be more than one (245B7–9), which would make the monistic thesis quite untenable. If, on the other hand, 'what is' is not a whole (as a result of its having been affected by the One[6]), but the whole as such *is*, that 'what is' turns out to fall

[6] Bluck seems to be perfectly right in arguing (84) that in the phrase 'being affected by that character' (*to peponthenai to hyp' ekeinou pathos*) *ekeinou* refers to the One and he rightly sees an allusion to 245B4–5: "will 'what is' as it has been affected by the One be one-and-whole?".

short of itself (245C1–3). And so, on this line of argument, he continues (C5–9), 'what is' being deprived of itself, will be evidently, 'what is not' ('not-being'; *ouk on*; 245C6)[7]. Next, the EV draws the same awkward inference as was drawn before (at 245B9–10): "once more the sum of things will be more than one, since 'what is' and 'the Whole' have each acquired their own separate natures" (see Bluck, 75 and 86).

The argument is continued, then, on the assumption (taken from 245B6) that 'the whole in no way *is*' (245C11). Well, if so, the same fate befalls 'what is'[8] and, in addition to its not being, even its incapacity of becoming 'what is' (C11–D3). The last inference is explained (D4–6): "what has come into being has always come into being as a whole, so that if you do not count 'the whole' among the things that *are*, you have no right to speak of being (*ousia*) or coming-into-being as be-ing" (*ousan*). A final conclusion is drawn (245D8–10) from the assumption that the whole is not at all: "Again, what is not a whole cannot even be of a definite quantity[9], for whatever is of a definite quantity by necessity is a whole of that quantity, whatever it may be". Apparently the Ancients' *horror infiniti* was sufficient to make them detest such an inference.

5.3. *The Semantic Import Of Plato's Treatment Of The Monists*

Let us try now to sum up the semantical import of the whole passage on the Monists (244B9–245D10). As has been remarked already, the passage falls into two parts. The introductory part (244B9–D9) starts with the 'two names–One thing' dilemma (244C1–2; 9–10) and deduces some bizarre inferences concerning the practical side of the Monists' use of names. All possible ways of refuge are blocked up (see above, 5.2).

(a) 244C1–2; 9–10: the argument takes the names autonymously, i.e. in their materiality, as *two* entities, and this assumption conflicts with Monism.
(b) C12–D4: if the name 'being' is an *empty* name, it still remains an entity distinct from the One. Again the name is taken autonymously and the same conclusion will follow.
(c) D6–9: if the *name* 'being' = *pragma* ('the One'), then the name is no real name and merely a name of a name. So there is something seriously wrong in Monistic semantics (their use of names).

In what was previously labelled as the continuation of the argument (244D14–245D10; see above, 5.2) some objections are raised concerning the descriptive forces of the names used. In fact it exposes a series of inconsistencies and awkward implications which inevitably follow from the use of the names, 'being', 'one', and 'whole'. As a matter of fact, when taken as descriptions (or if you want: from the viewpoint of their descriptive forces) these names are monstrously confusing.
(d) 244E2–245B2: 'what is unified' ≠ 'the One'. The descriptive forces of 'unified' and 'one as such' are distinguished. It should be noticed that, even if the name 'unified' is given the same indicative force as the name 'One' (in saying that the One is in matter of fact a unified sum of parts), yet their descriptive forces still remain distinct. Or, to say it in another way: if 'the unified' is taken as materially identical with 'the One' (in saying, again, that the One actually is a unified sum of parts), the two still are distinct 'things' from the formal point of view. (For a similar approach of the problems concerning being, see below, 6.3).
(e1) 245B4–5; 7–9: does the description 'thing unified' include the description 'one-and-whole'? The answer runs as follows: 'thing unified' ≠ the 'One'; 'whole' ≠ 'One'; therefore thing unified ≠ 'one-and-whole'.
(e2) 245C1–3: if 'what is' ≠ 'whole' as such; and 'whole' *is*; then 'what is' = 'what is not'. Plato obviously is in keeping here with his own view of 'being' = 'having a certain nature' (see above, 4.21 and *Index* s.v.). On this assumption (which takes what we call 'existence' as 'being of a certain nature, to the extent that 'existence' is on a par with 'being-stone', 'being-man', and so on), there is no fallacy in his argument. As a matter of fact Plato here strongly links up the indicative and descriptive uses, as one is certainly allowed to do. Later on we shall return to this view (see below, 7.1).
(e3) 245C5–9: 'what is' and 'the whole' have separate natures, that is, taken as descriptions these names are distinct.
(f1) 245C11–D3: if 'whole' = 'not being' (or: 'what is not'), then 'what is' = 'what is not'. Here, again, Plato blends description and indication (denotation).
(f2) 245D4–6: 'being not a whole' implies 'being not capable of becoming'.
(f3) 245D8–10: 'Being not a whole' implies 'being indefinite'.

We will find the same approach of the problems in the next discussions of the dialogue.

As Bluck rightly remarks (82), in attempting the task of disproving Parmenides' dictum and showing that what *is not* in some sense *is* and that what *is* in a way *is not*, the EV has begun by considering the nature of 'what is', and has first turned to those existing theories that maintain that there is a specific number of 'things that are', whether a plurality or only one. He has shown that Pluralists and Monists alike have been inconsistent and self-contradictory in using the names which are so pivotal to their theories: 'Hot-Cold', ('Two'), 'One', 'Being', 'Whole'. The EV has apparently exercised some restraint in singling out the perplexing difficulties in those theories, for he winds up this part of the discussion

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[7] The phrase *ouk on*, being the grammatical predicate (which is put at the head of the sentence to give it due stress; hence my "it should be noticed"), could also be rendered '*a* non-being', '*a* 'what is not'', such that one may translate: "'what is' will belong, then, to the domain of not-being".
[8] Viz. that it *is not*. The Greek phrase "this same befalls 'what is' (*tauta tauta hyparchei tôi onti*)" means indiscriminately "the same awkward character of not-being will be its fate" and "this same awkward conclusion will apply". Notice that the English phrase 'the same befalls' is equally ambiguous in this respect.
[9] I would prefer Warrington's ambiguous *quantity* (cfr. Dies: *quantité*) to Cornford's and Bluck's *number*. Numerical infinity may indeed be considered more offensive to the Ancient mind than spatial infinity, but its immediate (unpleasant) result is the Whole's *spatial* infinity. — For the meaning of the objection, see also Bluck, 81.

with the remark (245D–E) that countless other difficulties, each hopelessly insoluble, will arise if you say that 'what is' is either two things or only one. Theaetetus is very much impressed and does not hesitate a second over joining that pessimistic view (245E3–5).

However, Plato has not confined himself to criticising other philosophers. He has also made his own view of 'what is' ('being') perfectly clear, since this view is the backbone of his criticism. For the moment it may be summed up in two points (see also above, 5.2).

1. the name '*on*' ('what is' or 'being') means some thing distinct from the other basic qualifications assigned to 'things that are' ('One', 'Whole', *etc.*). It cannot be stressed enough that the significate of the name '*on*' is not the *concept* of Being[10], but some 'thing', some 'nature' (see esp. 245C5–9). If we do not realise this, the next point is not easily understood:

2. the name 'on' ('what is', or: 'being') is used by Plato to stand indiscriminately for 'existing' and 'having any nature (character; *ousia*)'. Especially these two points which are basic to a correct understanding of Plato's semantic views will emerge also from later discussions of the dialogue.

5.4. *The Materialists On 'what is'* (245E–247E)

The EV now turns to 'those who put the matter in a different way' (245E8). Those philosophers (and average men, as well; see Cornford, 232, and Bluck, 89) are meant who define reality as the same thing as body (the 'Materialists') as opposed to those who assert that true reality consists solely of certain intelligible and bodiless Forms (cfr. 246A–B). On this issue an interminable battle is always going on between the two camps (246C2–4). This battle is called 'something like a Battle of Gods and Giants fought over the subject of reality' (*peri tês ousias*; 246A6–7). The EV proposes to ask each of the two parties in turn for an account (*logon*) of the being (*tês ousias*) which they posit (246C6–7). From the Giants whose aim is to drag everything down to the material level such an account will not be so readily obtained (246C10–D1). We therefore must imagine them willing to answer our questions, he says. Theaetetus will act as their spokesman (D5–E4).

The Materialists will agree that there is such a thing as a mortal living creature, which in fact is a body animated by a soul. So they have to concede that a soul *is* also (Plato has: 'is something among the being things': *ti tôn ontôn*, 246E9). Besides, they will agree that souls are just or unjust through the presence in them of justice or injustice, and that such a virtue, in that it is capable of being present or absent, must be a 'thing' (*einai ti*, 247A9). Granting the invisibility of such things as soul and virtue they have to make clear what they mean by 'body' and their claim (246A7–B1) that only what can be squeezed is a subject of reality

[10] Bluck's formula (93) seems to be utmost unfortunate in this respect: "Being (the *concept*, italics mine) is something other than what has been posited as real".

(*ousian*, 246B1). The EV will try to make them admit that a small part of the things that are (*tôn ontôn*) is bodiless (247B1–D1).

They may also expect to be asked (247D2–4): what exactly do you refer to when you assert of both kinds of beings that they *are*? The EV himself suggests a possible answer:

> 247D8–E4: I posit, then, that anything really is (*ontôs einai*) that is so constituted as to possess any sort of potentiality either to affect something else in any way, or to be affected (even to the slightest extent by the most trivial agent, and even though it be only once). So I am positing that 'things that are' (*ta onta*) are distinguished by the mark that they are nothing but *power* (*dynamics*)[11].

The final sentence has made Cornford (234, n. 1) and Bluck (92, n. 1) worry a little bit. They would have liked the EV to say that the mark, not the 'things that are' themselves, is simply power. Bluck even suggests the accusative *dynamin* instead of *dynamis*. Cornford would prefer to translate: "a mark to distinguish real things ..... that it is nothing but power", but he recognises that such a rendering is indefensible. Bluck rightly remarks that a power (*dynamis*) is the property which reveals in its action the nature of a thing, and as being peculiar to a particular thing might easily be identified with the thing itself; the 'being' of a thing is simply the function that it performs.

To my mind Bluck's last remark touches the heart of the matter (see also Bluck, 97–8). To view a thing's true nature in its true function (for *ergon* as 'essential function', 'true nature', see e.g. *Rep.* I, 335D3; *Gorgias*, 503E1 and 517C1; for *dynamis* = 'character', 'essence', 'nature', see *Protag.*, 349B4; C5 and *Laws* III, 691E2) is truly Platonic thinking, indeed. Therefore the EV's thesis as put forward in the last sentence should be primarily understood as concerning the mark that distinguishes the 'things that are' ontologically, rather than a logic mark by means of which we may distinguish them[12]. Of course, the EV means to say that this *ontic* mark, in providing a *logical* tool, may serve us in order to discern what exactly 'being' is. So Cornford's and Bluck's difficulty proves to be a seeming one only. For 'mark' *is* identical with 'power' (as they like to hear the EV asserting) and in having power as their essential mark things are essentially nothing but power (as he is actually saying); see also 16.12.

The EV's suggestion about what *being* is (to be more precise, what they mean when using the name 'being'; see 247D2–4), is one that the 'reformed Materia-

[11] For *dynameis* as 'ontic power', see Peters, 42–5; Prauss, 67–86; Pester, 1–5; and below, 16.12.

[12] I cannot agree with Bluck (93) that the EV is offering *only a mark* (italics mine) of what is real, not a definition (*logos*) of the 'essence' of Being. — For that matter, unlike *logos*, the term *horos* is often indiscriminately used by Plato for 'ontic mark' (or: character) and 'logical definition'; e.g. *Gorgias*, 488D1–2: "is the mark (*horos*) of the better the same as that of the more powerful?"; *Statesman*, 292C5–6: "the mark of the directive science is .... a certain knowledge"; 296E1–3: "if the ruler governs advantageously, there must be the true character of the right administration of a state".

lists'[13] might find quite acceptable, as is confirmed by their spokesman, Theaetetus (247E5–6). So it makes good sense to offer it to the opposite party, the 'Gods' or 'Idealists'.

5.5. *The Idealists On 'what is'* (248A–249D)

We have to start by establishing the identity of the 'Friends of Forms', as the adherents of the opposite party are called by Plato right in the opening lines of this section (248A4–5). The question having been intensely debated, modern scholarship has made it certain that the Idealist theory presented here represents the classic shape of Plato's theory of Forms as it is found in the earlier (pre-critical) dialogues, most clearly in *Phaedo* and *Republic* (see Cornford, 242–8; Bluck, 94 ff.). It is true that, right at the outset, Plato seems to disengage himself from them in treating them a little ironically: "they are very wary in defending their position somewhere in the heights of the unseen, maintaining with all their force that true Being consists in certain intelligible and bodiless Forms" (246B6–8).

Theaetetus promises also to act as their spokesman (248A4–5). They posit that what was put forward by the Materialists as true Being should be called not, *being* but a kind of moving process of Becoming (246B9–C2), and that we are in touch with Becoming by means of the body through sense, but with true Being (*tên ontôs ousian*), which is unchanging, by means of the soul through thought (248A10–13). Theaetetus is invited (248B–C) to accept an explanation of that position in terms of 'power' (as meant before, 247D–E, see above, 5.4). The Idealists are supposed to reply that Becoming partakes of the power of acting and being acted upon, but neither of these powers is compatible with Being (248C7–9). The outcome of the next discussion (248D–249B), where the Idealists are faced with the problem of knowledge (knowing and being known, as specific cases of acting and being acted upon) is that the conclusion is inescapable that what is acted upon ('what changes': *to kinoumenon*) and Change itself are 'be-ing' (*onta*; 249B2–4)[14]. The thesis is put into a wider metaphysical context when the EV comes to conclude:

249C10–D4: On these grounds, then, it seems that the philosopher wo holds such things as knowledge and so on in high respect, is therefore obliged to refuse to accept from the advocates either of the One or of the many Forms that the All is static (*to pan hestêkos*), while, at the same time, he must not for a moment listen to those who make 'what is' change in every respect. Like a child begging for "both!", he must say that 'what is' and the All consists of what is changeless *and* what is in change, both together.

[13] *beltious gegonotas* (246E2). Of course, the Giants' reform is only imagined for the sake of the argument (see 246D5–6), which is addressed to the 'common-sense reader' rather than the out-and-out materialist Plato is speaking of. See 246B1–3: "as soon as one of the opposite party asserts that anything without a body *is*, they are utterly contemptuous and *will not listen* to another word"; see also Bluck, 92–3.

[14] Although I cannot go the whole way with Pester in taking *dynamis* mainly as 'Erkenntniss-kinesis' (126 ff.; 174), I have been convinced by his arguments for the negative thesis to the extent that neither the adherents of any theory of 'Forms-in-Motion' ('Ideenbeweger': 21–8) nor those of any opposite views lumped together as 'Soul-in-Motion' ('Seelenbeweger': 28–33) are on the right track in too strictly opposing the rival views. On Pester's interpretation (119 ff.), one could better adopt, in the case of Plato, 'Forms-being-moved *in* the Soul' ('*bewegte Idee* innerhalb der Seele').

PLATO'S NOVEL METAPHYSICAL POSITION

6.0. In the conclusion put into the EV's mouth at 249C10–D4 Plato is obviously vindicating Change *and* Changelessness for 'what is' (C11–D2), and, in doing so, begging for both 'what is in change' and 'the Changeless (D2–4). Indeed quite a revolutionary doctrine of being is here presented by the EV arguing against the 'Friends of Forms'. As a matter of fact the remaining sections of our dialogue only intend to clarify the new metaphysical position introduced by the EV. However, since Cornford (245) and Bluck (97) this passage in particular has been held to be an obstacle to interpretation. Modern interpreters have made it rather complicated, indeed. Bluck seems to have had a feel for what may be considered the leading question (see *op. cit.*, 100): 'does 'what is in change' include Forms?' Most unfortunately, however, he allowed it to be overtaken by quite a different question of his own, viz. whether knowledge is here presented as involving 'change' in its objects. We have to disentangle these two questions first.

6.1. *Modern Scholarschip Wrongly Puzzled*

Bluck rightly takes the final sentence as implying a dichotomy of 'what is in change' and 'what is Changeless'. To his mind it is puzzling in that the language seems to imply a contrast between two different classes of 'things', viz. the transient world ('what is in change') and the changeless Forms, whereas this would seem incompatible with the inclusion of the Forms in the class of 'what is in change'. As a matter of fact, this inclusion is energetically defended by Bluck. We will discuss it presently.

On Bluck's view the puzzling character of the sentence may disappear if the exact form of the expression ("like a child, I am begging for 'both!': this *and* that") is supposed to be due to the comparison with the child begging for both hands, the right *and* the left. In any case some looseness of language should be assumed, he says.

This solution, however, is not quite convincing. Anyone who has to make a

choice and refuses to do so can be reasonably supposed to be faced with two (or more) distinct things. Bluck's initial uneasy feeling that the comparison (which is really quite in keeping with the preceding lines) might cast doubt on the view that the class of 'what is in change' includes the Forms, seems to be, at first glance, quite understandable. However, the passage does not conflict at all with the inclusion of the Forms in the domain of 'what is in change'. To be sure, one's final interpretation of the basic doctrine of the whole dialogue is involved here. So we have to discuss, first, Plato's doctrinal move in our dialogue.

The middle dialogues, esp. *Phaedo, Symposion* and *Republic*, had drawn a sharp distinction between Forms ('True Being') and the transient world ('Becoming') and taken changelessness as the essential mark of True Being ('What *is*') and variability as that of Becoming ('what *becomes*'). For that matter, the Friends of Forms are still doing so. They eagerly want to adhere to the classic view put forward in those dialogues that the Ideal World, devoid of any change, is the indispensable condition of true knowledge. The *Theaetetus* had already qualified that intransigent view of knowledge. In the *Parmenides*, then, one of the charges brought against the classic theory of Forms with its severe doctrine of participation was that it fell short where knowledge was concerned: if the Forms exist in a separate world by themselves, they must, by implication, be unattainable to human knowledge (129D–130B). This is a basic problem because, at the same time, the view that the transcendent Forms *are* indispensable for true knowledge and must be knowable is still maintained. The basic conclusion of the discussion in the *Parmenides* is that the dichotomy of Forms and transient world had been over-stressed in the precritical dialogues.

Well, the EV thinks it is the task of the true philosopher to defend the thesis that "'what is' and the All consist of what is Changeless and what is in change, both together" (249D3–4). It seems undeniable that here, too, any over-sharp dichotomy between Forms and transient world is, at least implicitly, criticised, quite in line with the *Parmenides*. However, as was pointed out by Cornford (245) and Bluck (97), the EV's present protest follows immediately upon the Idealists' objection that, if knowing is an action, 'that which is', in being known, must be acted upon and so changed. So it appears, at first sight, as if the EV himself must think that what is known *is* changed by being known. Cornford rejects this implication at once, since the argument at 249C3–4 excludes the idea that the nature or content of a Form could possibly be altered by the act of knowledge. He prefers to assume (247) that the question of whether knowing and being known should not involve something analogous to the physical intercourse of perception seems to be left unanswered.

Bluck (97) seriously doubts the correctness of Cornford's surmise. He tries to give another interpretation (97–101). Knowledge may be allowed to involve *some* change in its objects without infringing the sanctity of the actual nature of Forms. He reminds us of the true sense of 'to be affected by' ('to be acted upon'), which, in the discussion with the Monists (see above, 5.2) has turned out to mean: 'to possess the quality of'; in terms of what has been said in our discussion above (4.21): 'to have a certain nature as a result of being acted upon'. Now, he goes

on, it might be said that 'being known' can be predicated of the unchanging thing and that it has the quality of being known and so is 'affected'. But there will be no need to suppose that the nature of the thing affected is thereby changed. The thing will be 'changed', but only inasmuch it has acquired an inessential attribute. Accordingly, as being known, the Form can be regarded as 'changed', albeit to a very limited extent, viz. only by virtue of the fact that it acquires the attribute 'being known'. He concludes (98): "so long as we distinguish between change of attribute and change of nature, no difficulty is involved in such an admission". Some two pages further on Bluck seems to reduce (100) the present 'paradox' concerning changelessness and changeability in the Forms to a lack of distinction between identity and attribution. In his view there is not sufficient evidence here for rejecting the view that being known implies change.

In an editor's note Gordon Neal tells us that Bluck added at this point the proviso that "at the same time, it [i.e. his view that knowledge is here presented as involving change in its objects, de R.] cannot be considered indisputably correct". So in terms of my previous distinction between the several statuses of the Platonic Form [transcendent, immanent, and mental; see above, 2.4], Bluck might have thought of a Form's *mental status*, i.e. the Form in as far as it is *conceived of* by human thinking (knowing) as existing apart in the Intelligible World or immanent in the transient world. Bluck stresses again and again that 'being known' can be called a change to a very limited extent only, since it does not affect the thing's nature.

However, there is still some confusion in Bluck's assertions about the Form being changed (which makes his later proviso perfectly understandable). What exactly does he mean when saying (98) that "the thing will be 'changed', but only inasmuch as it has acquired an inessential attribute"? As to the last term, his referring to Moravcsik's formula [1962:40]: "the Forms are subject to change and motion only in the sense that dated (temporal) propositions are true of them" is such as to make us fear that, like Moravcsik, he thought of logical operation only. Well, such singling out of only logical operation seems to be somewhat anachronistic in the first place. Further, as an explanation it seems a bit meagre. Cornford was quite right in pointing (245) to the truly Platonic doctrine that, as objects of knowledge, the Forms must be unchangeable. Otherwise any attempt to arrive at true knowledge is doomed to be abortive. It should be noticed that this is still confirmed in the later dialogues (e.g. *Timaeus* 28A; 52A; *Philebus* 59A–C). It would be quite unexpected, and even rather ridiculous, if Plato were now to concede that, albeit *to a very small extent*, the assertion: 'the *unchangeable* Form, indispensable condition for true knowledge, is *changed* by knowledge' is tenable.

To my mind, the very fact that Bluck was so much occupied with the question of whether knowledge is here presented as involving change in its objects is at the root of his misunderstanding the passage under discussion. He has been the victim of Cornford's 'first sight' (245), which, in fact, was an optical error. For that matter, Cornford was right in dismissing it at once. However, his introductory remark ("what may easily mislead the reader in this") has the nature of an ironical prophecy, as far as Bluck is concerned.

6.2. *Are The Forms Associated With 'what is in change'?*

Cornford and Bluck are right in observing that the EV's protest follows immediately upon the Idealists' objection that, if knowing is an action, it would follow that 'what is', in being known, must be acted upon, and so changed. However is his outburst at 249C10–D4 the EV does not react, as Cornford and Bluck think he does, against the Idealists' view of knowledge. Why should he? As is clearly recognised by Cornford himself (245–6) Plato's view of sensation as given in the *Sophist* is in perfect agreement with that of the *Theaetetus* and his view of true knowledge has not changed substantially since the classic period of the middle dialogues. The EV is most explicit on this score. He put his own metaphysical doctrine into the mouth of 'the man who is a philosopher and has a high respect for these things' (*tauta malista timônti*; 249C10). Well, Bluck rightly translates, *for these qualities*, and Cornford: *who values knowledge* (as does Warrington). So it is perfectly clear that the EV shares the Idealists' strict view of true knowledge and even makes it, as it were, the basis of the demand he lays before the true philosopher.

We must conclude that the EV's audacious thesis does not at all concern the question of whether or not knowledge involves change of its objects. What he is actually asserting is something like this: 'even granting (*con amore!*) that for the existence of true knowledge the unchangeability of the Forms must be recognised, I still insist, dear Friends of Forms, that 'what is' and the All must consist of what is Changeless *and* what is in change, and that (*pace vestra*), both together. And that is what you have to concede as true philosophers'.

It now remains to answer the important question whether the Forms are associated with the class of 'what is in change'? Well, they are. So far Bluck was quite right, I would think. To be sure, Plato still is of the opinion that the Forms are Changeless Entities in the Intelligible World. As such, that is, taken in their *transcendent* status, they are the firm metaphysical ground for both transient being in our sensible world and, accordingly, true knowledge about the latter. No doubt about that. However, as far as their *immanent* status is concerned, that is, inasmuch as they are actually partaken of by sensible things, they belong to the domain of 'what is in change'. That is why the EV asserts about the true philosopher: "whatever is Changeless and whatever is in change, he must say that 'what is' and the All consists of the *two* domains".

Bluck was wrong in trying to smuggle the implicit dichotomy away; in fact, Plato sticks to this fundamental distinction of the middle dialogues as an important *formal* distinction: 'change' is definitely not 'changeless(ness)'. So there was not any up-grading of 'becoming' to the rank of 'being', as is rightly argued by Bluck (96). However, from the *material* point of view, he recognises the mixing up of both domains: 'change' and 'changeless' are found together in the material world. In fact, Plato apparently takes his doctrine of *Phaedo*, *Symposion* and *Republic* that the sensible things of our world are a transient rendez-vous of a plurality of Forms, more seriously than he did before. This new approach of the sensible world had been the main doctrinal outcome of the *Parmenides*. The specific relation between Intelligible Form and sensible thing which he had described in terms of

'participation', can be better understood from now on. Their formal distinctness is, and will be, maintained (otherwise the doctrine of Forms would have lost its sense entirely), but, in its immanent status, the Form is materially identical[1] with the sensible thing. For that matter, the *Parmenides* had already argued that, if the Form is unattainably changeless, it is incapable of providing the basis for the sensibles' being, which is basically being changeable and changing. So Bluck seems to be perfectly right in taking the inclusion of the Forms into the domain of 'what is in change' to be implied in what the EV presents as his revolutionary doctrine of being.

6.3. *Again, Plato's Semantic Procedure*

As has been already remarked, the following sections of the dialogue aim to clarify the new metaphysical position which vindicates Change *and* Changelessness for 'what is'. It cannot be stressed enough that Plato carries out this clarification by resorting, again, to what I have above termed the semantical approach. A correct understanding of Plato's own procedure in these matters of utmost difficulty and delicacy is quite indispensable for grasping his arguments and conclusions. For that matter, Plato most explicitly asks his readers not to boggle at his revolutionary conclusions unless they are able to win over his arguments to their own side (257A8–11). Likewise, a few pages later on he demands that his opponents leave all trivialities alone as useless and follow, step by step and with a sense of criticism, what is actually said and to take his assertions *in that sense and in that respect* (*ekeinêi kai kat' ekeino*) in which he says they are meant (259D1–2). Especially the latter passage mirrors the great importance which Plato ascribes to his semantic procedure.

It seems useful to pay some critical attention first to what I consider to be some optical errors in Cornford's and Bluck's discussions of the texts at hand.

Cornford (248) is of the opinion that the reader might now expect that the discussion of 'Being' as conceived by the Materialists and Idealists should lead to an explanation of *eidôla*, how they are related to perfect Being. He is disappointed to see that the next section of the dialogue has little or no bearing on that metaphysical problem, but diverts the discussion, instead, to the different problem of falsity in thought and speech, which is to be solved at 259E ff.

However, Cornford's view suffers from an optical error, I am afraid. Where he supposed the EV to turn off to a different problem, Plato is, in fact, making him apply the same semantic approach as was found in the previous discussions to the problem of the *eidôla*, those mixtures of 'being' and 'non-being'. As a matter of

[1] 'Material identity' is here understood as in expressions such as 'the Morning Star and the Evening Star are materially identical' (for this topic see also *Epinomis*, 987B3) or 'the plan immediately following the second one and the plan immediately preceding the fourth one are materially identical'. The phrase has nothing to do with materiality as such, as should be added for the comfort of all those who might think that the present author here lays violent hands upon the Immaterial character of the Transcendent Forms.

fact the EV keeps on searching for the exact meaning of 'to be' ('is'). He continues his inquiry into the use of the phrase 'what is' (and 'what is not', respectively) in so far as this phrase is part of the metaphysical thesis he has just so passionately recommended to the true philosopher, viz. that 'what is' and the All consist of what is Changeless *and* what is in change, both together (249D3–4; see above, 6.1). Indeed, the EV sets out to scrutinise further the use of the names 'what is', 'change' ('motion') and 'rest', which are obviously the key-notions in his new metaphysical thesis. So Cornford has no reason to be disappointed.

A second point in Cornford's view of this part of the EV's argument seems to hide a more serious misconception on his part. He thinks (248; cfr. 251) that the term '*to on*' ('what is'; he always translates this as 'Reality' or 'Being') here shifts its meaning from 'that which is real' or 'that which exists' to "the 'realness' or 'existence' which real things or existents have" (*ibid.*). He even seems to charge the EV with developing his argument in "using the same term without pointing out that its meaning shifts", a rather serious accusation, indeed, since in Cornford's view that very argument apparently amounts to enervating the metaphysical thesis mentioned before[2]. He explains (248–9) the EV's concluding remark (at 250E6–7) that 'what is' is equally puzzling as 'what is not' as a recognition on Plato's side of the confusing circumstance that the expression '*to on*' has ceased to mean 'the real' (in his rendering) and now means 'realness'. To my mind, however, he seems completely mistaken in assuming that here the term '*to on*' is shifting its meaning. What we really find in this section is a further application of the important distinction already implied before (see above, 6.2) between 'material identity' and 'formal diversity' (or the indicative and descriptive uses of names).

As to Bluck's quite interesting and pioneering discussion of the matter involved two remarks should be made. I feel sure that he was rather close to the view explained here. When complaining (on account of the final sentence of 249C10–D4) that "the language would imply a contrast between two different classes of objects, when what is needed is a contrast between different respects in which the same objects can or cannot be changed" (100), he seems to be only mistaken in thinking that the Forms' having a mental status is to be considered an inessential quality or attribute (see above, 6.1) of the Forms taken by themselves. As was argued before one had better think of the Form's immanent status (which far from being an 'inessential quality' concerns their metaphysical nature), rather than their status resulting from our logical operations which is indeed inessential to them. Just as Bluck failed to see that the 'distinguishing mark' proposed by the EV earlier (see 5.4) is primarily an ontic mark, rather than a logical tool, the logical side of the present question ("Forms as *being known*") unhappily prevailed in his interest.

It should be also noticed that Bluck did see well (*ibid.*) that the metaphysical thesis put forward by the EV has its bearings on *our* (italics mine) 'essential distinction between identity and attribution', by which he was apparently indicating what I mean by 'material (indicative or denotative) identity' and 'formal diversity'. (Compare his remark on p. 83: "a hint, perhaps, that attribution must be distinguished from identification".) But he was unfortunately consistent in ranging the next discussion (249D–252E) under a syntactic (instead of a semantic) heading: "The Puzzle of *Predication*".

The next sections will give us many opportunities to point out the pivotal function of our practice of *name-giving* which makes us designate the same material 'thing' by diverse names (e.g. such names as 'what–is' and 'what–is–in–change'), whereas the formal significates still are distinct ('being' and 'being in change' respectively). In fact, Plato's entire discussion up to 259D is focused on the semantics of isolated terms (as opposed to those connected into a sentence), to wit the most vital ones in metaphysics, introduced later on (254C2–4) as 'five very important ones': 'Being', 'Rest', 'Change', 'Same' and 'Other'.

[2] Bluck is certainly right in rejecting (104) Peck's suggestion [1952:43] that the ambiguity of *to on* is causing trouble here.

Chapter seven

THE VARIETY OF NAMES AND THE COMMUNION OF KINDS

7.1. *Introductory: Some Puzzles Surrounding The Meaning Of 'what is'*

The EV begins (249D–250A) this part of the discussion by really being a spoil-sport. With almost sadistic satisfaction he states that the newly reached metaphysical thesis proves to involve its adherents in a painful confrontation with the very same question that they had themselves earlier put with regard to the thesis of the Pluralists: what is the exact meaning of 'what is'? As a matter of fact, just as those people were faced with the puzzling relationship between 'Being', 'Hot' and 'Cold', the EV and Theaetetus will have to disentangle those between 'Being', 'Change' and 'Rest'. How are those names used in the new metaphysical thesis? Bluck rightly points out (103) that in declaring that the All 'is' what is Changeless and what is in change, the new metaphysical thesis merely adopts a position similar to that of the dualists and is accordingly faced with the same painful question.

So the EV proposes (250A) to question Theaetetus on lines similar to those on which he argued before (243D–E) against the Pluralists' thesis concerning the principles of Hot and Cold:

250A7–C7: Well, don't you say that Change and Rest are complete opposites? — Of course. — Yet your say equally of both of them and of each severally[1] that they *are*? — Yes. — When admitting that they *are*, do you mean that they both, and each severally, change? — Certainly not. — Then, perhaps, by saying that both *are* you mean they are both at rest? — No, how could I? — So, then when assigning the name 'being' to them both you are conceiving of 'what is' as a third thing over and above these two, and taking Rest and Change as embraced by it and focussing your attention on their communion with Being (*ousias*)? — Yes, it does seem that we have an intuition[2] (*apomanteuesthai*) of 'what is' as a third thing, whenever we say that Change and Rest *are*. — So 'what is' is not just Change and Rest, both together (*synamphoteron*) but apparently something distinct from them. — In virtue of its own nature (*kata tên hautou physin*), then, 'what is' is neither at rest nor in change.

[1] So correctly Bluck (103). The EV intends to say that they are in change both together (as a combination) and each severally. For the sense of *amphotera*, = 'the two taken together', see also below, 9.33 (at 255B12–C1).

[2] Bluck for example (and correctly so). Collin has studied the uses of *manteuesthai* in Plato and found that 'intuition' is its 'most common and important sense'.

The purpose of the argument is quite clear. On the one hand there is a material identity between 'what is' and 'what is in change', or 'what is at rest' ('changeless') respectively, and a formal diversity between them, on the other. We can split up the items as follows:

a. Change ≠ Rest, that is, they are formally distinct (250A7–8)
b. Change (i.e. 'what is in change') *is*, and Rest (i.e. 'what is at rest') *is*; that is, there is a material identity between 'what is in change' and 'what is', and 'what is at rest' and 'what is', respectively (A10–11)
c. 'what *is* in change' and 'what *is* at rest' both partake in 'being', but that does not imply that they are *both* in change, or *both* at rest; that is, again, the *material* identity of what is in change' with 'what is' and of 'what is at rest' with 'what is' does not alter the *formal* diversity between Change and Rest (B2–7). — These three statements are all about 'Change' and 'Rest' inasmuch as they include Being. The next ones are their counterparts and concerned with 'what is'
d. therefore, 'what is' is 'a third thing', i.e. it is formally distinct from 'what is in change' and 'what is at rest' respectively, but, at the same time, when taken materially, 'what is' 'embraces' both Change and Rest, since that which is in change, or at rest, respectively, must *be* somehow; B8–C2
e. though materially embracing both Change and Rest, 'What is' is formally not just Change, or Rest, nor 'Change *plus* Rest', but a separate 'thing' which, 'in virtue of its own nature' (*kata tên hautou physin*), i.e. taken formally, is not in change or at rest (C3–7). In other words: 'what is', taken materially, is in change, or at rest, respectively, but *qua* 'what is' (i.e. formally speaking) it is not in change or at rest.

So the entire passage underlines the material identity of 'what is' with 'what is *somehow*' ('in change', 'at rest') as opposed to the (formal) diversity between Being (as such), Change (as such) and Rest (as such). One should notice the parallel with the previous arguments concerning the formal diversity between 'Being', 'Hot' and 'Cold' which, in spite of material coincidences, still exists and those about the formal diversity between 'Whole', 'One' and 'Being' which is not altered by possible material coincidences either.

Bluck is quite right in rejecting (105) Runciman's view that one meets with an 'erroneous deduction' (94) at 250C3–7 (our conclusion (e)). He was aware that the point at issue here is the exact meaning ('nature') of Being. Unfortunately, he reduces the puzzlement, again, to a difficulty in distinguishing between the 'proper nature' of a thing and its *attributes*[3] (italics mine). In point of fact no attrib-

[3] Bluck's remark (some lines further on, p. 106) suffers from the same confusion: "what is needed is an understanding of 'participation', that is to say, of attribution [*sic*! De R.]; and the elucidation of this requires an explanation of the difference between identification and

utes as such are concerned here, but rather our practice of name-giving. In using the names 'what is' and 'what is in change' as *concrete* names their material significate may be identical (e.g. *this* particular in the transient world); nevertheless their formal significates still are distinct, since, from the formal point of view, 'being' ≠ 'being in change'. Similarly the names 'what is' and 'what is at rest' used as *concrete* names may stand for materially the same thing (e.g. this particular man = this particular (instantiation) of manhood (i.e. the *eidos* Man taken in its immanent status); but, all the same, there still is the formal distinction between 'particular man' as such and 'manhood' as such.

In fact, it is the coexistence of material identity and formal diversity upon which all the EV's arguments are built, and which is also at the root of all the various puzzlements which are found in the intermezzo section of our dialogue (237A–264B). So we need not wonder that the EV makes every possible effort now to dispose of those puzzlements by clearing up the intermingling of what I have labelled 'material identity' and 'formal diversity' or, as will be shown later on, 9.1, the lack of distinction between the indicative and the descriptive uses of a name.

Plato next depicts using all rhetorical means the perplexity in which we are involved now on account of the notion of 'what is': indeed 'what is' seems, at the same time, to be in change *and* at rest *and* neither of both but some 'third' thing:

250C9–D4: Where, then, is the mind to turn for help if one wants to reach any clear and certain notion about 'what is'? It seems hard to find help in any quarter. Look here: if a thing is not in change, how can it be otherwise than at rest? And, again, how can what is not in any way at rest fail to be in change? Yet 'what is' is now revealed to us as outside Change and Rest! Is that possible?

Theaetetus shares in the bewilderment and answers with a whole-hearted 'No!' (D5). His companion does not spare the sore spot and complains that they are now no less puzzled about 'what is' than they were before about 'what is not' (250D–E). Finally, he remarks with some satisfaction that their puzzlement is now completely stated (E5). Cornford (252) rightly sees this remark as indicating "that all that has gone before is a statement of the problem, with some hints towards the solution". I think that the reader must be watchful now and pay close attention to all the EV's attempts to solve the main puzzle.

Cornford asserts (*ibid.*) that, under the mask of an apparent contradiction, Plato has changed the subject from a metaphysical consideration of 'the nature of the real' to a different field, which we should call Logic. I cannot grasp his point, I am afraid. Were the foregoing metaphysical considerations, in Cornford's view, illogical (or alogical), or do the logical considerations that follow have no bearing on metaphysics? Cornford, in fact, has failed to see that the EV sets out now to

predication" (*sic*!). Instead, it turns out to be an attempt to elucidate the difference between 'identification' ('denotation') and 'description'.

substantiate, by means of a semantic analysis, what he had himself rightly described (252) as 'hints towards the solution', more specifically by thoroughly investigating our practice of giving names to things. The next sections may be considered pivotal to what Plato intends to achieve in the *Sophist*: to clarify the notion of 'what is', a notion absolutely basic to all philosophy. This investigation takes up the whole of the remainder of the intermezzo (237A–264B), viz. 251A–264B. The greater part of it is devoted to the semantical problem of giving several names to one and the same thing (251A–259D, our sections 7.2–9.2), whereas 259D–264B deals with its counterpart, the problem of *logos*, more specifically false speaking and thinking (our chapter XIII).

7.2. *The Problem Of Giving Several Names*

The problem is stated with all due clarity in the opening words of this section: "Let us explain, then, how it is that we call the same thing — whatever is in question at the moment (Cornford; *hekastote*) — by several names?" (251A5–6). So the puzzle is that of *one man* (or any other physical object) *with many 'names'*. The EV explains:

251A8–B4: Well, when we speak of a man we give him many names other than his essential name [viz. 'man'; *eponomazontes*]: we attribute to him colours and shapes and sizes and defects and good qualities. And in all these and countless other attributions is implied that we say that he *is* not merely 'man' but also good and any number of other things. And so with everything else: we take any given thing as one and yet we designate it as many in using a multiplicity of names.

First a preliminary remark. There seems to be quite a lot of confusion on the part of the modern interpreters concerning what exactly is under consideration here. Cornford (252–3) and Bluck (107) have indeed recognised that Plato is indicating here the puzzle of 'one thing–many names'. However, in one breath the former speaks (253) of the consideration of "statements (*logoi*) in which the word 'is' and 'is not' occur; ,.... so we pass to *statements* (italics mine) in which we gives names to things". On a similar line Bluck considers it natural to assume that *predication* is referred to, "since predication was the issue where the 'one man with many names' was concerned". It is true, he may have felt some hesitation on this score, for he warns us that, at the same time, the various terms used by the EV in the next argument "are all metaphors and it would be very unsafe to assume that in the arguments to come they have a precise, technical meaning; although they may be used in reference or in allusion to what we would call 'predication', it does not follow that their *meaning* is necessarily bound up with our notion of predication". So far his hesitation is quite to the point. But what he next adds (107–8) testifies, again, to his confusion of what we would separate nowadays into semantics and syntax. He remarks that "the other important term", 'communion' (*koinônia*) which the EV uses in 251E, was used at 250B9 very obviously with reference to what we should call attribution, and is so used again here". For that matter, in a footnote Bluck refers to Cornford's denial (incorrect, to his mind) that these terms refer to predication at all.

However, we have to state again that this section does not at all discuss *predication* as such, nor *statement* as such. What is investigated here is *name-giving*, which, of course, also has much to do with asserting but is still something quite distinct from predication. Names are not predicates, formally speaking, but they certainly may be, and most often are, used as predicates in surface structure, at least. Any name used may, from the material point of view, be a 'predicate', but the formal distinction between name and predicate is not affected by that.

Cornford denies (256–7) quite relevantly in my view, that the relation between Forms that combine ('participation') which is dealt with in the next arguments has anything to do with that of subject to predicate. One must also take to heart his warning that the Aristotelian terms 'subject', 'predicate', and 'copula' should certainly not be used to describe what is here in Plato's mind[4]. However, I cannot grasp at all that Cornford keeps on all the same asserting, and rather inconsistently it would seem, that the combination and non-combination of Forms among themselves (the well-known *koinônia;* see below, 7.3; 8.1–8.5), that is intended here by Plato, is the one which turns up precisely in true and false *statements*[5].

A similar puzzlement to that described in our dialogue concerning the relationships of such Forms as 'Being', 'One', 'Many', 'Change' and 'Rest', occurs among modern interpreters on account of the notions of 'name-giving' and 'predication', or: attribution as such and sentential attribution. For that matter, both of the puzzles should be solved by means of the distinction between material coincidence ('identity') and formal diversity (see above, 6.2; 6.3; 7.1). In doing so one proceeds along the same lines as Plato himself.

To take up now the discussion of *Sophist*, 251A ff., the EV makes much of opposing the fundamental puzzle he has now in mind to that trivial question of how one individual thing can have many names (which is the semantic counterpart of the old question of the participation of a particular thing in many Forms). Cornford is right in referring to *Parmenides*, 129A ff., where that question was already dismissed as a trivial one. What are under discussion now are the relations of Forms to one another, the so-called 'Communion of Kinds' *(koinônia tôn genôn)*. It seems useful, however, to pay some attention to the trivial question first.

[4] Cornford has been rightly defended by K.M. Sayre (256–7) against Ackrill [1957:2 ff.]. It should be stressed that the supposedly 'Aristotelian' label 'copula' is even completely absent with Aristotle himself. The label 'copula' seems to date from as late as the eleventh century.

[5] It should be noticed in this connection that in his presentation (253; see above, 7.2) of the link of thought (to be found, in his view, at 250A–251A) Cornford's insertion of the Greek term *logoi* could raise the false suggestion that it is Plato himself who speaks of *statement* here. For that matter, the word *logos* in the sense of 'statement' is found nowhere in the whole discussion of 251A–259D and what we moderns might call 'statement' does not as such come up for discussion until 259E6. See below, 12.2.

7.21. *On The 'Trivial' Question Of 'One Individual–Many Names'*

The trivial question which the EV wishes to dismiss right at the outset as "merely entertainment for the young and the late-learners" (251B6–7) is commonly linked with Antisthenes (cfr. Cornford, 254; see, however, Guthrie III, 214; 216–8 and esp. Burnyeat, who has successfully argued against the Antisthenean character of the Dream; see also below, 7.22). All the same, Plato's words are ironically enough to be intended for that 'bastard' (251B7; C3–6):

> 251B6–C6: Thereby, I think, we have provided a magnificent entertainment for the young and for a number of old men who have turned to study late in life (*opsimathesi*). No wonder, for anyone can at once[6] take a hand in the game and object ‹against this practice› that many things cannot be one, nor one thing many. Indeed they delight in forbidding us to give the name 'good' to a good and the name 'man' to a man. I suppose, Theaetetus, you often meet with such fanatics, sometimes elderly men whose poor little minds are thrilled with such discoveries, and who even think they have uncovered here a treasure of perfect wisdom.

The theory meant here is rather poor indeed: a thing bearing many names must itself be many instead of one, so that, for example, you may call a man only *man*, a stone only *stone* etc. and cannot call them *substance*, *beautiful* and the like, since, in doing so, you would make it two or more things, in fact an aggregate of a man *plus* a beautiful (thing) etc., and, by that, destroy its metaphysical unity. The theory is attributed to Antisthenes who is commonly charged with denying the possibility of any non-identifying predication. Well, this view of predication is certainly *implied* in the general thesis concerning the use of names. For arguing that a physical object (man, stone, and so on) can only be given its essential name ('man', 'stone', etc.) clearly implies the impossibility of any non-tautological predication, too.

Indeed, in Aristotle, in *Metaph. Δ* 29, Antisthenes is also represented, it seems, as admitting only 'tautological predication' as such. However, on closer inspection it is not non-tautological *predication* as such, but giving non-tautological *names* (whether or not used as sentential attributes or 'predicates') that is under discussion. For that matter, in this chapter Aristotle deals with 'false account', that is, the many-worded descriptive name that may or may not be assigned to a thing, e.g. as its *definiens*[7]. Of course such compound names may occur, and most often do so, as the predicative part of a complete statement (e.g. a definition), but the predicative function of the name (or *definiens*) is of no importance as such:[8]

[6] *euthys*; the word apparently refers to the objection that can be made *at once* by anyone who has just started his first study of the matter, and is here synonymous, in fact, with 'without serious reflection'. To Plato's mind the late-learners are so many Johnnies–come–lately.

[7] For this sense of *logos*, see below nr. 13.13.

[8] It should be noticed that Ross (*ad loc.*) misleadingly has '*account*', or '*statement*' (italics mine) for *logos* (taking 'account' and 'statement' as synonyms) and has *definition* where he apparently means *definiens* (e.g. the account (*logos*) 'a figure bounded by a line all the points of which are equidistant from a point called the centre' is called by Ross the definition of 'triangle', instead of the *definiens* of that definition). Of course, the terms 'definition' and

Metaph. Δ 29, 1024b26–39: A false account (*logos*) is the account of 'things that are not' (*tôn mê ontôn*) inasmuch as it is false. Therefore every account is false when applied to something other than it applies to, e.g. the account of a circle is false when applied to a triangle. In a sense there is one account of each thing, i.e. the account of its essence; but in a sense there are many, since the thing by itself (*auto*) and the very same thing taken together with a property of its (*auto peponthos*) are the same in a sense. E.g. 'Socrates' and 'musical-Socrates' [or: 'Socrates-musician']. A false account strictly speaking is an account of no thing.

Hence Antisthenes was too simple-minded in claiming that nothing could be brought up (*legesthai*) except by the account proper to it: *one* account to *one* thing. From this the conclusion used to be drawn that there could be no contradiction, and almost that there could be no error. But in regard to each thing it is possible to bring it up not only by its own (essential) account (*tôi autou logôi*) but also by that of something else.

Some comment. (1) The notion 'false' (*pseudês*) is here apparently synonymous with 'not-applying', as 'true' (*alêthês*) stands for 'applying' (see the opening lines of this passage). It seems useful to quote a note of Cornford's (communicated by Guthrie V,18, n. 1 from an unpublished notebook on the *Cratylus*): "The use of *alêthês* is only intelligible by keeping its definition in mind, *to ta onta legein hêi estin.* (a) If the *on* in question is a relation between two things, the corresponding speech is a proposition affirming such a relation. (b) If the *on* is a thing, the corresponding speech is a name. Just as the proposition is true if it rightly reflects the objectively existing relation, so the name is true if it rightly reflects the objectively existing thing, i.e. speaks of it *hêi estin.* This it can do if, and only if, the material (sounds) has a natural (*physei*) correspondence with the forms of things (*ousiai*) as is shown to be the case at 434a–b". Also Kahn [1973:305] emphasises the notion of truth as cognitive correctness in general covering not only 'truth' of a statement but also 'genuineness' or 'realness' of a thing or object. (See also below, 8.3; 16.42; 16.43).

(2) Account (*logos*) obviously stand for *definiens*, not definition and, accordingly, means 'incomplete (many–worded) expression', not 'statement' ('assertion') (or: more specifically, definitory statement). (3) 'Socrates' and 'musical Socrates' are materially the same, though formally distinct[9]. (4) That a false account strictly speaking is an account of no thing seems to mean that when a false account (e.g. 'barbarian' said of the Greek Callias) is applied to a certain thing (Callias), it turns out in fact to have no indicative or denotative force ('to refer to nothing'), since 'barbarian Callis' is not an existing thing. (5) Antisthenes is charged with claiming that nothing could be 'brought up' = 'indicated' (*legesthai*) except by its own essential name or formula. Ross translates: *described*, which is quite acceptable, unless one takes (as Ross probably does) it to stand only for asserting in a definitory *statement.* In fact the word *legein* here, as often, loosely stands for 'to bring up' (for discussion), 'to mention', 'to call', and the like, which all include, but are not equivalent to, 'to assert'. Accordingly Ross' translation of the phrase '*hen eph' henos*' (at 1024b33) by: "one *predicate* to one *subject*" is too specific. Rather Aristotle means to say: one account to one thing. For that matter, such a false account may also occur in calling Callias 'that barbarian fellow' (as in "that barbarian fellow insulted me") without explicitly asserting: 'Callias is a barbarian fellow'.

In *Metaph.* H3,1043b28–32 Aristotle is restating in his own language the Antisthenean theory (see Ross *ad loc.*). We are told there that, in the view of those 'uneducated people' (*apaideutoi*), the essence (*to ti estin*; lit. 'the what some thing *is*') cannot be stated, since the definiens (*horon*) is a 'long rigmarole' (*logon makron*). So the definiens is a complex name (compound descriptive expression) which fails to grasp the true nature of the thing one wants to define. In fact the Antistheneans denied the possibility of any definition because of the inevitable deficiency of any definiens (definitory account). Again, *logos* (account) stands for 'many–worded expression', rather than 'statement' ('assertion') and accordingly is taken as a compound *name.* So Antisthenes' doctrine about definition is in line with his view of name-giving in general: any entity can only be brought up ('indicated' or 'denoted') by its own name (man by 'man', stone by 'stone', the good by 'good' etc.). Accordingly, if one tries to define it the attempt is bound to be abortive, since the definiens (predicative part of the intended definition) is nothing but an irrelevant combination of such names that are different from the only one applicable to the thing under discussion, viz. its essential name.

'definiens' are commonly used indiscriminately. But it could make us fail to see that 'account' (*logos*) here stands for 'composite expression', 'compound name', irrespective of its use as the predicative part of a statement (e.g. as the definiens of a definition). See also Gerold Prauss [1966] who, regarding the earlier dialogues, has convincingly shown (43–60) that *logos* should be regarded as having single words (*onomata*) as its smallest parts and that it is a characterisation of things operative in the manner of a (complex) name, rather than what we call a 'statement'. — For some qualifications of his view, esp. his use of 'aggregate', see below, 14.4; 15.2.

[9] Cf. De Rijk [1980], 26–33, and above, 7.1, and below 9.1.

7.22. *The Dream Theory In Theaetetus*, 201D–202D

In the *Theaetetus* we are told of Socrates 'dreaming' (201D–202D) a theory about the possibility of knowledge. It is substantially built upon a certain semantic theory which is commonly ascribed to, or at least connected with, Antisthenes. It seems, however, that in the *Theaetetus* Plato does not think more specifically of Antisthenes, which might appear from the absence of the scornful tone found in *Sophist*, 251B as well as in Arist., *Metaph.*, 1024b32; 1043b24. On the other hand, the correspondence between the Antisthenean thesis and the fundamental conception of the dream theory of the *Theaetetus* is quite striking, as has been rightly remarked by McDowell [1973: *ad loc.*]. He seems to have also been successful in pointing out (234–7) the occurrence of the dream theory's fundamental conception elsewhere in Plato's works (*Euthydemus*, 283E7 ff.; *Cratylus*, 429D ff.), so that there is no real need to think of its insertion into the *Theaetetus* as a foreign importation. I can accept his suggestion (237) that the semantic conceptions common to the dream theory and what is found in Aristotle's account of Antisthenes' doctrine were quite widely held at the time. I would think that Antisthenes, when he became interested 'late in life' in matters involved in the dream theory, went on to debase the doctrine and exploit it against Plato's metaphysical and episte-

mological theory. — At any rate, the dream contains fundamental notions which are also found in what we are told Antisthenes taught.

Quite apart from the provenance of the semantic theory at hand, it is worthwhile having a close look at what the dream theory tells us about *naming* 'concrete individual natural objects' (as Cornford rightly has it, 144; cf. 201E2: 'we and all other things'; for a similar designation, see *Sophist*, 233D10–E9, where *synhapanta* is specified as "you and me, and beside ourselves, all other animals and plants", E5–6).

Theaetetus, 201E1–202C5: What might be called the basic elements (*prôta stoicheia*) of which we and all other things are composed are such that no account can be given of them [*logon ouk echoi*, lit.: 'they have no account'; see below]. Each of those basic things just by itself can only be named just by itself, for one cannot give it another appellation (*proseipein allo*), saying[10] either that it is being or that it is not-being, because in that case one would be attaching 'being' or 'not-being' to it, whereas one ought to add (*prospherein*) nothing if one is going to bring it up just by itself, alone. For that matter (*epei*) one should not even add (*prosoisteon*) such appellations as 'itself' or 'that', or 'each', or 'alone', or even 'the', or any other of quite a lot of such terms. For running loose about the place as they are they get added to everything, being (formally) different from the things to which they are applied, whereas if it were possible for a basic element to be brought up in any account and to have it proper to itself, that account would have to be expressed without all names other ‹ than the thing's proper name ›. And so ‹ those people asserted that › it is impossible for any of the basic things to be brought up in an account, because in their view it can simply and solely be *named*, since name [i.e. its own appropriate name] is all it has.

But as for the things composed of such basic things: just as those things themselves are woven together, so their names woven together come to be an account (*logos*), for an account substantially is a tissue of names. In that way, the elements have no account (*aloga*) and are unrecognisable (*agnôsta*), but they are perceivable (*aisthêta*); and the complexes (*syllabas*) are recognisable (*gnôstas*) and expressible (*rhêtas*) and opinable in a true opinion (*doxêi doxastas*). Now when somebody gets hold of the true opinion about something without an account (*aneu logou*) his mind is in a state of truth (*alêtheuein*) about it, but does not recognise it (*gignôskein*); because somebody who cannot give and receive an account of something is not knowledgeable (*anepistêmona*) about that thing. But if he gets hold of an account as well, then it is possible not only for all that to happen, but also for him to be in a perfect condition with regard to knowledge.

Some comment. The term 'basic elements' ('*stoicheia*') was commonly used to mean 'letters of the alphabet'. Its literal sense is probably something like 'members of a series'. Plato seems to have been the first to use the word in the sense of 'ultimate constituents' (see Cornford and McDowell, *ad loc.*). Well, they cannot be expressed in an account, that is, in a many–worded expression ('formula'), but only *named*, that is, indicated by the name strictly proper to them. It should be noticed that at 201E2 the phrase '*auto kath' hauto*' is to be taken as both determining the subject ('*each* of them *by itself*') and the verb ('can only be *named by itself*', i.e. according to its proper being)[11].

[10] As Burnyeat has rightly observed (119, n. 59), translation of this clause is hindered by the way the complement of *proseipein* is given first in a form appropriate to a verb of 'calling' and then is expanded, as if for a verb of 'saying', into a pair of 'that'–clauses. A similar blurring over modern distinctions between calling and saying is found at *Sophist*, 256E3. See below, *ad loc.*

The basic thing, then, can only be brought up by the name proper to it, since any other appellation[12] would not apply. Even[13] the appellation 'being' ('that it is', 201E4) cannot be assigned to it, since this is a common appellation, which does not grasp the thing by itself. Cornford seems to be wrong in taking the appellation 'being' to stand just for 'existence'; rather it has the vague, more comprehensive sense of 'being'. Burnyeat [119, n. 60] also rejects Cornford's translation of *ousia* here as well as at 185C8 where *ousian* and *to mê einai* seem to figure as non-perceptible features common to all objects of perception and the terms used may be taken as verbal nouns abstracting from the content of statements such as 'it is the case that ...' or 'it is not the case that ...'. For the proper notion of being involved, see above, 0.2; 2.5; 5.3–5.5 and below, 15.4; 16.12; 16.43–16.44.

Further, expressions[14] (happily labelled 'dummy-names' by Burnyeat, 120), such as 'itself', 'that', or 'each' and so on ought not to be added to the only name applying to the basic thing in such a way as to make expressions as 'man itself' ('stone itself'), 'that man', 'each man', since they all are not proper to things. Even expressions containing the article 'the' are ruled out[15] on this ground. In fact, the addition of 'that' 'each' of 'the' etc. would render the only appropriate name a common name.

[11] For this latter connotation, see above, 4.21; 5.2 and below, 9.14; 13.31, and De Rijk [1980], 30–3.

[12] *proseipein* (201E3) certainly means 'denominate' (cfr. *prosêgoria* used by Aristotle, *Categ.* 1, 1a13 for 'appellation'), rather than 'to say in addition' (as is rightly observed by Burnyeat, 119, n. 59) as it is commonly taken here. (It should be remembered that *proseipein* is aorist infinitive of *prosagoreuein* ('to denominate', 'to appellate' *etc.*), while *proslegein* ('to say in addition') has the aorist infinitive *proslexai*. Notice, further, that in the *Theaetetus* Plato has *prospherein* for 'to add', 'to say in addition'; 202A2 and 4). — Accordingly, the *ouden allo* should be seen as an accusative determining the verb: 'to give another appellation', ('internal object'), not: 'to name some other thing'. For the rest, the *eipein* in *proseipein* seems to be loosely taken up in the explication: 'you cannot even say 'that it is' = 'you cannot even give the appellation 'being''. — For the rest, Burnyeat is surely right in remarking (*loc. laud.*) that Greek idiom quite often blurs over our distinctions between 'calling' and 'saying' and in rejecting Runciman's [41] suggestion to translate the verb *proseipas* at *Sophist* 250B11 'say in addition'. For the overlapping meaning 'calling-saying (that)' Burnyeat rightly refers to *Crat.*, 439D8; *Soph.*, 256E3 and *Laws* X, 895C.

[13] I would prefer to omit (with the Vienna codex *Y*) *outh' hôs ouk estin* and change the first *outh'* into *oud'*. (The aspiration of the following *hôs* may have caused the reading *outh'*.) To my mind *oud' hôs estin* would give a better sense ('not even that it is'), as the preceding *ouden allo* seems to require a climax.

[14] There cannot be any doubt that at 202A2–4 'expressions' are meant, not 'things', since words are added to the only name acceptable, not things. McDowell (238) must be completely mistaken on this score.

[15] Buttmann's conjecture *to to* for *touto* (at 202A4 and at 205C8) is quite plausible since (1) a definite article is wanted (hence Heindorf's (less plausible) emendation *to touto*), (2) *touto* has little sense after *ekeino* [at A3], (3) as the last item in the series the climax 'even not ‹such an unimportant thing as› the article' makes good sense, (4) *to to* may be paralleled with Cornford's quite plausible conjecture at *Soph.*, 239A3: see Cornford, 143 and 207.

The lines 202A6–8 contain an argument *ex absurdo*: if the (many–worded) account were one *proper* to a basic thing, it could never be many–worded but contain only the one appropriate name, that is, be a *one–word* account, which is a contradiction in terms.

In the final lines of our passage (202B3–5) the 'things composed of the basic things' (*synkeimena ek toutôn*) are opposed to the basic things themselves. The texture of the composition of the many–worded expressions ('appellations') proves to run parallel to the texture of the things they are intended to indicate and the dream theory calls, in fact, the many–worded formula (or: account) a 'texture of (appropriate) names'; see also McDowell, 231–3 who is not correct, however, in explaining the theory in terms of 'judgement'.

The crucial point in the dream theory seems to be that it is built upon what might be called a 'double-edged atomism'. Both the natural (perceivable) things and the accounts (*logoi*) running parallel to them are, in point of fact, mere juxtapositions of 'basic elements' (or 'appropriate names' respectively). And that is, in Socrates' view, the very reason why their epistemological application should fall short. Cornford (146) and Gulley (96 ff.) are quite right in pointing out that the only 'things' the theory recognises as the objects of any sort of cognition are concrete individual things, the perceivable parts of which are mere *aggregates* (italics mine). The earlier suggestion (made at 201C–D) that knowledge = 'true belief with the addition of an account' (*tên meta logou alethê doxan*) is bound to be useless, since, if *logos* means — as it really does in this semantic atomism — an account (explanation) consisting in the mere enumeration of the juxtaposed constituents of a complex thing (being itself a mere juxtaposition of simple elements), one cannot help ultimately arriving at simple parts that are unknowable and only perceivable themselves, which would imply that in the end no knowledge is yielded, in spite of that addition of an 'explanatory account'.

So the key concept is 'having an account'. The phrase *echein logon* means (cfr. Liddell and Scott, *s.v.*) 'to have an account' = 'to be explainable'. When used of persons it stands for something like 'to have a conduct that can be explained' ('accounted for', 'justified'); so e.g. Plato, *Apology*, 31B7. The well-known phrase *logon didonai* ('to account for') may also be recalled here. When it is said of things or states of affairs it means 'to be arguable, explainable, reasonable'; so *Phaedo*, 62D5. It has, then, the connotation of 'being capable of reasonable account' (as opposed to 'being unclear or intricate'). We have already found it said of *onoma* (at *Soph.*, 244D1) in the sense of (a name) 'lacking reference', 'being empty' = 'which cannot be explained by lack of content' ('intension'). In our passage (at 201E2) the phrase *logon ouk echoi* said of the basic elements means that they are not capable of being explained in an account (since they can only be *named* by their only appropriate name, which is strictly proper to each of them).

The complex natural things (such as ourselves and everything else of the kind; 201E2) having only such an 'atomistic account', or: an account that, so to speak, sticks together like grains of sand, are bound to remain unknowable, because such an account is of no help. Therefore Socrates must reject the theory (202C–206C) and tries to make clear that its failure is entirely due to the 'atomism' implied

in it. He suggests (203E ff.) that the compound thing (syllable) is not a mere aggregate of separate things (letters) but rather a unity over and above the elemental constituents and, accordingly, an entity arising out of the constituents as something distinct from them (204A).

So the compound *thing* cannot be a mere juxtaposition either and its constituents are not 'parts' in the sense of the dream theory (205A–E). Rather the compound must be an intelligible whole, knowable, indeed, down to its constituents, inclusively (205E). But that implies another view of the nature of the 'whole'. Thus a man is no longer, as he is in the dream theory (see Cornford, 151), 'a trunk plus a head plus limbs', but rather the substance or essence MAN, being some unity over and above the discernable 'material' parts, as Plato (later on, in the *Sophist*) and Aristotle (in his *Metaphysics*) come to view him. On their interpretation the *logos* will really be an explanation, an intelligible account (definiens) consisting of genus and specific difference.

As to the *Theaetetus*, this dialogue is already most explicit (206E–208B) in rejecting, quite regardless of the dream theory, the view that an account (*logos*) is a mere enumeration of juxtaposed elementary parts. Even if, unlike the dream theory, we hold that those parts are as knowable as the compound thing which they make up, still their mere enumeration will yield no knowledge at all. Any semantical atomism should be dismissed together with any ontological atomism (or: materialism).

As is well-known, the *Theaetetus* concludes with an aporia: all attempts to define knowledge have failed so far (210B–D). However, the discussions there are far from unsuccessful. It is true, a third possible meaning of *logos*: 'being able to name some characteristic mark by which the thing under discussion differs from any thing else' (208C7–8), is also disposed of (208C–210B), in spite of the fact that in giving a characteristic mark, it much resembles the procedure well-known later on of defining things by genus *plus* specific difference. It should be noticed, however, that Socrates is still speaking (as the adherents of the dream theory started to do at 201E) about individual features of concrete natural objects (a wagon, the person Theaetetus, the sun). Though they are no longer (ontologically) regarded as atomistic wholes, the *semantic* atomism cannot be overcome until one ceases to consider particular things *as such* (as is most clearly done at 208D, where 'something common to other things' (D8) is explicitly ruled out) and goes on to relate our semantic behaviour to the world of Forms. It is that conclusion ('classic' indeed) that is reached, again. The correct procedure starting from the intelligible World of Forms will be explained in the *Sophist*.

It can be easily understood, now, why Plato (in *Sophist*, 251A–C; see above) so impatiently dismisses the trivial question of how one particular thing can have many names as not deserving further discussion. The peroration of the *Theaetetus* had already settled such questions, as had been done before in *Parmenides* (129A ff.) from a different point of view. The EV now intends to approach the matter on the level of the intelligible Forms.

A second remark. It should be noticed that in *Sophist*, 252E–253D, the EV puts his view forward by taking up the analogy with the letters of the alphabet. There 'Vowel Forms' are distinguished from 'Disjunctive Forms', the former being of a higher rank than their counterparts in such a way as to make the 'whole' more mean than a mere juxtaposition. And so the fundamental mistake of the dream theory is definitely disposed of. For that matter, the true meaning of 'tissue' (*symplokê*) will be explained later (see below, 15.1; 15.4).

A final remark. That Antisthenes' view suffers from what I have labelled 'double–edged–atomism' is obvious. His assertion that an individual thing bearing more than one name (i.e. its only appropriate name) must itself be many implies, apart from a semantic atomism, an ontological doctrine of a truly atomistic flavour, which makes all things mere juxtapositions of material parts, so that in giving a man, say, three names (e.g. 'trunk–head–limbs') you would make him an aggregate of the parts referred to by those names, (viz. a 'trunk *plus* head *plus* limbs creature'), which amounts to 'ontological atomism', since you are supposed to construct a compound expression ('a trunk–head–limbs') which is nothing but a mere enumeration of separate names ('semantic atomism').

It may be suggested, now, with good reason that the quite popular theory which we know from its description in Socrates' dream (*Theaet.*, 201E–202C) had been adapted by Antisthenes[16] for the sake of his own materialist (atomistic) view, and that, as a reaction to this, Plato wants to give, in fact, his own emended version of the original theory, putting it into the mouth of the EV in *Sophist*, 251C ff. If that is the case, it is more easy to understand why Plato placed the attack upon the fanatics and late-learners at the start of the discussion in the *Sophist*. He urgently wants to dispose, first, of the crude version of the original theory put forward by the bastard Antisthenes, the more so because the latter not only presented a rather 'simple-minded' theory, but was even bold enough to use it as an ironical weapon against the sacrosanct World of Forms.

7.3. *Giving Several Names And The Communion Of Kinds*

The EV now turns away from the trivial question and simple-minded people like

[16] Although Burnyeat is right in locating (101) "the Dream section in *Theaetetus*, 201D–202D firmly within Plato's own philosophic concerns instead of seeking to account for it wholly or partly in terms of alien sources", he seems to overlook that the dream contains Plato's own philosophic concern, at that stage of his development, with some prevailing popular doctrine. Of course, there is a "clash between Antisthenes and the Dream (which) makes it natural to look to the Dream section for indications of some problem arising for Plato out of the role of *logos* in Socratic procedure" (117). However, the clash may be between Plato's and Antisthenes' quite different uses (and adaptations) of some preexisting popular view, which as it simply went was just up Antisthenes' alley. Guthrie, too, seems to confuse (V,117) the popular theory (which he ascribes to "some Sophist or Sophists in the late fifth of early fourth century") with Plato's adaptation of it. See also Hicken [1958:141–5].

the Antistheneans and addresses himself to 'all those who have at any time discussed being (*ousias*) in giving any view whatsoever' (251C8–9). He asks:

> *Sophist*, 251D4–E1: Are we to refrain from attaching Being to Change and Rest, or anything else to anything else, and to treat them in our discourse as unmixed (*ameikta*) and even incapable of partaking (*adynata metalambanein*) of one another? Or are we to lump them all together as capable of associating (*dynata epikoinônein*) with one another? Or shall we say that some can, some not?

The discussion here is about *Forms* (not: particular things as such) as 'mixed up' or 'not-mixed up'. This is easily understood when we consider the contrast between this discussion and that of the previous section (our 7.21–22) and is clear also from the summary at 253B9–10; "now, that we have agreed that the Kinds stand towards one another in the same way as regards mixing up". We shall see presently (below, our Section 9.1), however, that the opposition between Forms and particulars should not be pressed, since it is the Forms *as partaken in* by particulars (i.e. *immanent* Forms) that are dealt with.

A

The three possible alternatives suggested by the EV are now considered. The first ('no Form mixes with any other') is discussed at 251E8–252D1. A number of odd implications seem to follow from this assumption:
(1) Change and Rest alike will not partake in Being (*metechein ousias*); then all metaphysical theories discussed previously (242B–249D) will be sheer nonsense, since in fact all the adherents to those theories attach Being (*proshaptein to einai*) to Change and Rest'[17], the one group saying that things really (*ontôs*) change, the other that they are really at Rest (252A8–10). Bluck is right in pointing (108) to the rather loose sense of 'to attach'; what is attached is indicated here once by the verb 'to be' (*to einai*), once by the adverb 'really' (*ontôs*, literally 'in the way of being'; 'being-like'). Plato intends to refer to people who mix up 'Being' with either Change or Rest which is implied in assertions, Bluck says, such as 'all things *are* changing' (and 'all things *are* at rest' respectively). For in doing so the predicative expressions ('is–in–Change'; 'it–at–Rest') mirror a mixing-up of Change (Rest) *plus* Being. The same holds good for predicative expressions such as 'changes being-like'.

It should be remembered again (against Bluck, with all due apology for the pedantic repetition) that it is not *predication* as such that is discussed here, but *naming*, viz. the unavoidable insertion of the name 'Being' into certain predicative expressions predicated of things. As is easily seen, Being is not *predicated* of Change and Rest in those theories (since the subjects of the statements are, all of them, *things*)

[17] Bluck seems to be quite right in asserting (108) that the crucial point here is that all those people attach Being to *Change and Rest*, not that they attach it (as they also do, of course) to things. He seems to be quite negligent, however, in saying (108, n. 2) that the theories all presuppose the existence of one or the other of these two *concepts* (italics mine). As if Plato would ever care about the existence of *concepts*!

but is part of the description found in these predicative expressions. Cornford is certainly right in pointing out (259) that the 'Being' meant here is not the copula which connects subject and predicate in a statement, but stands for the Form 'Being' (he wrongly has: 'Existence'). He is also quite right in asserting that the view represented by Ritter and Burnet that this section is about judgement (and predication, I would add) is entirely unfounded.

(2) Some special attention is given to the semantic aspect of the first alternative when the EV puts forward (252B8–C9) those who do not allow one man to be called by any name other than his essential name (cfr. 251A–B; see above, 7.2) as champions of the first alternative in rejecting both Communion (*koinônia*) and non-tautological denomination. Those people, in fact the Antistheneans of *Sophist*, 251A–B and *Theaet.*, 201E–202D (see 7.21–7.22), are actually presented as not allowing anyone, on account of a thing's communion with a quality other than itself (*pathêmatos heterou*), to denominate (*prosagoreuein*) it by any other than its own appropriate name (252B8–10). The argument, then, runs as follows: those who reject any denomination of a thing on account of a (supposed) *koinônia* cannot themselves, in point of fact, help using additional names, such as 'being', 'by itself' etc. (252C). Therefore the semantic behaviour of these die-hards is a living proof of the impossibility of the first alternative, no less than of that of their semantic theory.

However, Cornford is mistaken in thinking (257) that the first alternative is analogous to Antisthenes' view that a thing must not be called by any name distinct from its own; "apply that to Forms, he adds, and the result is that a Form can only be named; nothing can be said about it". This may be all true, but it is not the EV's point here, where the Antistheneans appear only in the EV's last argument against the first alternative.

It will be noticed that Bluck (109) gives a wrong translation of 252B8–10 but seems to have correctly interpreted the next lines (252C2–9) as implying that their talk (semantic practice) involves communion with 'Being', 'Otherness' etc. However, I fail to understand what he then adds: "Here again it seems clear that communion implies the possession of an attribute".

B

The second alternative (252D2–11: 'all Forms are capable of mixing one with another') is so simple that Theaetetus himself can refute it under his own steam: Change itself would come to a complete standstill and Rest itself would change, if each were to supervene upon the other; and that is absolutely impossible (D6–11). So only the third alternative is left, then (D12–E8).

However, there is some discussion about the nature of the impossibility of the second alternative. Moravcsik [1962:45] abandons the idea that this passage is simply concerned with 'predication'. To his mind the EV intends to say (at 252D9–10): 'if there were a thoroughgoing universal mixing up, then Change and Rest could not be (regarded as) separate contradictory Forms'. I think he is quite right in doing so. Bluck sticks (111) to the notion that predication is specifically involved here. But this is merely due to his *parti pris* (see above, 5.1; 6.3; 7.2; 7.21).

In fact, the EV is speaking here of the Forms as considered in their mental status, that is, as concepts in our mind [see De Rijk [1977, 107–10]], or names, whether used as sentential predicates or in their primary indicative (denotative) function only. The 'Communion of Kinds', in fact, concerns the two other statuses of the Forms, viz. the transcendent and the immanent ones [see above, 2.4], which are also referred to by our names. The discussion is still about *naming* things (including predicative names), not about predication as such.

C

The third (and only remaining) alternative ('some Forms will mix together, others will not') turns out to be a fruitful one. In fact, it is at the root of all further considerations in the dialogue and will be established as the first basic conclusion in the summary of 258A–B.

The EV compares the Forms, some of which will mix together, others which will not do so with the letters of the alphabet. Of these, too, some do not fit together while others do (252E9–253A2). This analogy will play an important role. Plato distinguishes special letters (vowels) which are conspicuously good at combining and compares them with some special Forms which pervade the whole world of Forms. Well, just as special arts are needed (viz. grammar and music) for finding out which letters can have communion (*koinônein*) with which others, or which sounds with which others, so some science is needed 'as a guide on the voyage of discourse':

253B9–C5: Well, now that we have agreed that the Kinds [*genê* = all *eidê* except for the lowest ones, or: infimae species; see below, 8.4; 9.21] stand towards one another in the same way as regards mixing up (*meixis*), there surely is some science (*epistêmê*) needed as a guide on the voyage of discourse, if one is going on to point out correctly which Kinds harmonise with which and which are mutually incompatible, and especially of course (*kai dê kai*) whether there are some ‹Kinds›[18] that running through all hold them together to render their blending possible, and again, where there are divisions (*diaireseis*), whether there are certain ‹Kinds› running through wholes (*di' holôn*) that [i.e. Kinds] are responsible for the division. — No doubt, some science is needed, perhaps the very greatest of all.

Now the reader is prepared for an important digression on Dialectic before the EV goes on to the next stage of the argument, where the five most important Forms, in fact the ones pivotal in matters of Communion and Division, are dealt with.

[18] For this suppletion, see below, 8.3.

Chapter eight

AN IMPORTANT DIGRESSION ON DIALECTIC

8.1. *Dialectic And The Communion Of Kinds*

In order to clarify the Communion of Kinds an analogy is drawn between the vowels which 'form a sort of bond running through the whole system' (253A4–5) and certain Forms that are 'running through all' (253C1). Just as without the help of vowels it is impossible for one of the other letters to fit in with any other (A5–6), similarly it is the special Forms that make Communion possible and are responsible for Division (C2–3). It seems to be useful to have a look at the impact of this analogy.

8.2. *The Precise Impact Of The Vowel-Analogy*

What precisely is suggested by Plato's analogy of the vowels? Bluck rightly warns us (118) that a great deal more has sometimes been made of this passage than the text warrants. Moravcsik [1962:49] seems to interpret the analogy most strictly and think of 'Being' as being somehow sandwiched between two Forms that mix up, as a vowel comes between the two consonants that fit together. He even compared it with the way in which mortar connects bricks. Bluck rejects (121) Moravcsik's interpretation as probably extraneous to the purpose of the analogy. I think that he is right, the more so as Moravcsik's representation of the corresponding metaphysical texture too closely resembles the atomism so energetically disposed of by Plato in the previous sections. Bluck rightly points (121–2) to the 'pervasiveness' which is clearly suggested by the analogy. It rather excludes such juxtapositions like that of mortar and bricks.

What does the analogy really consist in? First: as grammar is needed in order to know which vowels can combine and which cannot, so dialectic is needed when the Communion and Division of Forms are concerned. Secondly: as there is a distinction between vowels that make combination possible and other letters that need vowels in order to combine, so there are Forms that make mixing possible and others that need them to mix. Bluck distinguishes (124) 'Vowel-Forms' and

'Disjunctive Forms'. However, no such explicit distinction is made by Plato. He then remarks that there seems, in fact, to be only one obvious 'Vowel Form' responsible for Communion, viz. Being, and only one Form obviously responsible for Division, Otherness. He thinks that the use of the plural need not mean that there actually is more than one Form of each kind; it is a result of the plurality of vowels with which the one Vowel-Form is compared.

To my mind, Plato does intend to say that there are more Vowel-Forms. Their function may be compared with that of the Vowels in the formation of words. What he tries to say with the help of the alphabet analogy is that just as in particular words vowels are a sort of bond pervading them all (253A4–5), to the extent indeed that there are no words that do not contain any vowel(s), so all combinations of Forms owe their being to some all-pervasive Forms. Plato is, in fact, going to speak of particular things partaking in (all-pervasive and other) Forms. As a matter of fact, it is the instantiations of the Forms (Kinds), that is, immanent Forms, which are meant by the *pantôn* at 253C1, and at the same time all things which indeed owe their being to their partaking in a certain combination of Forms. The EV's recapitulation of our passage (given at 254B) clearly supports the present interpretation of *panta* (see below, 8.3).

The description of the dialectician's task that follows will confirm this view by clarifying the proper nature of Communion and Division.

8.3. *The Proper Task Of Dialectic*

After he has delivered in the *Phaedrus* his 'not entirely unpersuasive' speeches on Love and Phaedrus has said that it certainly gave him great pleasure to listen to it, Socrates proposes to recapitulate the serious part of its content, to wit a pair of principles of procedure which emerge from those speeches'. The first is, he goes on[2], "to take a synoptic view (*synhorônta*) and bring widely dispersed things (*diesparmena*) under a single form (*idean*), so that one may make plain, by marking out each thing (*hekaston horizomenos*)[3], whatever it is that one wants to disclose (*didaskein*) at the time". He clarifies this by referring to his own marking out of Love; whether it was right or wrong, at all events it was that which gave his account lucidity and consistency. The second is the counterpart of the other, to wit "to be able to cut up ‹every thing›[4] at its natural joints, not hacking at any part like

[1] *Phaedrus*, 265C–D. See Guthrie IV, 408; 428. See also for this and the other relevant passages, Perls, 55–62 and Loriaux [1955:98–108].

[2] D3–E3.

[3] 'marking out by boundaries' rather than the common translation 'defining'. Guthrie rightly points to the fact that the original meaning of *horizesthai* ('setting a boundary') was still alive. "What the dialectician does is to erect a fence, as it were, enclosing an area within which the quarry will be found" (IV, 428, n. 1).

[4] Guthrie's translation (IV, 428: "to cut *it* up") suggests that he is thinking of the one form meant in the first rule. The Greek text does not contain any object and Hackforth and Robin (Budé translation) are right in not adding one in their translations. For that matter, Guthrie (and Diès [1909], 90–1) are wrong in taking the form (*idea*) as the object of the analysis recommended.

a clumsy butcher". In quite the same manner the requirements of 'the art of speaking' (*technê logôn*) are laid down, which turn out to also consist in Collection and Division[5] properly accomplished (*Phaedrus*, 273D–E; 277B–C; cf. 249B7 ff.). Again, he talks there (273E1–2) of the capacity for 'discerning the things that are according to their forms (*eidê*) and embracing each one ‹of these forms› (*kath' hen hekaston*) under a single Form (*miai ideai*), and at 277B5–8 the master of the art of speaking is given the task "to know (*eidêi*) the true character (*to alêthes*) of everything on which he speaks or writes" and this is made more explicit thus: "to mark out every thing, on itself, and, having done that, to go the other way around (*palin*) in cutting it up (*temnein*) according to its forms (*kat' eidê*), until one reaches what cannot further be cut up (*tou atmêtou*)".

From these passages it may be gathered that when observing all kinds of objects of the outside world the dialectician should be able to perceive that though they are widely scattered, they all fall under some single form (e.g. being tree, or stone, or animal, and so on). Well, this specific character must be singled out and disclosed in each of the particulars that have it in common.

The second rule prescribes the dialectician's behaviour with regard to each thing in the transient world. He must carefully analyse it into its natural constituents, according to its natural articulations. For example, a man should be analysed into 'being animal' and 'being rational', not say into having legs, arms and hairs as set against being coloured and being a barbarian, for in cutting him up along these lines, the dialectician proceeds like a clumsy butcher who is unable to bone a sheep properly.

Thus the first rule intends to correctly reveal a specific character (*idea*) *as being* common to a dispersed plurality of things, whereas the other concerns the analysis of the complex character of individual things. It is obvious enough, then, that the first rule makes of the dialectician a man of quick discernment who is able indeed to proceed according the second rule and analyse a thing into such common characters. It may be noticed now that at 277B5–8 the same order of the rules is found, while at 273E1–2 the discernment of each thing according to its natural articulations, to wit its immanent forms, *eidê*, precedes the act of embracing each of those immanent forms under a single transcendent Form (designated here by *idea*). The different order may be explained by the fact that, in the latter passage, the one single idea *qua* main subject of a discourse lies at the focus of interest, whereas elsewhere its orderly disposition is the prevailing issue.

It is most important, I think, to state that in the *Phaedrus* Plato is speaking of particular things and their (common) *immanent* characteristics. What should be analysed properly is the particular thing which appears in the transient world.

In *Rep.* V, 473C ff. Plato explains why philosophers must rule. The philosopher, then, is defined as the lover of knowledge and wisdom and said to be "a man with an insatiable appetite for learning everything" (475C7–9). His position is sketched in the framework of the important epistemological and ontological distinctions

[5] See above, 3.4 and Guthrie IV, 428–30 and V, 266–70.

which Plato made before. Unlike artists who do enjoy beautiful colours, sounds and shapes but are unaware of the transcendent Forms and mistake appearances for what really is, the philosopher sees those Forms as well as the particulars that partake in them, without confounding the two. The philosopher's state of mind is knowledge (*epistêmê*) while the artist and his like have only opinion (*doxa*). What the *Phaedrus* section more explicitly gives as the main rules governing the philosopher's successful action, is implied when Plato opposes the latter's state of mind to that of the believers of appearances. For instance, at 476A–D: "and in respect of the just and the unjust, the good and the bad, and all the characteristics (*eidôn*)[6] the same view (*logos*) holds good: in itself each particular ‹instantiation› is one, but while presenting themselves everywhere (*pantachou phantazomena*) mixed up with actions and bodies and with one another, each of them appears as a multiplicity" (476A5–9); "the man who recognises beauty in itself and is able to discern the beautiful itself from the things that partake in it and, accordingly, never takes the one for the other, is his life, in your opinion, a waking or a dream state?" (C9–D3).

Similarly in the doctrine of the Divided Line (*Rep.* VI, 509D–511E) by which Plato clarifies the diverse stages of human cognition, the important stage called *dianoia* is the recognition of Forms through sensible particulars partaking of them. Just as at *Rep.* VII, 537B–C "a comprehensive survey of the nature of things" (being the fruit of philosophic inquiry) is taken as the aim proper of all education. At the same time, this capacity is the chief test of somebody having (or missing) the "dialectic nature". For he who has the synoptic view is a dialectician (537C7). The synoptic view that is, which perceives the same form widely scattered all over the transient world and, by so doing, sees through the (common) nature of all those diverse things[7].

In the well-known refutation of the thesis that knowledge is perception in *Theaetetus*, 184B–187A the same doctrine is expounded along epistemological lines. Our sense-organs do not act in a disconnected way, but "all converge on one thing,

[6] Where those *eidê* are not *per se* 'forms' in the technical sense of the word. Of course, there are no transcendent Forms of evils. We have to realise that, throughout his works, Plato still keeps on using *eidos* and *genos* also in their non-technical senses. I think, therefore, that Guthrie (V, 97–100) is somewhat too hesitant in rejecting such "Forms". For that matter, there is some explicit evidence for the Platonists' denial of this. See Aristotle, *Fragmenta*, ed. Ross, p. 13. Bad things have characteristics (*eidê*) as well as good ones. The important difference is that the formers' *eidê* are but the characteristic lack of the corresponding contrary Form (or: form, in the early dialogues). See Rist [1967], 291 and Peters, 46–51.

[7] See also some other passages of the *Republic* discussed below, nr. 16.21. Another interesting parallel is found in the *Laws* where Plato describes the higher education of the "real Guardians of the laws", called the "Nocturnal Council" (XII, 968A7). As to virtue (*aretê*), "they will need the ability not only to look at the many but to press on to the one (*to hen*) and grasp (*gnônai*) it, and, having grasped it take a synoptic view of all the rest (*panta*) and relate them to it .... Nobody, indeed, can find a surer way of investigating and viewing any object than the power to look from many dissimilar particulars to one single form (*mian idean*)" (965B7–C3).

a mind or whatever one ought to call it, something with which we perceive all the perceptible things by means of the sense (184D1–5). We can *think* of the object of diverse bodily organs *at once*. Besides it is "the mind itself which, by means of itself, considers the things which apply in common to everything", (185D9–E2), "such as 'being', 'not-being', 'likeness' and 'unlikeness', the same and the other" (185C3–9). So "the mind will perceive through touch the hardness of what is hard and the softness of what is soft, but the nature (*ousia*) of them (i.e. their hardness or softness), i.e. *what* they are (*hoti eston*), their contrariety and the nature of the contrariety, — it is the mind itself that tries to decide this for us, by reviewing them and comparing them with one another" (186B2–9). As in the *Cratylus* (423E), Plato says that besides audible sounds or any other sensible quality there is the nature (*ousia*) of sound, or that sensible quality. It is that *ousia* that the mind seeks (without the aid of the senses) in a continuous process of reviewing and comparing and "calculating in itself things past and present with an eye on those of the future" (186A10–B1).

Guthrie seems to be perfectly right in declaring (V, 103) that "the ontology of the *Theaetetus* is that of the *Republic*" and rejecting any explanation of the doctrine of the *Theaetetus* in terms of pure logic. When Plato speaks of the distinction between "the contrariety and the ousia of the contrariety", this is surely not only meant as a merely logical distinction of 'concepts', as '*ousia*' does not mean 'concept' either (see Guthrie V, 103, n. 1). No doubt, Plato still maintained the full theory of Forms when he wrote the *Theaetetus* (see Guthrie V, 102). However, it should be recalled that in Plato's view the mind starts by observing, comparing and 'calculating' the diverse *eidê as they occur* in wide-spread particular instances, where they are indeed instantiations of the transcendent Forms, which most definitely are different from any concepts abstracted from the particular instances.

The dialectical method of Collection and Division is also described in the *Statesman*, in all due clarity[8] and, as in the *Theaetetus*, along the lines of human perception. After the Eleatic Visitor has referred to the discussions about the Sophist, where it had been insisted that one admit that 'what is not' *is*, he remarks that in their present discussion they cannot help admitting another one, namely that "Excess and deficiency are measurable not only in relative terms but also in respect of realisation of the due measure" (284B8–C1; cfr. D5–6). So measure exists and measurement is involved in all that is brought into being (285A1–3). However, many people have not been trained to study things by dividing them according to forms (*kat' eidê*) and confuse the two types of measurement which are in fact so different, just because they have judged them to be of like nature (*homoia*). As to other things, they commit the opposite error; they do distinguish them but fail to do so according to the proper parts (*kata merê*). Next, the correct procedure is described:

[8] See Guthrie V, 166–75, who is quite right in considering this passage to be "a somewhat clearer exposition of the method than that at *Sophist*, 253D". However, his own interpretation of the latter passage (V, 129–30) suffers heavily from his failure to see the precise meaning of *henos hekastou* at 253D6. For its correct sense, see *Index*, *s.v. heis*.

Statesman, 285A8–B6: The proper procedure is, whenever perception first presents common characteristics (*lit.* 'partnership', *koinônian*) of a plurality of things (*tôn pollôn*), to press on until one can see all their specific differences; and conversely when in a multitude of objects (*en plêthesin*) all sorts of disparities are perceived, not to be shamed into giving up until one has penned all that are cognate into a single enclosure of likeness and included them within a genuine genus.

Guthrie thinks (V, 166, n. 1) it not easy to know, in the passage descriptive of the dialectical method here and at *Sophist*, 253D whether Plato has in mind transcendent Forms or particulars as the starting point for the Collection and Division. However, unlike Skemp, he has opted for particulars, which are strongly suggested by the combination of *polla* with *plêthos*. No doubt, he is quite right in not thinking of transcendent Forms here. However, he seems to be unaware that there is no strict opposition involved between Forms and particulars. Strictly speaking neither the former nor the latter are meant, but the forms as immanent in the particulars; neither the Forms, accordingly, nor the instances but the instantiations. For that reason, *aisthêtai* at 285B1 can be seen with its ordinary reference to sense-perception, as well as *diaisthanetai* (at *Sophist*, 253D7) has a similar connotation in that it refers to the dialectician's capacity for "clearly discerning one Form as it, *through its immanent representations*, is entirely extended over a plurality of things".

Finally, in *Philebus* the dialectical method is discussed once more. Socrates and Protarchus are faced (14C–E) with the troublesome question of how one thing can also be many, as it arises when one posits single forms like man, ox, the beautiful or the good (15A4–6). Three questions may arise then; the first one concerns the assumption of really existing monads; the second is the well-known twofold question concerning the compatibility of being One and many at the same time:

Philebus, 15B1–8: First, whether one should assume such monads as really being (*ontôs ousas*). Secondly, how we are to conceive that each of them, being always one and the same and subject neither to becoming or destruction, is (*a*) *qua* whole (*holôs*) most assuredly this single unity, and (*b*) nevertheless (*meta de touto*)[9] comes to be in the infinite multitude of things that come into being, *either* ‹to be conceived of as› becoming many by being torn in pieces (*diespasmenên*) *or* achieving, as a whole (*holên*), the apparent impossibility of getting apart from itself in appearing one and the same in ‹what is› one and many at the same time.

Guthrie is entirely right in observing (V, 208) that these questions are not to be treated as mere questions of logic, since, for Plato, the one-and-many problem is not a question of logic but of the structure of reality. To solve this problem, Socrates recommends a method "easy enough to disclose but hard indeed to employ" (16C1–2). However, since every discovery of art and science is owed to it, Protarchus' due attention is called for. The method is based on the truth of an old saying that "all things that are ever said to be consist of one and many and combine in their nature limitedness and unlimitedness" (16C8–10). Next the difference

[9] I take here *meta de touto* synonymous with *epeita* as signifying something which could surprise or something unexpected (see Liddell and Scott, s.v. *epeita*, sub 3).

between eristic and dialectical discussion is stated, the former positing its 'one' arbitrarily and its 'many' too quickly or too slowly; it leaps straight from the one to the infinite multitude and fails to see the intermediates. The dialectician's task is then described in terms similar to those of *Phaedrus*, *Sophist*, and *Statesman*:

Philebus, 16C10–E2: This then being the ordering of things, we must assume one single form (*mian idean*) in the case of everything and look for it (for we shall find it present in (*enousan*) ‹everything›; then, if we have laid hold of it, we must look for two forms after the one, if there are two, or else three or some other number; next do the same with each of the 'ones' thus reached until, as to the original 'one', we not only see that it is 'one and many and infinite' but how many. We shall not apply the form of unlimitedness (*tên de tou apeirou idean*) to the multitude (*plêthos*) until we have seen the whole number of its forms intermediate between the unlimited and the one. Only then shall we release each 'one' in all those things into the unlimited[10].

I fully agree with Gurthrie (V, 209–11) that "we may say that any group of phenomena to which we rightly give the same name will be found to have a common nature or form". Again sensible particulars are primarily meant when Plato speaks (at 16D2) of everything (*peri pantos*) and they should be understood when he speaks of 'the unlimited'. Guthrie has rightly observed (*ibid.*) that, for Plato too, "even the philosopher or scientist must start from these [particulars] though scientific thinking is concerned with the higher levels". For that reason, one would do best to follow Hackforth [1945:23, n. 1] who suggests (*ad loc.*) that Plato does not discriminate here between transcendent Forms and particulars partaking in them in that he always has the immanent forms (or rather, the Forms in their immanent status) in mind.

Summing up, the effect of all these passages seems to be practically the same; wherever the Forms are under discussion, Plato's main interest concerns their immanent status, their being present and operative in particular things. Neither the Forms by themselves nor their instances lie at the centre of interest, but the instantiations. It is easy to see that our *Sophist* passage fits very well in this frame-work.

The *Sophist* passage now under consideration, 253B9–C5 obviously calls attention to the twofold task of Dialectic, viz.:
(a) 'to correctly point out which Kinds harmonise with which and which are mutually incompatible' (B11–C1). — It should be noted that reference here is to a *relational* property which implies that the property is, so to speak, ambulant in that one and the same Form harmonises with certain Forms, but does not with others. There is no Form that is *absolutely* harmonious or *absolutely* incompatible. Even Being is not absolutely harmonious with all other Forms. For, once a particular combination is given (say, a particular black man), Being does not harmonise

[10] It is unmistakably clear that, in the stage of Plato's development reflected by the *Philebus* the metaphysical one-and-many doctrine primarily concerns the universal structure of the cosmos as a whole, rather than some as surveyed by human perception. For this development in Plato's conception of philosophy and dialectic, see De Rijk [1965], 70–3.

with some other Forms (i.e. Brute or Whiteness). Accordingly, the phrases 'harmonious Kinds' and 'incompatible Kinds' do not designate certain distinct classes. It all depends on the nature of the *particular* combination in question.
(b) to find out which kinds are responsible (in diverse particular cases) for combining and separating respectively (C1–3). The clause opens with *kai dê kai*, which, as often happens, introduces an emphatic statement ('and what is more important'); hence my translation: 'especially, of course'.

The EV is most naturally interested in the *why* and *how* of (all cases of) Communion and Division. The next phrase '*dia pantôn*' ('running through (or: pervading) them all') is important. Of course, the word *pantôn* cannot refer to the whole collection of *Transcendent* Forms, since, on this interpretation, a rather strange light would be thrown on the real nature of Communion and Division. If it really were the case that some Forms were running through *all* Transcendent Forms and holding *them all* together, what then would befall to Division for which there would be nothing left to do? For that matter, Division is explained in the next lines as occurring when certain different (*hetera*) Forms 'running through wholes' (*di' holôn*) effect Division (C2–3). The Forms thus opposed cannot be associated with the Realm of the Transcendent Forms. Instead Forms must be meant as instantiations, that is, inasmuch as they occur in particular instances. Just as vowels act in *particular* words, so all-pervasive Forms are Forms that are found in all kinds of particular instances. They are in fact responsible for the fact that certain Forms combine into particulars. On the other hand, any communion has some division as its counterpart, since participation in some Forms involves the absence of other Forms different from (or even incompatible with) the ones which are partaken in. Communion and Division are actually performed when, for instance, a certain Form, say *A*, mixes with Forms *B* and *C* but at the same time does not have communion with *D* and *E*, or when Form *B* goes with *D* and *A*, not with *C*. It all depends, again, on the nature of the *particular* combination in question. So our interpretation is being confirmed: the *dia pantôn* must mean: running through all instantiations of Forms (and, thereby, all instances), and the all-pervasive Kinds involved are their bond (cf. *desmos*, 253A5).

What then of the 'wholes' referred to by the phrase *di' holôn* at 253C2? In line with the above interpretation they must also be certain instantiations of Forms, this time taken as 'wholes', whose division from other wholes is brought about by their Forms being different (*hetera*) from other Forms that constitute some other wholes. When actually entering into one particular combination, the combining Forms cannot help excluding others from this combination. The diverse 'wholes' accordingly are particular combinations of immanent Forms mixing together and together constitute the *panta* mentioned at C1. For example, if Form ANIMAL mixes with the Form MAN and BLACKNESS (effecting the combination *black man*), there is no room left for the Forms BRUTE and SWANNESS to join the company, whereas the Form ANIMAL may eventually admit SWAN and WHITE and so make room for *white swan*. Both the former ('black, man–rational–animal–living–body–composite–substance') and the latter ('white, swan–brute–animal–living–body–composite–substance') are wholes and it is the *different* Forms SWAN, BRUTE and WHITE-

NESS that are responsible for their being different from one another, whereas they have the subwholes 'animal–living–body–composite–substance' in common.

8.4. *The Description Of The Dialectician's Practice In The Sophist*

This interpretation is strongly supported by what is said some lines further on where that 'greatest science of all', Dialectic, is described:

> 253D1–E2: Dividing by Kinds (*gêne*) and not holding a certain Form (*eidos*) [*lit.* 'the same Form'] for another one or *vice versa*, is not *that* the proper task of Dialectic? — Yes — So he who is able to do that clearly discerns (*diaisthanetai*) one Form (*mian idean*) entirely extended through many things (*dia pollôn*), though each one (*henos hekastou*) still lies apart, and many Forms, distinct from one another, completely embraced (*exôthen*[11] *periechomenas*) by a single Form, and again ‹he clearly discerns› one Form running throughout many wholes in its being collected together, as well as many Forms in their being entirely marked off apart. Well, this amounts ‹to knowing› how to discern, Kind by Kind, how each set of things can or cannot have communion.

Some comment. I shall argue presently (below, 9.21), against the usual view, that the words *genos* (Kind) and *eidos* (Form) are not just synonyms.

As is quite clear from this passage, there is no reference at all here to any Transcendent Forms that, as such, are 'all-pervasive', but to Forms pervading *many* (*pollôn*, D6) Forms (or: things partaking in them). Bluck thinks (127 f.) that therefore by 'many-pervasive' the all-pervasive Forms, Being, Sameness, and Otherness, cannot be meant here. But he fails to explain how the discernment of such important Forms as Being *etc.* could possibly have been omitted in this description of the true philosopher's task. For that matter, the Forms Being, Sameness etc. *are* included here, as will become clear from a closer inspection of the passage under discussion. First, then, some preliminary remarks.

The EV speaks of a clear distinction of 'Forms' (*eidê*) through a division 'Kind by Kind' (*kata genê*, D1; cf. *kata genos*, at E2). Obviously the phrase refers to the interrelationships between the diverse Forms which from the point of view of logic may be arranged in a hierarchic order [see below, 9.1, our items (4) and (5)]. Any Form (*eidos*, which may itself be considered the genus of another *eidos*, of course) should be correctly inserted into the scheme by way of a clear-cut distinction of the genera (Kinds, *genê*) under which it should be subsumed.

There is some discussion about the genitive case, at 253D2–3, *tês dialektikês*. Does it mean: 'is the proper task of Dialectic' (Cornford) or 'belongs to (the task of) Dialectic' (Moravcsik [1962:51] and Bluck, 125)? The latter are of the opinion that Cornford's rendering might suggest that Division is the *whole* of the business of Dialectic, while it is not, of course, since Collection seems at least as important.

[11] The word *exôthen* ('from without') added to 'embraced' seems to strengthen the connotation of the prefix *peri* in *periechomenas*: 'embracing on all sides' = 'entirely embracing'. Cf. Aeschines, *On the Embassy*, 5: *tis tôn exôthen periestêkotôn* = "any man among those who are standing on all sides around the bar" ("almost the whole city is in the court", Aeschines adds).

However Bluck and Moravcsik start from the wrong assumption that only Division is under discussion here. As a matter of fact, lines 253D1–2 describe the two skills of Collection and Division, as it were, in one breath, as is also clear from the explication given at D4–E2: 'holding a certain Form (the Greek usually has in such cases: 'the same Form') for another' is in fact a mistaken Collection.

The detailed description of the dialectician's task should be seen, of course, as giving further details about what was said on the subject before, at 253B9–C5 (see above, 8.3). Against Campbell [1867, *ad loc.*; followed by others[12]] Cornford takes 'one Form extended throughout many' (253D5–6) to mean: 'one Form extended throughout many *Forms*' and rejects Campbell's assumption that the *polla* ('many things') are particulars, on the ground that 'the whole procedure deals with Forms only' (Cornford, 267, n. 2). But, as has been rightly remarked by Bluck (127), the Greek word *pollôn* must be neuter, as the apposition *henos hekastou* ('each *thing* lying apart') shows, whereas the word used here for Form is the feminine *idea*. So particulars must be intended, not Forms. Bluck is quite right in thinking here of particulars subsumed under a Form (or Forms and Kinds). I shall try to show presently (below, 8.5) that in the *Sophist* all Communion is concerned with particulars, that is, with the Forms *taken in their immanent status*.

The phrase 'each one lies apart' (D6) refers to the material non-identity of the particular instantiations of a Form, of which each one is materially distinct from, though formally the same as, the other in the group of particulars collected.

The phrase 'many Forms embraced by one' (D7–8) refers to those Forms that are all included in one other Form. For the word 'embraced' Bluck rightly refers (127) us to 250B9–10 ('Rest and Change as embraced by Being'). The one which embraces many others must be a higher genus which embraces a plurality of lower genera and species.

The next lines (D8–9) have been keenly debated (see Bluck, 127–30; Crombie [1962], 418). I think the EV intends to say here that the dialectician further knows how to discern one Form throughout many wholes *in its being collected together*, as well as many Forms apart *in their being entirely separated*, where I take, at D9, the two participles *synêmmenên* and *diôrismenas* predicatively, determining the respective modes of being of instantiations that are discerned by the dialectician.

So the following types of relationship are distinguished:

— 253D5–7: '*one Form* entirely extended through *many things*, which each still lie apart'. This concerns any Form whatsoever[13] discerned in many particulars. The dialectician is able to know the true nature of particulars by discerning one special Form running through a plurality of things that have that Form in common. For example, he discerns MAN in a plurality of men, or ANIMAL in a plurality of animals (men, lions, swans, etc.), or BODY in a plurality of bodies (men, lions, stones, etc.).

[12] See Meinhardt [1968], 40, nn. 2–5.

[13] There is no good reason, indeed, to assume, with Bluck (129), that such a Form (his Form *C*) should be less comprehensive than others. One might call a set of particular men 'men' or 'animals' or 'bodies' or 'substances' etc.

— D7–8: '*many* distinct *Forms* completely embraced by *one Form*'. Here all sorts of Forms subsumed under their several genera are meant. For example, BODY with all, or some, of its species (which may themselves be arranged Kind by Kind, as just so many lower genera).
— D8–9: '*one Form* throughout *many wholes* in its being collected together'. Here a higher genus covering two (or more) collateral sets (the so-called 'wholes') of its species (which may be themselves lower genera) must be meant. For example, LIVING BODY including PLANT, LION, MAN etc. and its collateral counterpart INORGANIC BODY including STONE, LIQUID and so on, both subsumed under BODY.
— D9: '*many Forms* in their being entirely marked off apart'. This phrase refers to any set of Forms (*pollas*: the 'wholes' mentioned before) taken quite apart from all the rest. So the dialectician is able to discern a plurality of instantiations that occur together in certain wholes, as marked off from certain other instantiations found in some other wholes. For example, the cluster BODY–LIVING BODY–ANIMAL–LION is discerned from its collateral cluster INORGANIC BODY–STONE–JEWEL.

The lines at D2–E2 contain the general conclusion: the dialectician's proper task is to discern the categorial distinctions and resemblances of all things. So it is quite understandable that Bluck regards (126 ff.) all this as a description of a part of a genus-species hierarchy within the world of Forms. I have my doubts about that, however. At least he seems to be too explicit in illustrating it in a certain hierarchic order (129). What is here presented by the EV shows small sign of the later Porphyrian Tree, since the enumeration of the elements mentioned seems rather unsystematic[14]. Therefore it may be regarded as an enumeration of several types of relationships, rather than an arrangement (let alone, a hierarchic order) of items (Forms and Particulars related).

The whole procedure described at 253D1–E2 should be taken primarily as the dialectician's investigation into the true nature of particulars. The first stage of this procedure (D5–7) concerns some particular, say Socrates, who is described in terms of something which he clearly has in common with a group of other particulars, viz. 'being a man', and at the same time 'being a man' is characterised by its occurrence in particulars other than Socrates.

The second stage (D7–8) is about some particular (Socrates) partaking in many diverse Forms (MAN, ANIMAL, BODY *etc.*) which have certain interrelationships (of one subsuming the other or being subsumed whichever is the case). This stage concerns another way of discerning the true nature of the individuals involved, in recognising, this time, the relationships between the diverse instantiations occurring in the particular under discussion.

The third stage (D8–9) is about discerning some higher Form (Kind) in its different species. Here it is no longer the particular as such that is in the focus but

[14] Meinhardt may be right in believing [1968:38] that Plato's terse description here suggests some schematic formulation of the Kinds current in the Academy, but I would rather suppose that the more technical schematisation of the genus-species hierarchy was elaborated *after* the *Sophist* (whether by Plato himself or in the Old Academy).

its relationships to other particulars is considered. For example, the instantiation of BODY in Socrates is related not only to those of LIVING BODY–ANIMAL–MAN that are also found in him, but also to the collateral set INORGANIC BODY–STONE–JEWEL (etc., etc.) by which comparison he turns out to be not-inorganic, not-stone etc., etc. and so he is taken together with its natural companions, viz. other men, other animals and other living bodies.

The fourth stage (D9) shows the highest degree of extrapolation (abstraction, if you want). Here all the instantiations occurring in a certain particular (Socrates) are taken together and marked off from the collateral set, whereby the formers' occurrence in that particular is left from consideration. This stage seems to come rather close to the later Tree of Porphyry.

The EV's concluding remark (at D9–E2) is most vital to the correct understanding of the entire section. It offers another opportunity to discuss more thoroughly the proper nature of 'Communion' as something that occurs on the level of particulars, not on that of the Transcendent Forms. Again, we may start from Cornford's rendering (263): 'That means knowing how to distinguish, Kind by Kind, in what ways the several *Kinds* (italics mine) can or can not combine'. As is rightly argued by Bluck (130), the word *hekasta* (E1) cannot mean 'the several *Kinds*', since in the Greek the phrase 'Kind by Kind' (*kata genos*; E2) comes after the word *hekasta* which, therefore, is unlikely to mean 'the several *Kinds*'. Besides *hekasta* is neuter, whereas in this passage the feminine *idea* is used for 'Form'. So the neuter plural *hekasta* most likely refers to 'each set of *particulars*' (Bluck, 131). We have already seen that in 253D6 the word *pollôn* must also refer to 'many instantiations of Forms', or many particulars partaking of them.

It should be noticed, then, that it is the instantiations that are primarily considered rather than the particulars, but on no account the Forms in their transcendent status. So Bluck's conclusion (131) that what is said in the summary at 253D9–E2 ('well, this amounts *etc.*') is that "to discern the genus-species relationships *within the Realm of Forms* (my italics) is to be able to distinguish, Kind by Kind, *how each* set of *particular things* (Bluck's italics) can or cannot have communion" is somewhat confusing. He is quite right in viewing the relations of Forms on the level of the particulars partaking of them, but his speaking of 'the Realm of the Forms' suggests that he is also thinking of the Realm of Transcendent Forms. For that matter he actually seems to see two parallel areas, that of the Transcendent Forms and that of the particulars. On his interpretation: "if two Forms have communion with one another, the two corresponding sets of particulars can have it too, and if the Forms cannot have communion with one another, then neither can the sets of particulars" (131). He thinks that this could only be true if the Forms are regarded not as concepts, but as "*designata* of common nouns which are also used in reference to particulars" (*ibid.*).

However, the distinction is not a clear one. Are the designata the Transcendent Forms or the particulars partaking of them? Bluck apparently thought that they are both and can actually be found in the two parallel Realms. To my mind, the designata are neither the Transcendent Forms nor the particulars but the instantiations of the Forms as occurring in the particulars. As we will see later on, the

quintessence of the *Sophist* is that Plato tries to get rid of the problem of participation in putting the parallel areas of Forms and particulars to the background and focusing their ontological *rendez-vous*, the instantiations. It is most significant that he uses the neutral *hekasta*, which cannot refer to the feminine *ideai* (Forms), but, at the same time, the word *koinônein*, which is used for designating a particular's partaking and the Communion of Forms as well. Indeed, the natural place of the Communion of Forms is the transient world, not the Transcendent Realm.

8.5. *Is Any Communion Of The Transcendent Forms Involved?*

As has been argued in the previous section the Communion of Kinds should be looked for on the level of the transient world. It is the instantiations of the Forms that combine or do not combine. Bluck, accordingly, seems to be wrong in assuming two parallel Realms, one of the Transcendent Forms, the other of the particulars partaking of them.

It might be asked, now, whether any particular communion occurring in the transient world should compel us to assume a Communion of the corresponding transcendent Forms occurring similarly in the Domain of Forms, as presumably was Bluck's view.

As a matter of fact, this view was defended by Auguste Diès [1909:89–124]. He refers (94–7) to the *Phaedo* where not only are some opposite forms said to be simultaneously present in the same individual (102B–C; "Simmias shorter than Phaedo *and* taller than Socrates") but also opposite qualities themselves turn out to be mutually exclusive (102D5 ff.). Well, it must be clear enough that such a simultaneous presence (or 'communion') is discussed as occurring (or as definitely *not*-occurring) in particular instances. The former in particular can only occur in the transient world, it seems, in that one particular thing can possess at the same time two opposite characters, by virtue of partaking in two opposite Forms. As to the association of 'three' and 'odd' and 'five' and 'odd', and so on for "half the entire number series" (104A7–8), they are indeed all of such a nature as to never be separated from the odd (104A1–3). However, what is in Plato's interest here is that they all reject the same opposite as does 'odd', to wit 'the even'. At 104A1–3 it is only observed that they are in point of fact always together.

At *Parmenides* 129C–E Socrates acknowledges that if one could show that the (transcendent) Forms among themselves can be combined with, or separated from, one another, then one should be filled with admiration (129E2–4). Next the separateness is proved to be impossible (130A ff.). And it is most significant that, in the ostensible conclusion of all the Hypotheses, at 166C2–6, it is said that "whether there is, or is not, a One, both that One and the Others alike *are* and *are not* and appear and do not appear to *be*, all manner of things in all manner of ways, with respect to themselves and to one another". Even if the ostensible conclusion should be considered a confession of failure (Cornford: [1939:245], which it is not, to my mind), it still is true that Plato in outlining "the foundations of the ontology which underlies all the later dialogues" (Cornford, *ibid.*) places the sensible world, the domain of the Forms' instantiations, that is, in the focus

of his real interest. No trace of any parallelisation of the transient domain with that of the transcendent Forms. On the contrary, the whole dialogue tries to make clear that our world's deficient nature *cannot* be mirrored over there.

As to *Phaedrus*, 265D–266B (discussed above, 8.3) Diès concludes that the natural articulations occurring in the transient world must be mirrored in the world of Forms. However, there is nothing to prove the necessity of such a parallelism. Granting (*con amore*) that all 'natures' depend on the corresponding Forms, nothing prevents us from regarding the combinations and associations as being of this sensible world.

The well-known *Republic* passage (476A–D; see above, 8.3) is interpreted by Diès himself as only concerning a *koinônia* of immanent forms, either of one of them inhering in a particular, or of a number of diverse instantiations in one particular. He agrees [92, n. 247] with Ritchie (*Plato*, p. 96) that "we need not take this passage as suggesting an intermixture of the ideas of good and evil, just and unjust, quâ ideas, but only in the sense that the same action may be good and just in certain respects and evil and unjust in others, and clearly in the sense that the ideas of the just and of the good (of the unjust and the evil) are intermingled in the same action. What Plato seems to mean is that *in phenomenal things* (my italics) we find not merely a single idea manifested in all the members of a class, but that variety also arises from the possibility of the ideas being combined with one another in different ways".

As to our *Theaetetus* passage (see above, 8.3) Diès thinks it himself (94) not very conclusive as a support for the possible relationships between the transcendent Forms.

To sum up the tenets of this section it may be stated that, after all consideration, there is a remarkable lack of straight-forward evidence that Plato ever thought of a Communion of Forms as occurring in their own transcendent domain. It seems to be useful to add this conclusion to that of the previous one, that in the well-known passages of the *Sophist* by 'communion' is nothing else understood but the association of some instantiation of a transcendent Form with a particular instance or the combination of diverse instantiations in one and the same particular'[5].

[5] The various terms used to describe the relationships between Forms (or forms) in the *Sophist* are listed by Cornford [1935:255–6). In a affirmative account we are said to 'connect' (*proshaptein*) two forms. The forms themselves are said 'to mix or blend together' (*symmeignysthai*), or 'to fit together' (*synharmottein*), 'to be consonant' (*symphônein*), 'to accept or receive one another' (*dechesthai*), 'to partake in one another' (*metalambanein* or *metechein*). He remarks (256) that the word *koinônein*, as well as *metechein*, is used of particulars which 'share in' a common Form, whereas 'blending with' is only used for the coincidence of two forms (two 'instantiations', to be more precise). See also Bluck [1975:117] and Guthrie V, 149, n. 3. So Plato's language does not give us the impression either that he has in mind transcendent Forms *as such* combining.

Chapter nine

THE COMMUNION OF KINDS

9.1. *On The Forms Mixing Together As Instantiations*

As we have already remarked, Bluck holds (131) that if two Forms have communion with one another, the two corresponding sets of particulars *can* have it *too* (my italics). So he does not only assume, so to speak, two distinct facts, one occurring in the domain of Forms, the other in the transient world, but he also regards the Communion of Forms as preceding the one which occurs in the transient world. He even opposed an *actual* communion of Transcendent Forms ('if two Forms have communion') to a *possible* communion in the sensible world ('the corresponding sets of particulars *can* have it, too').

As I have already suggested, he is entirely mistaken. To my mind, the Communion of Forms is that of Forms viewed in their *immanent* status. Indeed, formally speaking, Communion takes place between the instantiations, rather than between Transcendent Forms or between particulars as such. But there is a *material identity* between an instantiation (immanent Form) and the particular involved and that is the very reason why Form and particular are referred to in our discourse by the same token, the common name.

Indeed, we should not think of the Communion of Forms as some sacrosanct occupation of the inhabitants of the Transcendent World, as a Sublime and Elite Game between Very Distinguished Lords in their clubhouse ('shall we, or shall we not?') *after* which simple particulars may imitate them in mixing. On the contrary, the Forms meet one another in the sensible world where they mirror themselves in matter (in the intricate way about which we are told in the *Timaeus* and the *Philebus*) and are, accordingly, *immanent* Forms.

This interpretation finds strong support in the text we have just discussed but also elsewhere. At 250B9–10 the EV described Rest and Change as embraced by Being or rather supposes that Theaetetus will conceive of them in such a way. What are we to understand by this 'embracing'? *Either* only our notions ('concepts') of Rest, Change and Being are meant *or* also Rest, Change and Being considered ontologically, that is, the designata of those nouns (names). With Bluck (131) we have to reject the first prong of this alternative (see above, *ad loc.*). But if we view them ontologically, we are decidedly not justified in taking them to be *Transcendent* Forms. For in the Transcendent World BEING does not embrace the opposite, mutually excluding Forms, REST and CHANGE, as this would make BEING a two-headed monster of self-contradiction. Only one possibility remains: to consider these Forms in their *immanent* status, that is, as inhering in particulars which partake in them.

What is said at 253D7–8 should be interpreted along the same lines (see above). We have argued earlier, following Bluck, that at 253D5–7 ('one Form entirely extended through many things') *particulars* are meant, as is also the case in the summary (at 253E1–2). Well, nobody will try to suggest that, therefore (!), Forms cannot be meant. But again, the inclusion of Forms is only possible if we consider them in their *immanent* status.

Later on (see below, 9.22) another argument will be given for taking the Communion of Forms as occurring in particular instantiations rather than in the Transcendent World.

The passage 251D4–E1 (see above, *ad loc.*) should also be explained following this line of argument. Bluck pays much attention (107–15) to the different comments it has provoked. In his view it is natural to assume that the various terms used, 'attaching' (*prosaptein*), 'partaking in' (*metalambanein*), 'associating' (*epikoinônein*), all refer to *predication*, "since predication was the issue where the 'one man with many names' was concerned" (107). We have argued many times that he is quite wrong in assuming this. Moreover, he weakens this assumption a little because of an implied anachronism (cf. *ibid.*, p. 107), but still goes on to associate 'communion' (*koinônia*) with 'attribution', which term he apparently uses in the sense of sentential attribution (= predication). In fact, he always discusses (logical) attaching and (ontological) participation and communion in terms of assertion (statement-making) instead of taking them as occurring (or being implied, at least) in our *naming* of things.

To his mind, the passage containing the second element of our alternative ('all Forms are capable of associating with one another'; 251D7–8) raises a difficulty. "Why should we not", he asks (111), "attribute Change to Rest and Rest to Change?", in spite of the EV's acceptance of Theaetetus' denial (252D4)? He tries to solve this problem by distinguishing the concept 'change' and the designata of the common noun 'change'. Leaving aside the fact that the common noun represents a concept, we may say that he is on the right track, again, inasmuch as he focuses his attention on the particular instances ('designata') of the Forms (i.e. Change and Rest as well). But he goes so far as to distinguish between the Forms in as far as they are universals (the 'concepts') and in as far as they are, *qua* paradigms, the only true designata of common nouns. In doing so he can only think of the Transcendent Forms (not the immanent forms, let alone the particulars partaking in them), since the former alone are what he calls the 'True Designata'.

To his mind Theaetetus does not assert that following the second alternative,

the concept 'change' would be the concept 'rest', but treats 'Change' and 'Rest' as denoting the several instances of change and rest. In this way they might still be described as 'Kinds', but it is then true, still following Bluck's view, that they cannot be attributed to one another. He supposes that his interpretation has several important advantages over any other. "It allows us to admit, simultaneously", he (114) asserts, "(1) that the EV, even when he accepts Theaetetus' verdict, is thinking in terms of attribution, (2) that the example does prove what it is meant to prove, that participation between Kinds is not always possible, and (3) that it is nevertheless possible (as we know it must be) to attribute Rest to Change".

Bluck's exposition is tantalisingly obscure, I am afraid. It contains some pioneering hints of utmost importance, such as that the particular instances of the Forms are involved, but it also shows quite a lot of terminological and doctrinal confusion. First let us have a look at the supposed advantages of his view:

ad 1. the EV thinks of attribution in the general sense of 'attaching a name', not *per se* in the specific sense of 'attributing a name in statement-making'. Well, Theaetetus does exactly the same.
ad 2. why should the example be *meant* to prove that participation between Kinds is not always possible? It is true that it does show (or rather: implies) that Communion (rather than 'participation') between Kinds is not always possible, but what is really *meant* to be proved through an argument *ex absurdo* is simply that the second alternative is foolish, because it would imply such contradictory *notions* as 'Change–Rest', such inconsistent *entities* as 'what is in change *and* at rest similarly and simultaneously' and such foolish assertions as 'change is rest'.
ad 3. it is true that Bluck's thesis allows us to admit that it is possible to attribute Rest to Change. But again one has to take, unlike Bluck himself, 'attribution' in the larger sense of 'naming' (otherwise his thesis falls short)[1].

As to Bluck's thesis as such, we have already remarked before that it is quite convincing in taking the particulars into consideration. However, his distinction between 'concept' and 'common noun' is unsound and is bound to lead to serious confusion (as it did in Bluck's thought too). The distinctions previously made [above, 2.4] between the different *statuses* of the Forms seem more fruitful. The Form has a threefold status:

1. as a *Transcendent* Form, that is, existing separately in the Intelligible World, quite immaterial and independent from human thinking
2. as an *immanent* form, that is, existing embodied in the transient world
3. as *conceived of* by the human mind, or: the form in its mental status.

[1] Bluck's thesis which allows us to explain how to 'attribute' Rest to Change may be useful in clarifying the *third* alternative, but does certainly not help us to understand the fact that Theaetetus and the EV argue against the second one. In fact, when discussing their treatment of the second alternative, Bluck anticipates his own view about the third one.

From the viewpoint of human thinking and name-giving the same distinction runs as follows: Our common nouns (names) may stand for:

4. the Forms viewed by human thinking as Transcendent
5. the Forms viewed by human thinking as immanent
6. the Forms viewed as mental entities (or *noemata*).

Well, as is easily seen, Bluck's proposal to single out the 'concept' of Change etc. is rather unclear because 'concept' is an equivocal term. It can stand for a Form's being conceived of either as Transcendent, or as immanent, or as mental. It seems to be more useful to start with the common nouns (names) and investigate their different meanings (or rather: uses). In fact, this semantic approach is the one which the EV himself uses throughout the entire dialogue.

9.2. *On The Communion Of The So-called Five Kinds*

The EV now returns from his digression on Dialectic to continue the argument broken off at 253C5. Now that they are agreed (253E) that some of the Kinds will have communion with one another while others will not, the EV proposes to consider a selection of Forms from among those that are said to be most important. His proposal is preceded by a short recapitulation:

> 254B8–D2: Now that we are agreed (1) that some of the Kinds (*genôn*) will have communion with one another and some will not, and (2) that some have communion in few cases only, others in many, while others, again, even run through all and there is nothing to prevent their having communion with everything, — let us next follow up the argument as follows and consider not all the Forms (*eidôn*) for fear of getting confused in such a multitude, but a selection from among those that are said to be most important, considering, first, what each of them is like, and, then, how they stand in respect of the power to have communion with one another. By doing so, even if we cannot grasp 'what is' and 'what is not' with all due clarity, at least we shall not have failed to give a full account of them, so far as the character of the present inquiry permits, considering whether there is some means for us to assert with impunity that 'what is not' really is some thing that is not.

9.21. *On The Different Meanings Of 'form' and 'kind'*

Before giving some comment on this important passage, we should first pose a preliminary question about the words '*eidê*' ('Forms') and '*genê*' ('Kinds'). It is commonly assumed that the two terms are synonymous (so Cornford, 261, n. 1; Warrington, 204, n. 1, etc.). Bluck has (133):

> It is interesting that what are called Kinds (*genê*) in 254b appear to be the same things as are called Forms (*eidê*) in 254c. Coming as it does immediately after the discussion of Dialectic, this passage seems to be a clear indication that the reader acquainted with Platonic doctrine should interpret what follows in terms of Platonic Forms.

To be sure, the 'Kinds' certainly are Platonic Forms, no doubt about that. However, is not it rather striking that at 253D1 Plato uses *genê* and *eidos* in one formula: "not confusing two different 'Forms', by dividing the 'Kinds'"? In our passage, too, *Kinds* are said to have communion (254B8) and we are invited to consider special *Forms* (C2).

The simplest answer is that all Kinds are Forms but not *vice versa*. Indeed, the lowest *eidos* (the later infima species) is not a Kind (*genos*). The higher *eidê* may be called by that name as well as by '*genos*'. If they are regarded as subsuming other *eidê*, they are called *genê*, while they are called *eidê* in as far as this relationship is ignored. So it is easy to see that the formula runs 'dividing by *Kinds*', rather than 'by *Forms*', since the basis of their function as the starting point for division is the very fact that they are *genê*.

This consideration may also throw some light on what is meant by 'communion of Kinds' mentioned at 253B–C. On my interpretation, only generic Forms have communion. By this I do not mean the communion of two *collateral* generic Forms, since they are always each other's opposites and are fit only to divide, not to combine. So, as far as a particular's proper nature is concerned, the communion should be understood as the communion of a higher genus with a lower one (or the lowest eidos) and the phrase 'communion of Kinds' should refer to the communion of genera (one genus, actually in each case) with another (lower) genus or its lowest eidos. It should be noted that when communion is seen this way, it bears no trace of the juxtaposition of constituents which was so hotly rejected by Plato in the previous discussion (see above, 7.22)[2], since a juxtaposition always occurs between elements of the same level. Further, on this interpretation, it is as natural that Plato should speak of the communion of *Kinds*, as that he should speak of 'dividing by *Kinds*'.

9.22. *On The Intent Of 254B8–D2*

Next some comment on the passage quoted. First. The EV speaks of an agreement on the following points:

(1) 'Some Kinds have communion with one another and some do not'. This ought not to be seen as a distinction between a supposed group of 'communion-minded' Forms which should be opposed in an abstract way to the class of solipsists that are never supposed to have communion. On the contrary, a relative property is meant and the first thesis agreed means that there are Forms that have communion with certain others, but not with others. For example, assuming that there is a particular man, say Theaetetus, the Form BODY has communion with ANIMAL and MAN, but not with PLANT and DONKEY. And if you see, say, a particular jewel, what occurs is a communion of BODY with INANIMATE and STONE, and division with IMMATERIAL, ANIMAL, MAN and DONKEY, and so on. Incidentally, this is a further argument for the assumption that, according to the *Sophist* at least, the communion of Forms occurs only in the particular instances partaking in them, rather than in the Transcendent World. Therefore the *ethelein*, at 254B9, should be taken as meaning 'to be accustomed', 'to be in the habit of', rather than 'to be willing', 'to wish', 'to be inclined'.

[2] For the view that the higher eidos is contained in the lower one, and that *differentiae* are constitutive, rather than divisive, see also De Rijk, [1980], 36.

It is true that the first thesis may also concern the necessary *exclusion* of collateral genera and species, for instance, ANIMAL and INANIMATE, or MAN and LION. It should be noted, however, that though they do form certain constant classes, yet their non-communion (= division), too, is found only in particular things which partake in one of those opposite Forms. For as we have seen already (say, in the case of a particular man) ANIMAL at one time excludes INANIMATE, whilst at another (say, in the case of a particular jewel) it is INANIMATE that excludes ANIMAL, not the other way around as in the case of particular men.

(2) 'Some Kinds have communion in a few cases (*ep' oligon*, D9) others in many (*epi polla*, D19), while others, running through all (*dia pantôn*), have combined with everything'. The phrases '*ep' oligon*', '*epi polla*', and '*dia pantôn*', are not entirely grammatically congruent, yet combined as they are here they must be regarded as being of a similar sense and taken to mean 'with a few others–with many others–with all others'. It should be noticed in this connection that at 254B9–10 communion between certain Kinds is said to take place *not often*, *in many cases*, and *always*, respectively. It is quite clear, then, that the first two phrases cannot possibly refer to a Communion between Transcendent Forms, since such a Communion would be either *eternally* present or absent. So here we have another clue we should locate the Communion of Forms in the transient world.

Unlike the first part, the second part of the thesis prepares the reader to make a selection from those Forms that have communion. Of these, then, *some* of the most important (see 254C2–3) will be picked out for further discussion.

One may well ask which these 'all-pervasive' Forms are and in precisely what all-pervasiveness consists. As will be seen presently, they are, at least, Being, Sameness and Otherness. These Forms are 'all-pervasive' in the sense that all of them are included in everything.

Of course, two things should be remembered. (1) The EV does not mean that BEING or SAMENESS formally include OTHERNESS, but from the material point of view it may be said that 'what is' ('being') must always also 'be the same' *and* 'be different', as its 'being the same' also includes its 'being different'. (2) When discussing above the same phrase *dia pantôn* it was argued that *pantôn* (at 253C1) does not stand for 'all Transcendent Forms' but for 'all instantiations occurring in particulars'. On my interpretation of the Communion of Forms, we must conclude then that the all-pervasive Forms are those which are found in every *particular* in the transient world. To employ a distinction which was previously made (above, 6.2; 6.3; 7.1): though BEING, SAMENESS and OTHERNESS are formally distinct (i.e. not mutually inclusive), yet they are materially the same, that is, 'what is' coincides materially with 'what is the same' and 'what is different'. It is quite clear from the foregoing that 'all-pervasiveness' is strictly concerned with the transient world and certainly does not occur in the Transcendent World.

On this interpretation, then, the phrase *dia pantôn* (at 253C1 and 254B10) should be rendered as 'through all *immanent* forms', or even as 'through all things', but only if 'things' are understood as the particulars partaking in the Forms involved. So there is no reason to reject the all-pervasiveness of the Forms, BEING, SAMENESS, OTHERNESS, and CHANGE and REST as well, provided that we take them

all as being *immanent*, that is, as occurring in particulars. The immanent forms and the particulars in which they inhere are, and are not, simultaneously being, the same, other, changing and at rest.

To continue our commentary on the passage quoted (above, 9.2) it is striking that not all important Kinds are considered here, but rather just some of what are called 'the important ones' (254C2–4); cf. D4–5: 'What is' itself and Change and Rest are some important ones; *megista*, not *ta megista*; cf. Cornford, 273, n. 2.

They are considered in respect of their nature and, of course, their capability for communion (C4–5). The purpose is to gain a better notion of 'what is' and 'what is not' (D5–8), which is the aim of all investigation from 237B onwards (see above, 7.1). Now, this pious and rather vague desire is given a clear form by sharpening the question: how is it that we may say of 'what is not' that it really is some thing that is not (254D1–2)?

Phrasing the question this way apparently meets the requirement stated at C7, that one should "give a full account of 'what is' and 'what is not'". Well, in fact the question is phrased in such a way that it focuses on what we have labelled earlier as the distinction between 'formal diversity' and 'material identity' which parallels that between a name's indicative (denotative) and descriptive uses. It is just this pair of distinctions that will play the decisive role in the next discussion (254D–256D). In fact what the EV intends to consider 'without failing to give a full account' (C7) is whether there is some means by which — audaciously enough, at first glance — one may use the name 'what is not' to stand for some *thing* that is not. It will appear that it can be done.

A series of antinomies is presented which all try to elucidate the complicated and rather equivocal interrelationships between five of the most important (and, in fact, all-pervasive) Kinds ('What is', 'Change', 'Rest', 'Sameness' and 'Otherness'). Their solution will enable the reader of the dialogue to gain a clearer insight into the true nature of 'What is'.

9.3. *Four Antinomies Concerning The Five Kinds Raised and Solved*

The relations between the Five Kinds are discussed one after the other. They all seem to entail diverse perplexities for anyone who inspects them more closely. For that matter, the perplexity itself is consistent in that the successive antinomies reinforce one another and might be taken as four rounds of one antinomous argument concerning the true nature of the Five Kinds.

9.31. *The First Round: On Being, Rest And Change*

The EV considers first (254D4–5) the relationships of three Kinds, Being, Rest, and Change, and argues as follows:

> 254D7–12: Well, look, two of the three, we say, cannot mix (*ameikta*) with one another ....., but 'what is' can mix (*meikton*) with both; for surely they both *are*. So these prove to be three.

Next, he states that two other Kinds, which are implied in the preceding part of the argument, call for serious consideration:

> 254E2–255A2: Well, each one of them is *other* than the other two, and the same as itself. — But what on earth do we mean by these words we have just used, 'same' and 'other'? ‹Do we use them› as if they [i.e. the designata of these words] are a pair of Kinds distinct from those three, though always necessarily mixing with them, so that we must consider the Forms as five in all, not three? Or are we unconsciously using that pair of denominations (*to te tauton touto kai thateron prosagoreuontes*) as referring, in fact, to one or another of these three Kinds?

In what does the antinomy consist? Most interpreters seem to be on the wrong track in looking for the *meaning* of the premisses and trying to justify them (for example Runciman, Moravcsik, and Bluck; see Bluck, 134–7). But to my mind, this is beside the point. The antinomy simply consists in what we may express thus. Rest and Change are not-mixing (*ameikta*) and *therefore* 'other' than one another: 'what is', on the contrary, is *meikton* and therefore 'other' than the two *ameikta*. So they must be three 'other' (= different) things. But though each being is other than the other two, yet they are each the 'same' as itself. So what on earth do we mean by such (apparently equivocal) words, 'same' and 'other'? A confusion similar to the one concerning the three previous Kinds is bound to occur: are Same and Other distinct from the three previous Kinds, in spite of their necessary communion with them (such as to make the number of Kinds involved *five* in all), or are we just failing to notice that we in fact use the names 'same' and 'other' to stand for just *one* of the three, Being, Rest, Change? So the antinomy seems to be the result of the equivocity of the five names used.

Indeed, the approach is the semantical one: if we say so-and-so, so, how do we *use* those *names*?, the EV somewhat impatiently (with stylistic impatience, of course) asks (*ti pot' au nun*; E2). Notice that the suggested alternative, too, is introduced as a matter of semantics (*ê...hôs.....prosagoreuontes?* 254E5–255A1). The translator, or the interpreter at least, has to take 'name' to mean both the linguistic entity and its *designatum*. However, this is quite common in Greek (as it sometimes is in modern parlance, too); see De Rijk [1980], 37; 44–5. Therefore, any objection on this account[3] entirely misses the point.

Next the EV sets out to clear up the situation by investigating the relationships between the pairs, Change and Rest, and Other and Same. But the attempt will lead to a consolidation of the initial antinomy.

9.32. *The Second Round: On Change, Rest, Same And Other*

The EV starts by undermining what he has been suggesting in his final remark, as far as the four Kinds other than Being are concerned. It should be noticed that the matter is still approached from the viewpoint of name-giving:

[3] Such as is made by Berger, 72–3; see Bluck, 140 n. 1; cf. our note 6 (below).

255A4–B6: But certainly Change and Rest are neither Other nor the Same. — Why not? — Well, whichever name we give in common (*hotiper an koinêi proseipômen*) to Change and Rest, precisely[4] that [i.e. its designate] cannot be either of them, because otherwise Change will rest and Rest, in its turn (*au*), will change. For, then, it holds good for both of them that if either of the two becomes the other it will force the other to transform, in its turn, into the opposite of its own nature, having come to partake as it does through the actual way of giving names of its opposite. — Quite so. — Indeed, but both do partake in the Same and the Other. — Yes. — Let us not, then, say that Change, or Rest either, is the Same or the Other.

There is much confusion among the interpreters about the impact of the EV's conclusion that Rest and Change will both be forced to transform into their opposite natures (255A11–B1) as it seems to imply that, if Rest or Change has its opposite said (of course, they say: *predicated*) of it, it must reverse its nature (see Bluck, 139–43).

Bluck remarks (142) that one has to recognise that Rest and Change are being treated not as concepts, but as *designata* of common nouns, as in the previous argument. As we have seen before, such an opposition is unsound and should be replaced by a distinction between the 'names designating some thing' and 'some thing designated by that name', which are not to be too strictly opposed to one another. The antinomy in fact is due to neglecting such a distinction, as was the case in the first round, too.

Again, the EV refers to some awful consequences of our practice of *name-giving*. Special attention should be given to the tense of the participle *metaschon* (at B1). Bluck is quite right in arguing (156) that "the aorist here strongly suggests that the reference is not to the established and unquestioned relationship of contrariety between Change and Rest (or Same and Other) but rather to something which arises *ex hypothesi* in this particular argument". Well, the hypothesis concerns a certain practice of giving names, as is unmistakably clear from the discussion.

Indeed, name-giving is the pivotal issue and it is that practice of ours that seems to force Rest and Change to reverse their own natures. This is obvious from the EV's words. So at 255A7–8 he asserts: "whatever name we give to Change or Rest, its designate cannot be Change or Rest". Incidentally, Bluck's translation (as well as those of Cornford and Warrington) is less happy in its failure to notice Plato's proper wording. Thus he translates 'whatever we say that *both* Change *and* Rest *are*' (his italics) and seems to disregard the usual meaning of *proseipein* = 'to

[4] The phrase *hotiper an ...*, *touto* ... etc.(A7–8) means literally 'that name precisely' (whichever it may be that we use), *that* ... etc. The generalisation ('which*ever*') is effected by the particle *an* which goes with the *conjunctivus generalis* (*proseipômen*), whereas the suffix '*-per*' highlights *hoti*: 'which precisely'. (Cf. De Rijk [1980], 25, n. 24.) My translation adds 'precisely' to *touto* which in fact takes up the antecedent included in *hotiper*. At 255B6–7 Plato himself repeats the '*-per*': '*hotiper ... touto auto hoper*'. — It should be noted finally that *hotiper* is to be taken as being an internal object of *proseipein* (cf. e.g. *Theaet.*, 152D2–4: 'nothing is one thing just by itself nor can you correctly name it through a thing-name or a qualitative name'). Cf. the phrase *onomata onomazein* (See Nuchelmans [1973], 14–5).

denominate', 'to name'[5], which should be compared with *prosagoreuontes* (at 255A1). Therefore one might better translate: 'whichever name we use ..., its designate .....' etc.[6].

The EV then moves on to consider his earlier suggestion (made at 254E5–255A2), but now with regard to Being and 'the Same'.

9.33. *The Third Round: 'What Is' And 'The Same' Disentangled*

He proposes, for the argument's sake, to conceive of 'What is' (or: Being) and 'the Same' (or: Sameness) as being identical (*hôs hen ti*, lit. 'as something one'). He is himself the first to point out the problems one inevitably finds, then:

255B11–C7: Well, if the words[7] 'Being' and 'the Same' have no difference in meaning, then, once more (*au palin*), when we say that each of the two are both, we shall thereby be denominating (*proseroumen*) them as being the same. But that of course is impossible. — Yes, and therefore it is not possible that 'the same' and 'what is'[8] is one thing. — Hardly. — Then, we may set down 'the Same' as a fourth Form (*eidos*), in addition to the three ‹mentioned above›. — Certainly.

The pivotal sentence (at B12–C1) is commonly mistranslated. Cornford and Warrington have: "when we say that Motion and Rest both 'exist'" and Bluck translates (144): "when we say that Change and Rest *are*" (his italics). Peck is right in objecting (48) that the expression 'the same' is obviously intended to be understood, and is in fact understood, by Theaetetus to mean "the same *as each other*", and he correctly thinks that this is illegitimate. Bluck agrees (144) that the singular *tauton* (at C1) may be adduced in support of Peck's view and that it is true that the substitution of 'are the same as each other' for 'are' would not be justified by the hypothesis that 'Being' and 'Sameness' are identical in meaning. Yet he rejects Peck's remark and rather strangely suggests (145) that the EV's wording is deliberately misleading (but that it is Theaetetus rather than the reader who is meant to be misled). He adds that for Plato the point will have been the general one, that we cannot substitute 'is the same' for every occurrence of 'is', such that the argument looks like the one we had at 250A–B, as he had correctly recognised earlier (144). To his mind, Plato must certainly have regarded the present argument, in one form or another, as valid, for the next argument seems to run along the same lines.

[5] See at *Sophist*, 251A6.

[6] Moravcsik [1962:46–7] is aware of the semantic nature of the argument and is wrongly criticised for that by Bluck (140) and Berger (71), but I have to agree with Neal (140, n. 2) that Moravcsik's treatment of the passage does not throw much light on it.

[7] It appears from the article added to '*tauton*' (so *to tauton*, which is literally 'the same') that the words are meant. To my mind the use of the verb *sêmainein* ('to signify') is not a sufficient reason for translating 'the words' etc. so explicitly. Modern parlance, too, may retain, and in fact sometimes does retain, an apparent vagueness in this respect. See De Rijk [1980], 44–5.

[8] Here *tauton* (without the definite article) and *to on* indiscriminately stand for the names and their designata. The vagueness should be retained; see the previous note.

I think that Peck's objection is correct and Bluck's rejection of it is ill-founded, as is indeed his own comment on this passage. However, both Peck and Bluck start from the usual wrong translation, which disregards the double occurrence of *amphotera*. The EV does not say "when we say that Change and Rest both *are* (or: exist)", but rather (and note the double *amphotera* = 'each of them, both'): "when we say that each of them (*amphotera*) is both (*amphotera*)", that is, if both Rest and Change are 'Change *plus* Rest'. This translation is the only possible one, grammatically speaking, and has the advantage that now the inference is sound. Of course, Plato's argument makes use of what *we* consider to be two different meanings of *amphotera* ('either', 'both'), viz. 'each of two things' and 'two things taken together'. For the sense 'both together', see *Ion*, 541B9–10: 'at once the ablest general and ablest rhapsodist' (*amphotera aristos ôn.... kai stratêgos kai rhapsôidos*); *Phaedo*, 68C1–2: 'a lover of wealth and reputation, one or the other, or both together' (*êtoi ta hetera toutôn ê amphotera*); *Parm.*, 148C8 (D2): 'on both grounds together' (*kat' amphotera*); *ibid.*, 159A3: 'in respect of both characters taken together' (*kata d' amphotera*). — It must be agreed that the 'confusion' is intentional, since at 250A–B Plato opposes *amphotera* ('both together') to *hekateron* ('each severally') as at 250C3 he has *synamphoteron* for 'both together'. Notice the difference between this and the argument at 250A–B. There Being was shown to be something distinct from both Change and Rest and their combination, while here the natures of Change and Rest themselves are discussed in respect of Being.

9.34. *The Fourth Round: 'What Is' And 'The Other' Disentangled*

Next, the EV goes on to disentangle 'What is' and 'Other' (Being and Otherness, if you prefer). He offers a last semantic proposal in order to avoid the conclusion that our five Kinds really are five distinct Kinds. He suggests that 'the Other', at least, may be the same name as 'Being': "And should we call Otherness a fifth Kind?" (255C8–10). Again he is himself the trouble-maker when he points out that there is no means to evade the conclusion that Otherness, too, is a Kind distinct from the other four:

> 255C12–E2: But you will surely admit that among things that *are* (*tôn ontôn*) some are named (*legesthai*) on their own (*auta kath' hauta*), others always in respect to other things (*pros alla*). — Yes indeed. — And that the 'other' (*to de ge heteron*) is only called so in respect to some 'other' thing (*pros heteron*); is not it?. — Yes. — But this would not be so unless Being and Otherness were totally different (*pampoly diephereteôn*). For if Otherness, like Being, partook (*meteiche*) of both types ‹of being named›, then among the 'other' things some thing would be 'other' *without respect to* some 'other' thing. Actually, however, we find beyond all hesitation that whatever precisely is 'other', by necessary implication is what it precisely is in respect of some other. — It is as you say. — Well, then we must mention the nature of 'other' [= Otherness] as a fifth Kind among those we are selecting. — Yes.

Bluck seems to share (146) Runciman's opinion [1962:90], that "Plato surely considered it true to say of any Form that it is (copula) *kath' hauto* — 'non-relational' [to my mind, quite an unfortunate label; see below] — at any rate in a sense". He adds in a note (146, n. 2): "we are not told in this dialogue that all Forms must be *kath' hauta*, but it would seem reasonable to suppose that a Form qua concept (*sic!* De R.) could still be so described. From earlier works it would appear that even Forms whose instances were relational would themselves be non-relational: cf. *Symp.*, 211a–b".

There seems to have been quite a lot of confusion on this account, as may be illustrated by considering the *Symposion* passage. There everlasting BEAUTIFUL is described as something that is "not of the flesh ....; not something that exists in something else, such as a living creature .... or anything that is —, but subsisting of itself and by itself in an eternal oneness, while every beautiful particular thing partakes of it" (211A8–B2). Indeed, here the Intelligible, Transcendent Form BEAUTIFUL(NESS) (BEAUTY) is described as a 'being by Itself' (*kath' hauto*). However, Bluck seems to have had a rather confused notion of what he calls 'non-relational' (*his* rendering of *kath' hauto*), as one page below (149) he supposes that Plato intends Man to be non-relational but Servant (vis-à-vis Master) to be relational. Thereby he seems to use 'non-relational' (Bluck is still using Moravcsik's (47 f.) rather unfortunate rendering of *kath' hauto*) indiscriminately to mean 'subsistent' and 'non-correlative'. In fact, this translation of *kath' hauto* is rather unclear (though Moravcsik does not himself confuse 'relational' with 'correlative', it seems).

The pivotal question seems to concern the precise meaning here of the phrase *kath' hauto*. (For the sake of clarity I have added a digression on the several uses (meanings) of that phrase; see below, 9.4.) We have to consider this question in connection with the entire passage as it stands 255C12–E2.

The discussion clearly starts from the semantic viewpoint. See the words *onomata* in the previous lines (C9) and *legesthai* at C13, whereas the same verb is to be supplied at D1. Besides, in the lines D4–5 'the both types' (*amphoin toin eidoin*) must mean the two ways (*kath' hauto* and *pros allo*) in which things that are may be *named*[9]. For the use of '*eidos*' for 'type', 'sort' *etc.* (quite common in Greek, of course), see *Phaedo*, 97E5 ('any other *type* of cause'); *Cratylus*, 386E8 ('a *class* of beings'; besides 389B10, 390A6, E3, where it has the technical sense of 'form'); *Rep.* III, 406C2 and quite a number of other places in the *Republic* ('this *type* of medicine' *etc.*, besides 402C3 where it means 'Forms', as it does in many other passages in the *Republic*). See also above, 2.11.

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[9] Bluck (following Taylor, Campbell, Cornford, Moravcsik and Runciman) thinks (146, n. 1) that *eidê* refers to the putative Forms 'Relationality' and 'Non-Relationality' (in Moravcsik's terminology). He must concede that they occur nowhere in Plato's theory. Frede is quite right in rejecting (24) all attempts to view the expressions *auta kath' hauta* and *pros alla* as referring to two Forms, since there is no evidence of them anywhere in Plato. He correctly sees them as referring to *legesthai*, but takes, unfortunately enough, this verb to mean 'to be *predicated*' and even neglects the distinction between 'being' and 'being predicated' so that, in fact, he takes the phrases to be referring to the modes of being of entities, instead of to the modes of their being *named*. Of course, the preceding *meteiche* (at 255D4) has contributed to the misunderstanding of *eidoin*. However, for the non-technical use of *metechein* (= 'to have a share'), see Des Places s.v. It may be stated as a corollary that this passage cannot be used any longer in support of Cornford's thesis (281, n. 1) that 'partaking' is symmetrical in the case of Forms.

Bluck's interpretation (148–50) does not consider the EV's own semantic approach at all. He explains the labels *kath' hauto* and *pros allo* as two ontic ones and speaks of 'non-relational' and 'relational' things (or instances), respectively. But Plato explicitly distinguishes between those 'things that are' which are *named* on their own and those which are always[10] *named* after others (255C12–13). He must have had in mind such beings as man, tree, stone as opposed to father, son, daughter, master, servant *etc.* The former can be given names 'on their own', that is, without regard to other entities, while the latter can only be named after their (supposed) relation to some other thing. Compare Aristotle's definition of 'relatives' (*Categ.* 7, 6a36–37): "all such things are said [either *named* or *predicated*] as relative (*pros ti*) things that are either said to be just what they are *of* or *than* other things, or in some other way of relation to something else" [see also De Rijk [1980], 49 ff.].

As is easily seen this has absolutely nothing to do with the *kath' hauto* character of Transcendent Forms, which is attributed to them in *Symp.*, 211A–B (see our item (B1) in the survey given above 2.11). The phrase has, on the contrary, only the general sense of 'on their own', 'being in no need of others' (our item (A), above, 2.11), and even the technical sense of '‹being named› after its own nature' which is found in *Theaet.*, 201E3 (see above, 7.22), seems to be only weakly connoted[11].

Likewise the drift of the whole passage is rather simple: Being and Otherness must be formally different since 'What is' may be named either on its own or in respect of others, while 'Other' must always be named after some other thing; if Otherness, like Being, could really be named in *both* ways, some 'others' could be named after themselves and the correlative nature inherent in 'other' would be lost, whereas correlationality really belongs to the precise nature of 'other'.

It may now be asked what exactly Plato means here by 'things that are' (*tôn ontôn*, C12) and 'other things' (D1). It should be noticed that he speaks of some things that are named on their own, as opposed to some that are always named in respect of others. Bluck says (146) that we must rule out both the possibility that at 255D3–7 Plato is thinking of Forms qua *concepts*, and the possibility that he is thinking of *things* that partake in Otherness and in Being. He suggests (148–50) that the EV is talking here about the Forms, Otherness and Being, but treating them as he treated Change and Rest at 252D and at 254D–255B, namely as (what Bluck calls) 'paradeigmatic standards'. Again, he is tantalisingly obscure in what he exactly means by 'paradeigmatic standards'. On the one hand he

[10] Frede has given (36) an intelligent explanation of the occurrence of *aei* just before *legesthai* (instead of before *pros alla*) and refers to similar uses elsewhere in Plato (*Philebus*, 16C9; *Euthyd.*, 272B1; cf. *Charm.*, 164E6: *legei pros ton aei eisionta* = 'always speaks to those who enter'; *Gorg.*, 464D2: *tôi de aei hêdistôi thêreuetai* = 'she always uses pleasure as a bait to catch'). Thus the common interpretation (Schleiermacher, Taylor, Diès, Bluck) should be preferred to that of Cornford who links *aei* with *auta kath' hauta* as well as with *pros alla*.

[11] So Frede seems to be wrong in taking (16–29) the *kath' hauto* phrase as (primarily) having an ontic reference.

apparently intends this term to mean what I have labelled 'immanent form', when he refers to *Phaedo*, 102D–103B, where *instantiations* of beauty or tallness are said to be *in us*[12]. On the other hand he speaks (*ibid.*) of "Otherness itself *qua* paradeigmatic standard". Bluck was presumably rather confused concerning the paradeigmatic *character* of Transcendent Forms and their paradeigmatic *function* (of being partaken in) *in* the particulars.

Guthrie (V, 146) is well aware of the difference between the 'paradigm' conception of Forms and the notions of 'sharing' and 'presence in'. However, in emphasising the former at the expense of the latter (as he agrees he does) he seems to be neglecting the very purpose of our dialogue, viz. to find 'a middle way between Parmenides' philosophy and the Heraclitean doctrine of total flux, because the former was not a philosophy that could be lived with' (Guthrie, V, 123). He who searches for such a way must emphasise the 'presence in' notion rather than the paradigm conception. It must strike his readers that a few pages further on Guthrie remarks (161) that the Transcendent status of the Forms (called by him their 'exalted status'; 159) does not contribute anything to a solution of the logical problems of the *Sophist* and only causes trouble. In fact, Guthrie fails to see that the paradeigmatic function of the Forms is exercised through their presence in particular things, and the difference between immanent form and particular thing is of such an importance as to save a Platonist from sliding into 'the doctrine of total flux'.

Neal, too, seems [1975:148, n. 1] to be somewhat confused about 'the precise nature of this duality in Being'. His note is the more interesting as it throws light on Bluck's own perplexity which appears from a passage in his original manuscript which Neal has by mischance omitted because as it stood it did not square with Bluck's view). It concerns, in fact, Bluck's unfortunate view of the supposed Forms 'Relationality' and 'Non-Relationality'. Finally Frede, too, confines (12–29) himself to taking the dual aspect of 'what is' to be the basic Platonic distinction between Forms and particulars (see also Neal, *ibid.*), instead of between the transcendent and the immanent status of the Forms. Indeed, Bluck's misunderstanding of the precise meaning of *kath' hauto* (at 255C13) as well as his unclear view of the label 'paradeigmatic standard' has hampered him (as it did Frede) in fully exploiting their fundamental findings concerning what they considered to be the 'ambiguity' of Plato's terminology.

Leaving aside Bluck's terminology (which is rather obscure, I am afraid) it may be said that the solution he suggested seems to be the correct one. What is intended here is neither the particulars partaking in the Forms under discussion nor the Forms in their mental status (Bluck's 'Forms *qua* concepts', 146). Neither indeed is reference intended here to Transcendent Forms but merely to their particular instantiations, which are *in* the particulars, that is, the Forms considered in their immanent status.

[12] See above, 2.44.

9.4. *An Appendix On The Different Uses Of 'kath' hauto'*

The following uses of the phrase '*kath hauto*' (*auto kath' hauto*; *auto eph' heauto*) are found in Plato's work.

A

General use (where its meaning is not further specified): 'by itself', 'in itself', 'on its own', 'being in no need of others':

Hipp. maior, 299C6–8: The pleasure of seeing is not caused by sight and hearing and that of hearing not by hearing and sight but .... each of those pleasures is lovely *just by itself*.

Phaedo, 64C4–5: Is death .... the separate condition of the body *by itself* when it is released from the soul?

Many other similar passages may be found in the so-called 'middle-dialogues': *Phaedo*, 65C5; 66E6; 67C6; E6; 79D1; 83A9–B1 etc.; *Rep.* II, 358B5, D2; IV, 476B11; VII, 516B5, 528B1; IX, 572A2; X, 604A3. The phrase also occurs in the later dialogues:

Theaet., 156E8–157A4: nothing is hard, hot, or anything, *just by itself* (as indeed we have just explained; 156D–E) but it is in their intercourse with one another that all things arise in all their variety. [Cf. however, *ibid.* 152D2–3; below sub B2.]

Ibid., 182B3–7: No doubt you will remember how we were stating this earlier: nothing is, *just by itself*, a definite thing (*hen*), not even the thing that acts or the thing that is acted upon, but as a result of their intercourse with one another .... some things come to be of such or such a quality, while others come to be perceiving.

Statesman, 307E3: 'They want to keep *themselves to themselves* (*autoi kath' hautous monoi*) and to mind their own business'.

Philebus, 18C6–8: 'nobody of us could ever get to know one out of the collection (*viz.* of sounds) *just by itself*, in isolation from all the rest'.

Timaeus, 89D8–E2: 'a minute discussion of the subject would be, *alone just by itself* (*auto kath' hauto monon*) [i.e. without any additional discussion] quite a serious task'.

Critias, 112B3–6: 'the fighting force has its abode *alone*, *on its own* round the temple of Athena and Hephaistos, girdled by a single wall, like the garden of one house'; cf. *Laws* XII, 967A6.

As is seen from this survey, Plato often uses this common Greek phrase in a non-technical sense.

B

Specific uses:

1. *said of the transcendent Forms*: 'Existing by Itself (Themselves)' 'Self-subsistent'

Phaedo, 100B5–6: 'I am assuming the existence of Beauty *on itself* and Good *Itself* and Great *Itself*, and so on'.

Sympos., 211A7–B2: '(the Beautiful is not) something that exists in something else, such as a living creature, or the earth, or the heavens, or anything that is, but Subsisting *of Its own and by Itself* (*auto kath' hauto meth' hautou*) in an eternal oneness, while every beautiful thing partakes in it'.

Parm, 128E6–129A3: 'Do you not recognise that there exists, *just by Itself*, a Form of Likeness and again another contrary Form, Unlikeness Itself, and that in these two Forms you and I and all the things we speak of as "many" come to partake?'

Ibid., 130B1–C3: 'Have you yourself drawn this distinction you speak of and put apart on the one side Forms *by themselves*, and on the other the things that partake in them? Do you believe that there is such a thing as Likeness Itself apart from the likeness that we possess?', and so on? .... And also in cases like these; is there for instance, a Form of Rightness or of Beauty or of Goodness, and of all such things? — And again, a Form of Man, apart from ourselves and all other men like us — a Form of Man *by Itself* (*auto ti eidos anthrôpou*); or a Form of Fire or Water?

Timaeus, 51B8–C6: 'Is there any self-subsistent (*auto eph' heautou*) Fire, and are all those things which we always call, each of them, "Self-subsistent Beings" (*auta kath' hauta onta hekasta*) or are only those things which we see or in some other way perceive through the bodily organs, endowed with true Being and nothing whatsoever besides them?; and are those Intelligible Forms which always are in our mouth, nothing at all, and only words (*logos*, lit. "a formula")'?

2. *said of the sensible things*: 'in virtue of its (their) own nature'

The opposition of this lemma to our (*B1*) might make one assume that this use concerns the *subsistence* of sensible things and expect items such as 'particular man', 'animal', 'stone' etc. to be inserted, all of which, unlike 'white', 'beautiful', 'righteous' *etc.*, have no need of a substratum, being themselves the substrates of qualitative, quantitative, and other properties. However, to my knowledge, Plato never uses the phrase *kath' hauto* to indicate such particular subsistence in the transient world. Of course, we need not at all be surprised at this. Ontologically speaking, the only truly subsistent entities are, in Plato's view, the Transcendent Forms. It is Aristotle who introduces true subsistence to the 'first substances' (*prôtai ousiai*, see *Categ.* 5; cfr. De Rijk [1980], p. 39 ff.) and thereby to the every-day world.

In fact Plato uses the phrase *kath' hauto* with reference to sensible things only in order to indicate their specific nature or their essential constituent:

Theaet., 152D2–3: nothing is just one thing *in virtue of its own nature* (*auto kath' hauto*); cf. 153E4 and 157A7–9; The conclusion from all this is, as we have been saying from the outset, that nothing, *just by itself*, is one thing but is always coming to be several things (I read *tina* instead of *tini*, at A9).

Sophist, 238C10: what *all by itself* [= in virtue of its own nature] is not: see above, *ad loc.*

It should be remarked that equivalent phrases (such as '*kata tên hautou physin*') are also used to indicate the substantial (essential) constituent of sensible things (particulars). For example, in *Soph.*, 250C6–7 (see above, *ad loc.*): "in virtue of its own nature (*kata tên hautou physin*) 'what is' is neither at rest nor in change". (It is quite obvious that what is meant in this passage is particular being, not the Transcendent Form, Being, since the determination 'in virtue of its own nature' is rather senseless when said of a Transcendent Form, whereas it does make good sense to distinguish between a particular and its specific nature).

Of course, the particular's specific nature designated by the phrase '*auto kath' hauto*' is nothing but the *immanent* form it essentially possesses.

Every student of Plato's philosophy will be acquainted with those beautiful passages where Plato associates a man's pure, 'unadulterated' thinking with knowledge of the unadulterated nature of sensible things. It is quite significant, then, that at one moment he understands by 'unadulterated nature' the Transcendent Form partaken in by a particular, and at another the immanent form occurring *in* the particular. See, for example, *Phaedo*, 65E5–66A3, where the man who will grasp at [*lit.* 'will hit'] 'what is' (*ho teuxomenos tou ontos*; A7) is described as "the man who approaches each thing, as far as possible, with thinking only (*autêi têi dianoiai*) without taking into account any of the sense ‹...› — the man who, using unadulterated thinking just by itself (*autêi kath' hautên eilikrinei dianoiai*), sets about hunting that which *in* each of the things there are (*hekaston tôn ontôn*)[13] is the unadulterated self-by-itself [= its proper nature, just by itself]".

It is evident that here the *immanent* form of particulars is meant. A few pages below, however, Plato is undoubtedly speaking of the *Transcendent* Form:

Ibid., 79D1–6: But when the soul investigates just by itself [that is, not by means of the senses, see 79C] it passes into the realm of the Pure and Everlasting and Immortal and Changeless, and as being of a kindred nature, when it has become itself just by itself (*autê kath' hautên*) and free from interference, consorts with It always ‹.....› and remains, in that realm of those Things, constant and unchanging, through its contact with such Things.

About three Stephanus pages further it is *immanent* forms which are meant, but with an unmistakable connotation of the corresponding Transcendent Forms:

Ibid., 83A7–B1: Philosophy encourages the soul to collect and concentrate itself by itself (*autên de eis hautên*) and to trust nothing but just itself (*autên hautêi*) whenever alone by itself (*autê kath' hautên*) it thinks of any of the things that are, alone by itself (*auto kath' hauto tôn ontôn*).

The next passages taken from the *Theaetetus* clearly refer to the immanent form as the ontic constituent of sensible things (to use Boethius' terminology, their *forma essendi*)[14], but, again, the Transcendent Form, True Being is certainly connoted:

Theaet., 186A2–5: Well, under which head do you place Being? For that, above all, accompanies all things. — I should put it among the things which the soul tries to reach at, by itself and without an intermediate. Cf. *ibid.*, 187A5–6; *Rep.* IX, 572A2.

On the other hand the same dialogue offers an example of the use of *kath' hauto* referring to just the immanent form of particular things. So *ibid.*, 201E3, where the phrase is best taken as referring to both the object (subject, in the translation)

[13] In fact, *hekaston* goes *apo koinou* both with *tôn ontôn* ('each of the things there are') and with *auto kath' hauto eilikrines* ('the unadulterated each-self, just by itself'). The present translator found himself forced to subject the English language to an even greater strain than is his normal wont.
[14] Cf. De Rijk [1980²], 141–56.

and the verb [see above, 7.22]: 'each of them *just by itself* can only be named *just by itself* [= can only given its own appropriate name]'.

As is well known, Plato often just uses *auto to* (e.g. *auto to kalon* to mean 'Beauty Itself') instead of '*(auto) kath' hauto*'. It has the same ambiguity as the latter formula and stands for both transcendent or immanent forms indiscriminately.

Quite an instructive passage is found in *Phaedo*, 103B1–5, where Socrates warns an anonymous opponent (see 103A4) that, unlike before (at 102A11–B2), they are now saying that the opposite character itself (*auto to enantion*) could never be its own opposite. It is clear that the formula *auto to enantion* indiscriminately refers to the Transcendent Form and the immanent character under discussion from the addition (at B5): "whether it be the opposite character in us or the opposite in Nature" (*en têi physei*). For the context, see below, 14.2.

As is easily seen, the phrase *kath' hauto* in its technical sense either refers to the Self-Subsistence of a Transcendent Form (our item *B1*) or to the specific nature of a particular in the transient world (our item *B2*). So *B1* concerns in fact the Platonic Forms considered in their transcendent status, whilst in *B2* they are viewed in their immanent status.

Let us see, now, what Plato might put in opposition to those things referred to by the *kath' hauto* formula. One may expect that they will all be things Plato considers to be non-subsistent, that is, either a particular taken as a whole or its specific nature, since, unlike the Transcendent Form, both the particulars and their specific nature (immanent form) are 'non-subsistent'. Well, this use which corresponds to our item *B1* is found in all those passages where Plato opposes both the particular things and the immanent forms (which they possess by partaking in the Transcendent Form) to the latter:

1. '*not-kath' hauto*' *said of both particular things and their immanent natures.* So, for example, *Symposion*, 211A7–B2, [see above] where the Transcendent Form BEAUTIFUL is opposed to what is apparently 'not-subsisting by its own and by itself', that is, the beautiful 'particulars'. Their class turns out to contain both *particular things* partaking in the BEAUTIFUL (see A7, where they are implicitly opposed to the Transcendent Form that *never partakes*) and immanent forms occurring *in* those particulars (see A8–B1 where it is stressed that the Transcendent Form is *not in* something else). See also *Parmenides*, 128E6–129A3 and 130B7–9 where what is meant, are both the particular things ('you and I and all the things we speak of as "many"; 129A2) as well as the immanent forms that the particulars possess ("the likeness that we possess", 130B4').

2. It is obvious, however, that the label '*not-kath' hauto*' can also be used, in correspondence to our item *B2*, with reference to 'what is not a particular's own nature'. This use is most likely to be found wherever Plato is speaking about our naming of things according to their own nature (*kath' hauto*) as opposed to our giving them a name after something else, as well as where he is speaking of our way of considering them:

Lysis, 220C2–5: ‹if .....› evil were to be removed out of our path, and were never again to come in contact either with body or soul, or any other of these *things*, which indeed we call according to their own nature, neither good nor evil ‹.....›

Rep. VII, 528A11–B1: we went on to solids in revolution before studying them in their proper nature (*auto kath' hauto labein*).

Chapter ten

HOW THE FIVE KINDS COMBINE

10.0. After the complete opposition between Change and Rest has been stated at 250A (see above, *ad loc.*) and the discussion of the four antinomies has further clarified the situation holding between the Five important Kinds which the EV is selecting (254B–255E), we may follow the EV in assuming now that their separate identity is firmly established (see also Bluck, 150–1).

Next the EV proposes (255E8–9) to draw some conclusions about the Five Kinds, which may be inferred from (a) their separateness and (b) the recognition (255E3–6) that 'the Other' ('Otherness') yet turns out to be all-pervasive. The combination of the claims, (a) and (b) seems to make those inferences rather equivocal at first glance. The aim of this section (255E3–256D9) is to investigate the power still possessed by the *diverse* Five Kinds of having communion with one another.

10.1. *On 'Change' As A 'what is' And A 'what is not'*

One need not wonder that Change (*kinêsis*) is now picked out as the first notion, since the things partaking in Changeability lie at the very basis of the Communion of Forms:

255E3–256D9: Yet (*ge*) we shall also say that this nature [of 'Otherness'] is all-pervasive, for everything is other than the others, not by virtue of its own nature (*dia tên hautou physin*) but because it partakes in the character of Otherness. — Now, then, taking the Five Kinds one by one, let us say something about them. — First about change: let us say that it is altogether other than rest. — Change, therefore, is not rest. — But change *is* by virtue of partaking in 'What is' (*tou ontos*). — And, again, change is other than the same. — Change, therefore, is not the same. — Yet change, we agreed, is the same as itself because everything partakes in the Same. — So we have to admit without boggling at the idea that change is the same and not the same as well. For whenever we call (*eipômen*) change the same or not the same, we are not using the expression in the same way (*homoiôs*): when we call it the same, we are naming it in such a way (*houtô legomen*) because of its participation in the Same with reference to itself; but whenever we call it not the same, we do so because of its communion with 'the Other' ('Otherness'), whereby it is separated off from

the Same and has become not that (*ekeino*) but some other, so that, this time, it rightly is called 'not the Same'. — So too, supposing change partook *itself* (*autê*) in any way of Rest, there would be nothing absurd in giving it the attribute (*prosagoreuein*) 'at rest' (*stasimon*). — Perfectly correct, [Theaetetus answers] on the proviso that we will agree that some Kinds will mix with one another, some will not. — That, of course, is a conclusion we proved earlier on, arguing that such is indeed their nature. — But, let us repeat: Change is other than the Other, such as it is different (*allo*) from the Same and Rest. — So, according to our present argument, it is, in a sense, not other *and* other. — What, then, of the next point? Are we to say that Change is other than this trio but not than the fourth, once we have agreed that there are five Kinds we have set out to investigate, and that also one by one (*kai en hois*)? — How can we? We cannot allow that their number is less than it was shown just now to be. — So we need not hesitate to assert forcibly that Change is other than 'What is'. — Indeed, it is clear that change really (*ontôs*) is a 'what is not' (*ouk on*) and a 'what is' (*on*) as well, since it partakes of 'What is' (*tou ontos*).

2. in previous passages we found a similar use of *dia pantôn* (as of *dia pollôn* and *dia holôn*) and translated these phrases by 'running through all (many) *particulars*' (or: 'particular wholes'); see above, 9.1 (on 253C1–3; D5–7). There we found cogent reasons to assign (with Bluck, for the latter passage) the all-pervasiveness (many-pervasiveness) of Forms to *immanent* forms and particular instances. See especially above 7.1.

3. the *hen hekaston* (at 255E4) is commonly taken to mean 'each one of the (four or five) Kinds' and, accordingly, to stand for Transcendent Forms. However, on this interpretation the word *hen* seems superfluous. It should be remarked that at 256E1 'each of the Kinds' is expressed by *hekaston*, not *hen hekaston*. Besides, the phrase *hen hekaston* was also used at 253D6 and certainly means there 'each *particular* dynamis' (see above, *ad loc.* and below, 16.3), as *hekasta* in 253E1 must mean 'each set of *particular* things' (partaking of certain Forms); see *ibid.*

4. in a similar context, at 256A7–8 the word *panta* is commonly taken as standing for 'all things', which is correct. There is an implicit reference at 256A7 (in the verb *ên*; lit. 'change *was* the same' = 'change, we agreed, is the same'), which must be to 254E4 (cf. Diès, 369, n. 1, where 254 *d* is a misprint). Well, at 254E4 the EV is explicitly speaking about the separateness of the five Kinds. This might be an additional reason to consider the EV to be speaking here and there of the Five Kinds as *immanent* forms, that is, as Forms mirrored *in* particular things participating in them.

5. the *hen hekaston* (at 255E4–6) is said to *partake in* Otherness. Well, any subject of partaking must be a particular thing, not an immanent form, let alone a Transcendent Form (which is what *is* participated in, of course). Accordingly, the EV must mean here particular things *inasmuch* as they partake in certain Transcendent Forms or (to put it another way) possess an immanent form.

For all these reasons we must regard the EV to be speaking here (as before, e.g. at 255B3) about particular instantiations of the Five Kinds, or the particulars themselves inasmuch as they partake in these Forms.

10.2. *On The Intent Of 255E11–256D9*

Let us consider, then, the intent[1] of the passage 255E11–256D9, where the EV is 'asserting something about the Five Kinds' 255E8–9):

1. (a) 255E11–15; CHANGE IS NOT REST; what are meant here are the immanent forms of Change and Rest and indeed also the Transcendent Forms
(b) 256A1: CHANGE *IS* BY PARTAKING OF BEING; what is meant here is the instantiation (= immanent form) of Change taken together with the particular thing ('what changes'); and the Transcendent Form, Being, of course

2. (a) 256A3–5; CHANGE IS NOT THE SAME; what are meant here are the instantiations (= immanent forms) of Change and Same as well as the Transcendent Forms
(b) 256A7–8: CHANGE IS THE SAME; what are meant here are the instantiations (= immanent forms) of Change and Same, and their particulars

3. (a) 256C4–6: CHANGE IS NOT OTHER; what are meant here are the instantiations (= immanent forms) of Change and Other, and the Transcendent Forms as well
(b) *ibid.*: CHANGE IS OTHER; what are meant here are the instantiations (= immanent forms) of Change and Other, as well as the particular thing

4. (a) 256D5–8: CHANGE IS NOT BEING; what is meant here are the 'instantiations' (= immanent forms) of Change and Being, as well as the Transcendent Forms
(b) 256D8–9: CHANGE *IS*; what are meant here are the instantiations (= immanent forms) and its particular.

It will be seen that each of the (*a*) statements (*1a, 2a, 3a, 4a*) holds good for both the immanent and the Transcendent Forms involved, while each of the (*b*) statements (*1b, 2b, 3b, 4b*) concern both the immanent form(s) and their (its) particular thing(s). So each pair is free from falsehood *if only its terms are taken to stand for the immanent forms*[2]. But whenever they are taken in the (*a*) statements to signify the particular things, or in the (*b*) statements for Transcendent Forms, falsehood rears its head.

Some comment. Just as in the whole preceding discussion the EV uses the semantic approach. This is made perfectly clear by 256A11–B7: *eipômen* (A11), *eirêkamen* (A12), *legomen* (B2), *legetai* (B4) and *prosagoreuein* (B7). The heart of the question is, again, how we can use different names. In the passage 256A11–B7 there is an explicit question about our use of the word 'same', but it can be easily seen that the ambiguity of 'change' (which is clearly recognised by Plato, see esp. 256A11–12) is also involved. In line with what we have stated before, it may be said that at one moment the terms 'same', 'other', 'change', *etc.* refer to the particular instantiations of Forms occurring in particular things, and at another those particulars themselves.

Bluck thinks (152) that Plato's statement at 256A1 ("but change *is*, by virtue

[1] Cf. Bluck, 151–2.
[2] So it can be better understood that the EV does not contrast (in *1b*): 'change is rest' with (in *1a*) 'change is not rest', since the former, then, would have only a chance to be true if referring to particular things. However, this is explicitly ruled out at 256B6–7. See above, 10.1.

of partaking in 'What is'") spoils the symmetry of the four pairs of contrasted statements (see also below, 10.2), but he seems to be wrong. In the first pair of statements, Change is contrasted with its *formal opposite*, Rest, in such a way as to also exclude its partaking in Rest. So the only contrast with what is said at 255E11–15 can be the concession that nevertheless change *is*. The *modus irrealis* used at 256B6–7 shows that Plato rejects the idea that Change Itself (*autê*) partakes in Rest, which rejection is indeed quite natural. Of course this claim does not exclude the possibility that that which is in change may also be at rest. As is quite clear, in the latter case neither the Transcendent Form nor the immanent form is involved, but only the particular thing itself, partaking, at the same time, but in different respects, in both Change and Rest.

In what does the all-pervasiveness of the nature of 'other' consist? The phrase *dia pantôn autôn* (255E3) is commonly rendered as 'through all Forms', whereby 'Forms' seems to be taken as meaning the Five Transcendent Forms (Kinds), Being, Rest, Change, Same and Other. However, some points may be made against this view:

1. if 'Other' pervades all five Kinds, it also pervades itself. But, then, the declarative sentence E4–6 also asserts of 'Other' that it is other 'not by its own nature but by participation in the character of 'Other'', which is definitely nonsense, since no Form *partakes in* Itself. Therefore one might assume that *autôn* at E3 should be taken as referring to the four other Kinds and is loosely connected with D9–E1: 'among those Forms we are selecting'. However, the EV's talk here of the *Transcendent* Forms is to be strictly ruled out, since they cannot possibly be said (as they would, at E4–5) to be (different) 'not by their own nature'. Transcendent Forms, indeed, are whatever they are only 'by their own nature' (*kath' hauta*) and any distinction in them between 'substance' and 'property' would destroy their 'simplicity' ('purety'). So the Transcendent Forms are called 'what is pure and uncontaminated' (*katharou*) in *Phaedo*, 67B2; 'the realm of the *pure* (*katharon*) and everlasting and ... changeless', *ibid.* 79D2; cf. 80B1 (*adialytôi*) and *Philebus*, 52D6–7; 59C2–4.

It may be clear that the whole passage has nothing to do with the different meanings (uses) of 'is', as is commonly said, nor is it concerned with the contrasting of 'identification and predication' (Bluck). What it really does is to table the different uses of the *names* designating the Five Kinds. It was the recognition of the different uses of these terms indeed that led the EV (at 256A10–11) to urge Theaetetus not to boggle at the *seeming* contradictions but to accept the various statements as quite compatible.

Was Plato himself somewhat puzzled on this score, as Bluck (153 and 114–5) suggests he was? After offering his own interpretation of the difficult passage 152D4–E1 (see above, 7.3) he says (114–5) that it may perhaps be tempting to some readers to suppose that Plato, by showing that the attribution of Rest to Change *qua* paradigm virtually amounted to identification, intended to reduce to absurdity and to abolish the conception of Kinds as paradigms. But such a reading (he continues) of the passage is not compatible with any reasonable interpretation of it in its dramatic setting. Bluck thinks, all the same, that there is some evidence that may suggest that Plato was not fully aware of the nature of the distinction between the two ways in which he had regarded Forms. Bluck is even of the opinion that if Plato had been fully aware of the nature of that distinction, he might have been expected to make the EV ask at 251D–E not simply whether some or all of the Kinds will mix together, but also whether some of them will do so in one capacity but not in another. He finds Plato's failure to do so all the more striking in view of 256B6–7, where Bluck thinks that he has found the hint that Change can, after all, participate in Rest and that the very fact that it is only a hint suggests that Plato himself may have been puzzled on this score.

Im am afraid the puzzlement is entirely Bluck's, not Plato's. Of course, Bluck is certainly right in rejecting the (possible) surmise of some readers (he may have thought of the views on the *Parmenides* of scholars such as those mentioned by Guthrie V, 59) that Plato intended to abolish the notion of Kinds as paradigms (see also above, 9.34). But he is definitely wrong in finding a hint at 256B6–7 that 'Change can, after all, participate in Rest', since the *modus irrealis* used there most clearly rules out this possibility (see above, 10.1, and above, n. 3). Plato, therefore, cannot reasonably be supposed to have been puzzled on this account. On the other hand Bluck's confusion about the exact nature of the distinction between the different ways in which Plato regarded the Forms, hampered him in seeing that the distinction involved is not between Forms *qua* 'concepts' and *qua* 'paradigms', but between their paradeigmatic *character* (my label: 'Forms in their transcendent status') and their paradeigmatic *function* (my label: 'Forms in their immanent status'), so that Bluck's two ways should be replaced by three (see above, 9.1, p. 113)[3].

[3] When commenting upon 256B6–7 (152–3) Bluck neglects the *modus irrealis* again and seems, accordingly, to be prohibited charging Plato with being puzzled about the true relationship between Change and Rest.

Chapter eleven

THE REINSTATEMENT OF 'WHAT IS NOT' (256D–259D)

11.0. The last conclusion of the previous section (change really is a 'what is not' and a 'what is' as well, since it partakes in 'What is'; 256D8–9) will be applied now to all of the Kinds and indeed any Form whatsoever (256E6). In this way their diversity (as so many distinct paradeigmatic characters) will appear to be fully compatible with their communion one with another on the level of the transient world.

11.1. *Forms Being And Forms Not Being*

First the relationships of Being and not-Being with the three remaining Kinds and any other Form are discussed:

256D11–E7: It must, then, be possible for 'what is not'[1] (*to mê on*) to *be*, not only in the case of Change but it may be generalised for all the Kinds. For in all of them the nature of Otherness so operates as to make each one of them other than 'What is' (*to on*) and, consequently, a 'what is not' (*ouk on*). On the same line of thought, therefore, we shall be right in calling (*eroumen*) them all 'not-beings' in this sense (*houtôs*) and, again, because of their partaking in 'What is', ‹in saying›[2] that they *are* and are 'beings' (*einai te kai onta*). — Well, obviously (*ara*) in the case of any Form whatsoever 'what is' (*to on*) is manifold but 'what is not' (*to mê on*) is unlimited in number (*apeiron de plêthei*).

Some comment. When Plato states (D11–12) that in the case of all Kinds it must be possible for 'what is not' to *be*, he must mean, in full accordance with all the previous occurrences of such a formula, that the immanent Forms *and* the particular things partake in them equally. So at D12 in *kata panta* ('in case of them all') the word *panta* refers to all instantiations of the Forms (i.e. immanent forms) and,

[1] I use (as before) the phrase 'what is' to mean *to on* absolutely, not for 'what is so-and-so'. It covers both Being (*Ousia*) and 'the thing that is'. As for 'what is not' (*to mê on*) the same holds good.

[2] For this suppletion in modern translation, see above, Ch. VII, n. 10.

thereby, all particular instances (i.e. particulars possessing these immanent forms). The nature of Otherness, indeed, makes each of them other than other instantiations (or instances, respectively) and it makes them, accordingly, a 'what is not'.

It may be asked, now, what exactly here is meant by the phrase 'what is not'? Of course, it does not have the absolute sense ('what absolutely is not') which was ruled out long before (at 236D–238A; see above, 4.21). One still may ask whether the distinction of immanent forms and things numerically different is also involved. The EV apparently means to say:

1. 'what changes' *is not* 'what is'
2. 'what is at rest' *is not* 'what is'
3. 'what is the same' *is not* 'what is'
4. 'what is other' *is not* 'what is'.

So from the viewpoint of indication (denotation), each time what may be meant is just *one* thing whose diverse formal modes of being are discerned, e.g. when speaking about a man (or: stone etc.) and calling him (it) 'x', one may state:

ad 1. x changing *is not* x being
ad 2. x at rest *is not* x being
ad 3. x being the same *is not* x being
ad 4. x being other *is not* x being.

So it can still be said that the word 'Kinds' stands for both the immanent forms and their particulars, but, speaking more properly, it is the diverse immanent forms of the same particular (our x) that are discerned, or: the same particular thing (x) is conceived, or spoken, of according to its diverse immanent forms ('modes of being').

Accordingly, the phrase *ouk on* ('what is not') has a descriptive force (cf. Bluck, 158), not an indicative (denotative) one. It must act, therefore, as what Aristotle will call in his *Perihermeneias* (2,16a32) an indefinite noun (name) such as 'not-man', 'not-stone', to the extent, indeed, that the phrase '*ouk on*' is equivalent to 'what is not an instantiation of any of the other Kinds'.

Next the EV concluded (E2–4) that, on the same line of thought, we may give all of them the descriptive name '*not–being*–so–qualified' (*houtôs*) i.e. 'not-Being such and such', and, at the same time, as partaking in Being, they still are to be said (named) *beings*. He winds up our passage by stating (E6–7) that in the case of *any* Form, not only our Five Kinds, 'what is' is *poly* but 'what is not' is *apeiron plêthei*.

There is much debate about the correct interpretation of these lines. Diès (Budé-translation) most remarkably renders:

'Alentour de chaque forme, il y a donc multiplicité d' être, infinie quantité de non-être'. ("Around each form there is, therefore, multiplicity of being, and an infinite quantity of not-being")

and quotes Malebranche (*Entretien*, p. 4); "ma main n'est pas ma tête, ma chaise, ma chambre ni mon esprit ni le vôtre; elle renferme pour ainsi dire, une infinité

de néants, les néants de tout ce qu' elle n'est point". So he takes *peri* (at E5) to mean 'around' (which is grammatically possible, of course) and apparently thinks that the EV says that any Form is surrounded by a limited multiplicity of being and an unlimited quantity of non-beings. I cannot grasp how Diès understood this. This much seems to be certain, that any presence of multiple beings *around* any Form does not *follow* (E5: *ara*; 'donc', 'therefore') from the previous lines, whereas the '*presence* of non-being around any Form' really sounds rather mysterious, to say the least[3].

Cornford translates: 'there is much that it *is* and an indefinite number of things that it *is not*'. Neal rightly remarks [1975:158, n. 3] that this translation involves taking *to on* in the highly dubious sense of 'that which *it* is' and *to mê on* as 'that which *it* is not'. Bluck assumes (157) that Cornford has probably hit on the correct sense but he has himself serious doubts about the inference as such. He writes (157–8):

> It might perhaps seem strange to infer from the fact that every Kind partakes of Being that there is 'much' that it is, and from the fact that each is distinct from Being that it is likely to be distinct from an indefinite number of things. The more natural inference might seem rather that many things will probably partake not only of Being but of each of the other Forms as well, and that whereas all Kinds alike 'are not' Being, similarly in all probability an indefinite number of things will 'not be' each of the Kinds: 'in the case of each of the Forms there is much that is (partakes of) that Form, and again *what is not that Form* will be unlimited in number'.

He tries to find the missing premiss indispensable for this conclusion by interpreting (158) at D11–12 *to mê on* as 'that which is not *that Kind*'. But from D12–E4 it is clear, he adds, that it is Change and each of the other Kinds that are thought of as being 'things that are not' — the *subjects* in statements denying their identity with Being — and 'that which is not' at D11 is therefore almost certainly intended to be a description of the subject of any such statement. So Bluck comes to the following meaning of the final sentence: "each Kind is distinct from Being and so is a 'thing that is not' and yet partakes of Being and so is a 'thing that is'[4], and in fact it seems that in the case of each Form its 'being' is plentiful and its not-being unlimited in number — it 'is' many things and 'is not' an unlimited number of things" (158). In his view, this last observation is an inference not simply from the fact that each Form is and is not Being, but also from what was said a little earlier about Change being and yet not being 'the same' and 'other', for that too must be true of all Forms: there are many other things, indeed, that each Form is not (Bluck, 158–9).

[3] To my knowledge, all other translators (rightly) take *peri* to mean 'about', 'in the case of'. For this use of *peri* with the accusative (or the genitive), see e.g. *Gorg.*, 490C8; *Phaedo*, 109C1; *Soph.*, 232B2; *Statesman*, 277E8.

[4] Bluck rightly joins (158, n. 2) Runciman's argument (85) that *metechei tou ontos* (at 256E3) cannot, as has been suggested by Cornford [1939:288] and Ackrill [1957:1], correspond to any exclusively existential use of *einai*. This is ruled out by 256E5–6. We have seen above (4.21; 5.1; 5.3–5.4) that it is also incompatible with what Plato apparently understands by *einai*.

Bluck's interpretation is rather obscure. He renders 256E5–6 as: "in the case of each Form its 'being' is plentiful and its 'not-being' unlimited in number" (158). But he does not say in his explanation (157–9) what one is supposed to understand by 'Form' here. For that matter, his previous (somewhat unclear, see above 9.34) distinction between 'paradeigmatic standard' and 'concept' is not sufficient here.

Frede (85) interprets 256E6: 'with reference to each Form not-being is immensely numerous' ('in bezug auf jede Form das Nichtseiende unermesslich zahlreich sei'), which should not be explained in terms of numerical diversity from the Form of Being. He suggests (53; see also Neal, 158, n. 3) that at 256D11–12 and E6–7 to say '*to mê on* (or *to on*) is in respect of X' is an alternative way of saying 'X is *ouk on* (c.q. *on*)'. This may be right, but what is one to understand by a 'Form' X? (using my labels: Transcendent Form, immanent form or the particular thing partaking in it?)[5].

It seems to be useful to set out the line of the whole argument of 255E–256E. The thesis of the all-pervasiveness of 'other' is applied to Change, first (255E11–256D9): Change is 'other' *and* 'not other', including (see 256D5–9) 'other than what is' and 'not other than what is', such that Change is a 'non-being' and a 'being', respectively. Next follows our passage, 256D11–E7. *The application of the names*[6] 'being' and 'not-being' does not only concern Change but the whole domain of Kinds (*kata panta*): everywhere 'Otherness' establishes a special relation to 'what is' ('Being') in that, by partaking in 'Other', every thing is made 'a non-being', in this sense (*houtôs*), while, because of its partaking in 'What is', it still may be *named* 'being'. Then the final conclusion is drawn:

> 256E6–7: as to every Form ‹it may be said that› 'what is' is manifold and 'what is not' unlimited in number.

What does the EV mean? In order to be consistent with all the previous passages we have to assume that he is speaking of particular instantiations of the Forms involved ('immanent forms'), or the particulars themselves *inasmuch as* they partake in them. Well, since the duality of 'being' and 'not-being', 'changing' and 'not-changing' etc. in its positive aspect is always a result of *participation* in certain Forms (*being* by partaking in 'What is', *changing* by partaking in Change, etc.) and in its negative aspect springs from the participation in Otherness, the *particular things* must be meant inasmuch as they partake in those Forms (or: possess those immanent forms). So the 'what is' (*to on*) must stand for 'a particular thing which

[5] In fact, by sharing the common opinion that in the whole dialogue what are mainly concerned are the different uses of the verb *estin* Frede, like the other interpreters, does not have much interest in the different ways of naming the Forms (different meanings of the word 'Form'), which really is at the bottom of the whole discussion. It is remarkable that Owen did see [1971:255] the semantical side of the problems in the *Sophist* as the primary one ("the *Sophist* will turn out to be primarily an essay in problems of reference (indeed! De R.) and predication and in the incomplete uses of the verb *associated with these*" (my italics). However, he did not fully exploit his findings.

[6] For the semantic approach ('naming', 'asserting'), see above, 6.3.

is', and, indeed, this is descriptively manifold, i.e. it has many shapes (in partaking in many Forms, e.g. MAN, WHITE, JUST, WISE etc.). In exactly the same line of thought 'what is not' (*to mê on*) must refer to a particular thing that *is-not* an unlimited number of Forms, (as a result of its *not-partaking* in them), such that it rightly may be described as 'not-having an unlimited number of shapes'. It should be noticed that the label 'unlimited' does not necessarily refer to an infinity of Forms (which does not exist, on Plato's view, to be sure), but to a number that is not a definite one, as in the case of the Forms that *are* partaken in by a particular, their number *is* limited[7].

The remainder of this section (257A1–259D8) should be understood in the same line of thought.

11.2. *The Not-being Of 'what is'*

The EV goes on to say something (cf. his proposal at 255E8–9) about 'what is' itself, which turns out to be affected by 'Otherness' no less than the other Forms. So we have to accept that conclusion without boggling at it:

257A1–11: 'What is', too, must be said, therefore, other than the rest. — 'What is', too, it seems, *is-not* in as many respects as there are other things. For, in not-being those things, it *is* its single self, but it *is not* all that unlimited number of other things. — Then we must not boggle even at that conclusion, granted that Kinds are of a nature to have communion with one another. If anyone refuses to accept that, he has to win over our earlier arguments to his side before he can try to rebut their consequences.

Some comment. On the line of argument prevailing in the previous section ('all Kinds, including Being, are affected by the nature of Otherness', cf. 256D11–E7), the EV concludes that 'what is', too, is other than the rest. Again, the particular things are meant, but, again, inasmuch as they partake in certain Forms different from other Forms. Therefore, they *are-not* in just as many respects as they do not partake in the latter (257A4–5). That the particular thing is viewed just inasmuch its has a certain Form, viz. the one it is called after (e.g. 'man', (the) 'righteous', (the) 'philosopher', (the) 'sophist' etc.), is pointed out by the use of *hen* in the next sentence: it is its single self (*hen .... auto*) and not that vast number of other things (A5–6). So the word *hen* refers to the contrast between the *one* thing that the 'what is' (= particular thing that partakes in Being) *is*, and the vast number of things that it *is-not*. This must be understood, as before, from the descriptive point of view, the 'otherness' concerning *qualitative* differences ('being not so-and-so'), not, as such, different identity. To say it another way, a particular righteous man's being righteous is primarily discerned from his not being pale, or shy *etc.*, and not from another man's righteousness (let alone the latter's lack of it, since the *former*'s not being other 'things' is concerned).

[7] Cf. Bluck, 159: "But 'unlimited number' need mean no more than 'an extremely large number'; and nothing need be included apart from the other Forms".

It should be noticed that, again, it is the semantic viewpoint that prevails in the argument: the *hen* ('its single self') does not single out a thing's individuality as opposed to other individuals, but its being named after one special Form (mode of being), 'man', 'the just', 'the pale' etc.

Cornford takes (289) in this passage *to on* to be primarily referring to the single Form of Being (he has 'Existence', as usual) and assumes that "the conclusion applies equally to what Parmenides meant by *to on*: 'that which exists', the Real, if we understand this as a collective name for all the existing Forms which make up reality". So the EV is supposed to have established the first point against Parmenides' dogma that there is no way in which 'what is' can 'not-be'.

Bluck thinks (160) that Cornford's surmise would seem reasonable, since in what follows the present passage (257B–258C) the EV offers further argument to show that it is possible for 'what is not' to 'be' but says nothing about the converse proposition, so that it is reasonable, indeed, to suppose that we are concerned with that converse here. Bluck thinks, however, it difficult to believe that *to on* means 'what is' here and takes it to stand for 'Being' throughout this passage. In his view Cornford's saying that "*to on* here .... is verbally ambiguous", apart from making the argument unnecessarily captious, scarcely solves the problem, as the natural way to see the expression here would be as referring, unambiguously, to the Form. To solve the problem he takes refuge in what he has called several times before the Form as 'paradeigmatic standard'. However, the same obscurities seem to be involved then as before, all resulting from the obscure meaning of Bluck's label 'paradeigmatic standard'.

The problem is solved if, as before, we take 'Kind' ('Form') to stand for the particular thing *inasmuch* it partakes in the Form 'Being'. So the immanent form of Being occurring in a particular thing is discerned from the latter's other immanent forms. Of course, the differences between these immanent forms are based on the distinctness of the corresponding Transcendent Forms, (BEING, RIGHTEOUSNESS, etc.), as their communion is due to their 'coincidence' in a particular thing.

So Parmenides is indeed rebutted on the first point of his thesis, since it has been proved, now, that 'what is' in a way *is not* (not, however, that 'What is' in a way is not, since the Transcendent Kind, Being, is not concerned at all). The importance of this conclusion against the old Master is stressed by the EV's pathetic warning (257A8–10) not to boggle at this conclusion, since, after the previous agreement, it is quite irrefutable.

11.3. *The Being Of 'what is not'*

Next the second point is made against Parmenides' dogma in showing that 'what is not' in a sense *is*. It is expressly announced by the EV as a second point (257B1) and approached from the semantic point of view, viz. our practice of naming (attribution, predication):

257B3–C2: When we use the expression 'what is not' (*to mê on legômen*), we do not, it seems, mean it as "what is contrary (*enantion*) to 'what is'" (*tou ontos*) but only as "what is other (*heteron*) than 'what is'". — For instance, when we call something 'not-tall', may we not

just as well designate by the qualification (*dêloun tôi rhêmati*) what is ôf medium size (*ison*)[8] as what is short? — When it is said that it is a contrary that is signified by a negative particle, we shall not agree, but only allow that the use of 'not' (*to mê kai to ou*) indicates something different from the names (*onomatôn*) that follow it, or rather from the things (*pragmatôn*), whatever they are, which are referred to by the expression[9] following the negative particle[10].

Some comment. It may be asked what exactly is the difference between 'contrary' (*enantion*) and 'other' (*heteron*). The examples that follow make it quite clear that the EV means the attribution of negative names (expressions)[11]: 'when we *call* something .... etc.' The force of the negative particle is explained as not bringing up *per se* the description contrary to that of the affirmative expression (*'not-large' = 'small'), but only denying the affirmative description, while admitting all others.

Some special points should be made. First. Bluck (163) and Moravcsik [1962:67 ff.] rightly reject the view that *heteron* ('other') means 'incompatible'. Those who hold it think that they can find some support in the example adduced and in the fact that if a thing is equal to something it cannot be also large in comparison with the same thing. As is easily seen, this view is entirely based on the assumption that the name stands for the Transcendent Form [Form (X) is incompatible, indeed, with not-(x)] or the Form (form) in its mental status (or to use Bluck's label, the Form *qua* concept). So this view might be wholly reduced to maintaining the requirement of consistency: 'if you use the name (not-x) for A, your naming A (x) is excluded as incompatible'.

Secondly. The negative expression ('not-x') applied to A signifies A's not-partaking in X-ness, or: A's not possessing the immanent form (x). However, since the expression ('not-x') has the function of a name, one might better formulate it as follows: the expression 'not-x' has materially an indefinite positive significate ('all things whatever ....') but this significate is expressed by the formal exclusion of one certain significate ('all things whatever *that-are-not-x*'). So the negative expressions are not empty descriptions, but *indefinite* ones.

Thirdly. There seems to be something special about the example used by the EV. The negative particle ('not') in 'not-large' does not exclude, it seems, the basic notion of quantity and would seem to mean 'of a certain quantity, but *not*, large'. On this interpretation one could not reasonably say: 'not-large but clever'. On the same line of thought it may be assumed that the negative force of the particle is a minimal one: it does not deny more than is necessary. So the negative

[8] Cf. Warrington: 'of medium height'. For *ison* as 'something between large and small', see *Parm.*, 161D8–9.
[9] *Lit.* 'which the expression lies around'.
[10] It should be noticed that, like German and Dutch, Greek always has 'what-not-is', *etc.* instead of English 'what is not' *etc.* Cf. Owen [1971:238] and Neal [1975:162, n. 1].
[11] which may be used as subject-names or predicative names ('predicates'), but their function in a statement is out of the scope here.

expression is neither an empty description (designating *nothing*) nor does it signify the complete contrary (*enantion*) of the positive expression but only the absence of one special immanent form.

Fourthly. Our previous statements seem to be confirmed by what is later on said about the 'not-beautiful'. This expression, too, turns out to be an indefinite description which designates some 'thing' but without describing it positively (257D–E).

All this can be best explained, it seems, in the framework of name-giving. The negative expressions are *qua* expressions negative but they are not empty nor do they designate nothing. The semantical approach is most abundantly clear in the final sentence of our passage, where an explicit distinction (I definitely do not say: *opposition*) is found between the expressions (our way of name-giving) and the 'things' they are referring to. Notice that 'things' (*pragmata*) is used here indiscriminately to mean the things denoted and the significates of the expressions[12]. The next discussion is of the same type. The nature of Otherness is described as being cut up into pieces and it is asked whether each of them has its own special *name* designating, as Otherness itself, some 'thing':

257C7–D9: The Nature of the Other is, like Knowledge, parcelled out into pieces. — Knowledge, like Otherness, is one, but each part of it that has to do with a particular subject is marked off and given an appellation (*epônymian*) of its own. Hence the appellation of many arts (*pollai technai ..... legomenai*) and forms of knowledge. — The same thing holds good for the parts of the Nature of Other, which is, surely, one. — Is there a part of the Other that is set in contrast to the Beautiful? — Well, shall we say that this is nameless (*anônymon*) or that it has an appellation (*epônymian*)?[13]

Theaetetus answers without hesitation: "it has one" and defines it by describing our semantic behaviour involved:

257D10–11: Yes, it has. What on any occasion we name 'not-beautiful' (*mê kalon*), this is other than nothing but the Nature of the Beautiful.

Notice that what is called the Nature of the Other (Beautiful) is nothing but the Form, Otherness (Beautifulness) as usually not *per se* excluding the corresponding instantiations of the Forms. For this meaning of *physis*; cf. *Phaedo*, 103B5; *Cratylus*, 423A3;E8; *Rep.* III, 395B5; X, 597B6; C2; D3–7; E4; 598A2; 612A4; *Parm.*, 132D2; 158C7. It should be remarked, further, that Theaetetus asserts that the negative force of the description 'not-beautiful' effects the exclusion of Beauty

[12] This is quite common in Greek (as it is rather often found in modern parlance, too). See above, 5.0, n. 1; 9.32, n. 7. For the use of *pragma* for 'significate or form (Form)' in Plato, or rather the 'thing' *as it is conceived of*, see e.g. *Protag.*, 349B3–4; *Crat.*, 390E1; *Soph.*, 218C4; 244D3) and especially 257B9–C2. Cf. Prauss, 190 and our *Index* s.v. *pragma*.
[13] Plato's analogy between Otherness and Knowledge is duly stressed by Lee [1972:267–304]. Unfortunately I did not know of his important paper until now.

only; apart from Beauty nothing is excluded'[14]. It is striking, indeed, that the negative force of the expressions is explained away by Theaetetus to such an extent that they are put on the same level as the positive names designating the several parts of knowledge.

Next the EV sets on to inquire into the 'ontic content' of such negative expressions. This is the more important as, in the end, the 'ontological respectability' (to use Bluck's label, 161) of 'what is not' requires the same approach to be shown:

257E2–11: Well, being marked off among the things that are from a single Kind and again set in contrast with one of the things that are, this surely constitutes the being of the 'not-beautiful' (*to mê kalon*)? — So the 'not beautiful' turns out, it seems, the setting of some thing that is in contrast with some thing that is. — Well, then, on this argument, are we to say that the Beautiful has any more right than the not-beautiful to be counted among the things that are (*tôn ontôn*)? — None whatsoever!

So Theaetetus' underlining of the minimal force of the negative particle in expressions such as 'not-beautiful' is confirmed and strikingly adopted by the EV. The being of the 'not-beautiful', he says, consists in the fact that, among the things that are, it is marked off from just one Kind (the Beautiful) and contrasted with that Kind, that is, indeed, itself one of the things that are. The negative expression does nothing but set some thing as *being*, but in contrast to another being. The 'not-beautiful' has as much right as the Beautiful to be called 'what is'. So the not-beautiful turns out to belong to the domain of things there are; it only is 'not beautiful'. In the semantic framework one may say: our naming some thing 'not-beautiful' does not imply our exclusion of it from 'being', but only from 'being-beautiful'.

Next the same is said of the 'not-large' and the 'not-just' (258A1–6). The conclusion is generalised, then, to the extent that each 'thing' signified by a negative expression is as such a 'part' of Otherness and thereby partakes in 'What is' (Being). So the conclusion is unavoidable that 'otherness' not only does not exclude being *but even includes* it:

258A7–B5: And we shall say the same of all the rest, since the nature of the Other has been shown to be among the things that are, and, once it *is*, its parts also must be counted as things that *are*, no less than anything else. — So, it seems, the setting of the nature of

[14] Keyt's discussion of the passage [1973:303–4] is sagacious enough but fails to put it into its own context. Theaetetus' paraphrasis is not ambiguous, since the correct name of any individual always meets the only requirement to be met, viz. 'being not-beautiful' (rather than 'not: being beautiful'). For that reason it can never be used as a correct designation for Aphrodite ('this not-beautiful thing'). For that matter, Keyt mistakenly (and indeed quite unfortunately) omits the *only*, in Theaetetus' formula: 'different from Beauty *only*'. This is the more remarkable as Plato expresses this *only* quite emphatically by using the phrase 'nothing other than' (cf. Latin *non nisi* as a strongly emphasised *solum*), as is rightly observed by Kostmàn (205–6 and 211, n. 26) who, for the formula *ouk allon tinos* refers (210, n. 17) to *Charmides*, 167B11–C1. Cf. *Sophist*, 247E4 (see above, 5.4). I am afraid, Keyt's difficulties are home-made and his penetrating solutions beside the mark.

a part of the Other'[15] and of the nature of Being side by side in contrast with one another is, if one may say so, no less some being (*ousia*) than 'what is' itself, for it does not signify something opposed to 'what is' but simply and solely (*tosouton monon*) what is other than 'what is'. — Well, under what name are we to appellate it (*proseipômen*)?

Otherness includes being, indeed, and the formal distinction of the two natures, that of 'the other' and that of 'what is', does not amount to denying Being from Otherness (258A11–B4). Therefore the distinctive name one is going to give to 'the other' will be of much importance. Theaetetus is quite sure that the appellation sought for is the expression 'what is not', the meaning of which they were so eagerly looking for because of the Sophist. The EV hastens to draw the pivotal conclusion that 'what is not' unquestionably *is*, since it has its own nature:

258B9–C5: Has it then, as you confirm, no less being than anything else? And may we now boldly assert that 'what is not' unquestionably *is*, having its own nature: just as the large turned out to be large, and the beautiful beautiful, similarly with 'not-large' and 'not-beautiful'? And so, too 'what is not' (*to mê on*), on the same principle, both was and is 'a what is not' (*mê on*), a single Form to be counted among the many things that *are*?

So 'the own nature' of the Other is identified with that of 'what is not'. 'What is not' is equivalent to 'what is other than x'. The negative expression does nothing else but refer to some 'thing' by filling up the empty place (x) and, thereby, signifying that 'thing' as 'not-x'. The frequent use of 'the nature of the other' (256D12–E1; 257C6; D4; 258A7–8; B11) leaves no doubt that the EV regards 'the Other' and thereby 'What is not' as a special Form, to the extent that 'not-large' is not equivalent to 'partaking in some Form other than Largeness' but rather 'partaking in Difference from Largeness' (so rightly Neal, 165, n. 1). This leads us to give some special attention to the meaning of negative expressions.

11.4. *Are There Forms Corresponding To Negative Expressions?*

I start from the passage just quoted. No doubt, at B11 the 'what is not' having (= partaking in) its own nature is, again, the particular thing, inasmuch as it has some immanent form. What is named 'not-beautiful' is given this name inasmuch as it has its own nature, viz. that of Otherness. The double comparison which is meant to illustrate the nature of Otherness (and thereby of 'What is not') is most interesting. Just as what is (named) 'large' is some 'thing' that is large, so what is (named) 'not-large', is some 'thing' that is not-large; and, again, just as what is (named) 'not-large' is some 'thing', so what is (named) 'what is not'

[15] *Tês thaterou moriou physeôs*; not, (the contrast of) "a part of the nature of the other" [Cornford; see especially his explanation, 292, n. 1; Diès ("une partie de la nature de l'autre"); Warrington, Bluck, Lee and others], but [with Schleiermacher (Platon, *Sämtliche Werke* 4, and Rowohlts *Klassiker der Literatur und Wissenschaft*, Griechische Philosophie, Band 5, Hamburg 1958, p. 232 ("der Gegensatz der) Natur eines Teils des Verschiedenen"]: 'the nature of a part of the Other', since the different natures are opposed. It should be noticed that 'nature' is to be taken as immanent nature; see also our next section. — For other adherents of the rendering given here, see Lee [1972:282–3].

is some 'thing'. The EV even calls it 'a single Form among thè many things that are'. Of course, this single Form is not the Transcendent Form as such but in as far as partaken in by some particular thing and is, therefore, considered in its immanent status. This immanent form of Otherness (Not-being) is indeed among the things that are[16].

How about the 'parts of Otherness', 'not-beautiful', 'not-large' and so on? Are they, too, Forms among the things that are, just as the whole (Otherness) they are parts of? This is rightly considered to be the main question here.

It should be remarked, first, that what are meant by 'parts' must be immanent forms of otherness occurring in particulars partaking in (the Transcendent Form) Otherness. But are they unavoidably negative Forms (*'Not-Beautiful', *'Not-Large' and so on), as might be suggested by the comparison given at 257C–D, where the parts of Knowledge have turned out to be as really *being* as Knowledge itself? Bluck is right in warning (168) that since it is always rash to press Plato's analogies beyond their expressed purpose, there is no need to assume that if there are Forms of particular branches of knowledge, there must also be Forms corresponding to the 'parts' of Otherness.

It appears from 257C–D (see above, 11.3) that the negative force of a description like 'not-beatiful' only effects the exclusion of Beauty; nothing else is excluded. However, Cornford seems to be wrong in thinking (290) that the expression 'not-beautiful' is a collective name for all the (transcendent) Forms there are other than the single Form, 'Beautiful'. He takes 'the not-beautiful' to be a special name for this part of the Other, just as the various species ('parts') of knowledge have special names. Frede (92 ff.) goes as far as to most explicitly defend the existence of negative Forms in the *Sophist* and tries to explain away the counter-evidence of *Statesman*, 262B ff. by suggesting that the limitation imposed there is a later development in Plato's thinking. On the other hand, Peck [1952:51–2; cf. [1962], 64] rejects the view that negative expressions should refer to negative Forms.

As a matter of fact 'negative Forms' seem to be rather strange candidates for a place in the Ideal World. In what should their perfection consist? Is the supposed Transcendent Form *'Not-beautiful' to be taken as *'Absolute Ugliness'? Such a surmise must lead to sheer nonsense, indeed, for, then, the less (*sic!*) the participation, the better a thing's condition would be. Besides, to Plato's mind *'Absolute Ugliness' must be identical with *'Absolute Not-being' and, accordingly, completely coincide with all other supposed negative Forms, *'Not-just', *'Not-gentle', *'Not-love', and so on. But such a formal coincidence is strictly ruled out by the EV's remark (at 257C) that 'Otherness' has *different* 'parts'.

[16] Hence Frede's attempt [88–9] to show that at 257C11–12 (unlike [*sic!*] 255D9, 256E1, 257C6, D4; 258A8; A11; D7) *hê tou kalou physis* does not mean 'the Form of the Beautiful' but just 'what is beautiful' lacks good sense, since he unnecessarily opposes the transcendent status of a Form to its immanent status. Indeed, especially in the later dialogues the formula refers, for the main part, indiscriminately to both some particular things *as partaking in* a Form and that Transcendent Form ('Nature') itself as well.

We have the explicit testimony of Aristotle and Alexander of Aphrodisias that the Platonists did not accept Forms corresponding to negative expressions:

> Aristotle, *Metaphys.* A9, 990b9–14 (cfr. M4, 1079a4–10): Of the ways in which we [Platonists] prove that the Forms exist, none is convincing, for from some no inference necessarily follows, and from some arise Forms even of things of which we think there are no Forms. So .... according to the 'one over many' argument there will be Forms even of negative expressions (*apophaseôn*).

In his comments on this passage Alexander quotes from the first Book of Aristotle's lost work *Peri Ideôn*, where the author explains the above argument[17]. The 'one over many' argument, he says, involves the Platonists in setting up Forms answering to negative expressions and things that are not (*tôn mê ontôn*). For even a negative expression is said as one and the same of many things and also about things that are not, and yet it is not the same as any of the things of which it is verified. For 'not-man' is said both of horse and dog and of everything except man, and is, accordingly, a 'one over many' and yet not the same as any of the things it is said of. So there would be Forms of negative expressions, he concludes, which is absurd (*hoper estin atopon*), for how could there ever be a Form of not-being (*tou mê einai*)? If one is to accept this, there will be one Form of dissimilar (*anhomogenôn*) and entirely different things (e.g. of line and man), since all such things are 'not-horses'.

Plato himself most clearly rejects in the *Statesman* the view that there are Forms which correspond to negative expressions such as 'not-Greek' ('barbarian'). One often objects that the passage only affords evidence that such 'Forms' are of no use in Division. But it cannot be denied that Plato is there warning that we should not be thinking of Forms which answer to negative expressions. The whole drift of the passage (262B–E) is to avoid making divisions which do not correspond to Divisions found between real Forms[18]. This is perfectly in line with the instruction of *Phaedrus*, 265E that in dividing into Forms we should follow the objective articulations of Being and not 'hack off parts like a clumsy butcher' (cf. *Statesman*, 262B1–2).

But what about Plato's explicit talk of *parts* of 'Otherness', (Otherness being itself a transcendent Form; see above, 11.3)? Answering this decisive question requires that one gives an answer, first, to the general question whether or not *parts* of Transcendent Forms are themselves Transcendent Forms, or just forms immanent in particular things.

Well, in the early dialogues the parts of the Socratic *eidê* ('forms') seem themselves to be forms as well. So *Euthyphro*, 12C6: "Reverence is a part of Fear, the Uneven is a part of Number"); *Laches*, 199E7 ("Courage is one of the parts of Virtue", cf. 198A); *Protag.*, 329D–330C. Whereas the *Euthyphro* passage may still be explained as primarily dealing only with a Socratic statement of conceptual

[17] See Aristoteles, *Fragmenta selecta*, recogn. W.D. Ross (Oxford 1955), 123.
[18] So Frede's (unsuccessful) attempt to explain the *Statesman* passage away by assuming that it should represent a later development, is quite understandable.

relationship (between 'reverence' subsumed under 'fear'; see 12C5: "fear is wider in extent than reverence"), the other ones clearly deal with such relationships in an ontological context. So *Laches*, 199E–200A discusses 'the nature of courage'; and *Protag.*, 329D–330C is about Justice as some 'thing', with the famous formula referring to the existence of ontic forms as viewed apart from particular things ("is there such 'thing' (*pragma*) as Justice, or not?"; 330B8–C1).

However, as has been earlier remarked (see above, Ch. II), the Socratic eidos found in the earlier dialogues is to be considered an ontic characteristic *present in* a particular thing and, accordingly, is something different from the Platonic Transcendent Form as it is found in the middle and later dialogues. So in *Statesman*, 306–307 the situation is quite different. There the 'Visitor' impresses (306B6–7) upon the young Socrates the necessity of saying something startling to the effect that wisdom and courage are both 'parts' of virtue. They are, in a sense, 'fiercely hostile' to one another and ranged in opposition to each other *as residing in many of the things there are* (*en pollois tôn ontôn*; 306B10–11). The Visitor warns Socrates that he really means to say something different from what is commonly believed, since the usual statement is that the several parts of Virtue are all in mutual harmony. He proposes to have a closer inspection and see whether the position is quite so simple as that or whether in fact there is far more often strife between the several parts. Next he suggests searching among all things (*en tois sympasi*; C7) for whatever we call excellent (*hosa kala men legomen*; C7–8) and yet classify under mutually opposed Forms. He tries to clarify what he has in mind (*auto*) by considering more closely the opposing kinds (*genesi*; 306E2–3), or rather our semantic behaviour[19] when we encounter such occurrences. In fact, we use, for instance, the same name (*onoma*) or appellation (*prosrhêsis*), 'vigour(ous)' in order to express our approval of either swiftness of mind, or body, or the vibrant power of the voice. On the other hand, there are particular cases in which we approve other things by using a name quite different from the above-mentioned, viz. 'controlled' (*to tês kosmiotêtos onoma*; 307B2).

It should be noticed that all those oppositions are found in the particular instances. The Visitor is most explicit about that. Having been asked by Socrates where these conflicts occur, he replies: "in all the things we have just considered and in many others, too" (307C9–D1). Well, they were considering beautiful *things* (*hosa kala*), and so on.

Likewise in *Timaeus*, 30C "any nature which exists as a part only" is considered 'an imperfect thing' (30C5–7), such that 'parts' must mean particular instantiations of Forms, not Transcendent Forms as such that were parts of other Forms.

Finally, *Laws* XII, 963A–964B may be mentioned in this respect. After the Athenian has asked what it is that we must be so anxious to discern, in itself as well as in its various occurrences (963C), he gives as an illustration our practice

[19] Compare 261E3 ff. and also 265C4, where the Visitor prefers to use a phrase or compound name (*logos* = description or enumeration of characteristics) to 'using a simple name' (*onomazein*).

of name-giving of the four different kinds of virtue, which obviously involves the conclusion that each kind, by itself, is *one*. Well, what about the fact that the *one* name ('virtue') is assigned to all of them?, he asks (963C–D). So the decisive question will be whether *different* things ('courage' and 'wisdom') have *one* name. The Athenian answers that it is because that one of them, courage, is concerned with fears, and so is to be found without any discourse or reason in brutes and in mere infants, while wisdom cannot ever be without such discourse (963E). So it is the particular instantiations, again, that cause the diversity of virtue, in that one and the same ('virtue') is *occasionally*, that is, in particular instances, combined, or not-combined, with reason.

Let us have another look at *Sophist*, 258A–B (see also above, 11.3). The nature of Other has been shown to be among the things that are and so have its parts (258A7–9). The next sentence seems to be commonly misread. Cornford is fair enough to say that he understands it (by changing the word order) as: *hê moriou tês thaterou physeôs kai ‹moriou* supplied with Campbell› *tês tou ontos ‹physeôs› antithesis* instead of the MSS reading: *hê tês thaterou moriou physeôs kai tês tou ontos ... antithesis*. As it stands the latter reading means: 'the setting of the nature of a part of the Other and of that (sc. the nature: *tês*) of Being ... *etc.*'. So the nature of a part of the Other (e.g. 'not-beautiful') is opposed to the nature of Being[20], that is, by recognising that, formally speaking, 'not-beautiful' is not the same as 'being'. However, nevertheless (*ouden hêtton*, B2) both 'not-beautiful' and 'what is' are significative of being (*lit.* 'the part of 'other' and 'what is' are being'; *ousia*), for the former (e.g. 'not-beautiful') does not signify something opposed to 'what is', but simply and solely what is (formally) other than 'what is'. In point of fact, the semantic question prevails, as is clear again, from the EV's final words: 'under what *name*', then, are we to *appellate* it (that is, the part(s) of the other)? The semantic approach, then, forces us to take the phrases 'the part of the other' (e.g. 'the not-beautiful') and 'what is' as standing indiscriminately for both the terms which signify and the things signified. Plato's speaking of *antithesis ... sêmainousa* (*lit.*: 'the antithesis .... *signifying*') clarifies his concentration on the things signified and the mode of signifying at the same time.

According to Bluck (167) it may appear illogical that this 'setting in contrast' should itself be equated with the 'Not-Beautiful', but he thinks that a less literal and nevertheless legitimate rendering here might be, "the 'Not-Beautiful' turns out to be something that is which is contrasted with something that is". However, the illogical appearance is mainly due to Bluck's failure to see that, as so often, Plato indiscriminately speaks of signifying and the thing signified. — For the rest, whoever rejects negative Forms, as Bluck rightly does, might better speak of 'the *n*ot-beautiful' instead of 'the *N*ot-Beautiful'.

In fact, the antithesis has a semantic relevance. Negative expressions which we

[20] Campbell's suppletion *moriou* is not only superfluous but also not in line with the summary given at 258E1–3, where obviously a part of Otherness is contrasted with Being, not with a part of Being. See below, 11.5.

use in setting a part of the other, such as when saying 'not-beautiful', are themselves (significative of) being, since such expressions do not exclude 'being' but 'being-such-and-such' (e.g. 'being-beautiful'). So properly speaking, the opposition must be between 'other' (e.g. 'not-beautiful', 'not-just' *etc.*) and 'what is x, y, z *etc.*' (e.g. 'beautiful', 'just' *etc.*). Therefore the negative expression signifies only what is other (than beautiful, just, and so on).

We may recall here what Theaetetus has asserted about the negative force of expressions such as 'not-beautiful'. They effect the exclusion of Beauty (*etc.*) only and in fact state positive being, but by a negative name: 'the not-beautiful', or: 'what is not-beautiful' (see also above, 11.3)[21].

So the (nature of a) part of 'the Other', e.g. 'the not-beautiful' *by definition* partakes in Otherness. But it must be the nature of a particular thing inasmuch as it partakes in Otherness. On the other hand, the particular thing named 'the not-x' must be some *being* that is 'not-x'. Therefore it should partake in Being, more particularly in Man, Stone, Beauty, Justice (i.e. Being-man, Being-stone *etc.*). The particular horse which is other than stone can be named 'horse' and 'not-stone' as well. It partakes in two different (Transcendent) Forms, Horse, and Otherness. The former participation is the one which is well known from the classical period and gives no special difficulty. But when a particular thing partakes in Otherness this entails the problem raised in the *Sophist* passage at hand. It is focused on our use of negative expressions and contains two related questions: (1) how are we entitled to use negative names?, and (2) does such use necessarily mean that we must assume Transcendent Forms answering to each negative expression?

At the bottom of the whole question of whether there are 'negative Forms' is man's capacity for naming things by negative expressions, as when one calls a horse 'a not-stone'. This is bound to make us ask whether, for Plato, there is some mode of 'being-not-x', since, to his mind, our use of such expressions must be also based upon Transcendent Reality. He clearly answers the question in the affirmative inasmuch as Otherness really is a Transcendent Form. However, our use of a negative expression in designating, say, a horse as 'not-stone' does not involve the assumption of a Transcendent Form *'Not-stone', but only that of Otherness. In point of fact it is the particular thing's *immanent* form, horseness, that implies its being 'not-stone', because its partaking in HORSENESS causes it to be a horse and at the same time blocks any partaking in STONE.

This is the negative side of 'Otherness'. But, at the same time, there is a positive side: not-partaking in 'X-ness' does not necessarily throw a 'thing' into the abyss of Absolute Not-Being, since it still may partake in Otherness, i.e. be 'something else, other than x'. So to partake in Otherness does not amount to partaking in negative Forms but opens the way for a thing to be other than x. Apart from leading to sheer nonsense (see above) the assumption of negative Forms is indeed quite superfluous. It will do, for Plato, to assume positive Forms and just the one Form

[21] This should be compared with Aristotle's 'indefinite name' (*aoriston onoma*, in *De interpr.* 2, 16a30–2; 10, 19b8–10 and 20a31–40).

Otherness. The latter safeguards a thing from not-being-at-all, the former realises this 'escape from nothing' by making a thing be more specifically 'so-and-so'.

In the final analysis Otherness is part of the sensible things' defective nature. That they are participations does not only entail that they are such-and-such in an imperfect way but also that they do not partake in many other Forms. Otherness is the most vital characteristic of sensible things: it limits their nature (of 'being not other things') and, at the same time, safeguards them from being absolutely nothing; indeed, from here onwards: 'being some other thing' is equivalent to 'not being not anything whatsoever'.

It is remarkable, indeed, that Bluck's sound device to the main problems of the *Sophist* here fails to help him to solve the problems. "Once again", he says (171), "the explanation can be found in the conception of the Forms as paradigm cases". However, it is again quite unclear whether he is speaking of the instantiations (immanent forms) as opposed to the Transcendent Forms or in contradistinction with particular instances. As to the main question it is correctly put by Bluck (165) but his various answers are rather hesitant (169, 170), and he lacks good sense in making them depend on two further questions [(1) can we still maintain that the Beautiful, with which the Not-beautiful is contrasted, is (for Plato) a Form?, and (2) is there evidence here that Plato has abandoned his gradational ontology?]. As a matter of fact Plato still maintains his theory of Transcendent Forms. The innovation wholly consists in his full exploitation of the Form of Otherness. These two (viz. a positive Form and the Form, 'Otherness') are sufficient to explain any particular instances of not-being.

Bluck's main mistake seems to be that he interprets the 'parts' of Otherness ('the not-beautiful', and so on) as being themselves Transcendent Forms. So he describes (167; 171) 'the Not-Beautiful' as 'the–thing–that–is–other–than–beautiful'[22], such that, in Bluck's view, 'the Not-beautiful' is an alternative name for any Form other than the Beautiful. On this interpretation, however, the status of Otherness as a Transcendent Form (which is clearly maintained by Plato, to be sure) seems rather phantasmagorical and its assumption superfluous. We could better consider the 'parts' of Otherness (e.g. 'not-x', 'not-y' *etc.*) as many immanent forms occurring in particulars that partake in the Forms, X, Y *etc.* So we could better understand that at 257D Theaetetus is replying in terms of concrete instances, and have no need to explain that away by saying, with Bluck (166), that "this is not surprising in a respondent in a Platonic dialogue". To restate it from the semantic point of view, 'the not-beautiful' is an indefinite name signifying a positive thing, viz. an *immanent* form of a particular thing, by means of a negative description. For example, a particular stone's (immanent) form is *called* its 'not-horseness'[23].

[22] Why not 'than–the–Beautiful'?

[23] So the only difference with Aristotle's indefinite names is the latter's complete disposal of the Transcendent Forms which still are involved in Plato's view.

To conclude this section it should be stated with all due clarity that 'negative Platonic Forms' are to be rejected completely. They are useless and even quite absurd, and are most explicitly denied by our other sources as well.

11.5. *The Parmenidean Dogma Refuted. The Summary*

A grand summary of the case against Parmenides is given at 258C–259D. First the EV asserts that he and Theaetetus have made a remarkable advance on the stage reached before (at 256D–E), where it was merely shown (against Parmenides) that 'what is not' *is*, while in the last discussion the true nature of 'what is not' was also demonstrated:

> 258D5–E3: We have not only shown that things that are not (*ta mê onta*) *are* but we have also brought to light the Form (*eidos*) there actually is of 'what is not' (*tou mê ontos*). For we have shown that the nature of the Other *is* and is parcelled out over all things there are in their mutual relationships (*pros allêlla*); and we have ventured to say of every part of that nature [viz. the Other] that is set in contrast to 'what is' (*pros to on*), that precisely that (*auto touto*) really [litt. 'being-like'; *ontôs*] is 'what is not' (*to mê on*).

After Theaetetus has heartily agreed (E4–5) the EV goes on to deal conclusively with all those who have misunderstood the new doctrine (258E6–259D7), especially (259B8 ff.) those people mentioned at 251B (see above, 7.21). He discusses first of all the rather stupid view that he and Theaetetus were pleading for 'what absolutely is not', which was labelled *to mêdamôs on* at 238C and here 'the contrary of what is' (*toùnantion tou ontos*). They have long ago said good-bye, he adds, to the question of whether or not there is such a thing and of whether any account can be given of it or none whatsoever (258E6–259A1). But as to their real view of 'what is not', an opponent must *either* by refuting it convince them that they are wrong *or* join their view. The EV goes on to give this view in all detail:

> 259A3–B6: He, too, must accept our statements, that (1) the Kinds have Communion with one another, (2) 'What is' and 'the Other' pervade them all and one another, (3) the other, by partaking in 'What is', *is*, by virtue of that participation, not being, however, that which it partakes in [i.e. the Transcendent Form 'What is'] but some other (being); and since it is other than 'What is', quite clearly it by necessity is able to be 'a what is not' (*mê on*); and (4a) 'what is' having got a part of Otherness will be other than all the other Kinds, and, in being other than all those, it is not any one of them nor all of them together, but just itself; so that, once again indisputably, 'what is' is *not* everything under the sun (*myria epi myriois*); and (4b) all the other Kinds, similarly, whether taken one by one or all together, in many respects *are*, in many other *are not*.

Some comment upon the statements summed up by the EV:
(1) the Kinds have Communion with one another. This conclusion had been drawn earlier (252E ff.) As we have seen the Communion is a communion of several *immanent* forms possessed by particulars (see above, Chs IX and X).
(2) the second statement takes up the conclusion drawn at 253C1 and 254B10, where the all-pervasiveness of 'What is' and 'the Other' was clearly stated (above, 9.1-9.2). This pervasiveness, again, should be located in the realm of particular being; indeed, *immanent* forms possessed by particulars which partake in the corresponding Transcendent Forms pervade other, rather than the Forms viewed in terms of their transcendent status (see *ibid.*).
(3) as to the third statement it should be recalled that what is partaken in is a *Transcendent* Form, whereas the phrase 'what partakes' refers to the particular thing, more especially the particular thing *inasmuch as* it possesses the corresponding immanent form. So the third statement opposes 'the other' (that is, 'what is other' or a particular thing) to the Transcendent Form, 'What is' ('Being').
(4) the fourth statement concerns Being and Otherness:
(4a) as to Being: the particular being partaking in (the Transcendent Form of) Otherness is opposed to all things partaking in other Kinds and identified as some thing which is neither (x), or (y), or (z) *etc.* nor an aggregate (x *plus* y *plus* z *etc.*); therefore 'what is' is not the 'sum of all things'.
(4b) as to Otherness: the other Kinds viewed, of course, as immanent forms occurring in particulars, or rather as those particulars inasmuch as they partake in Otherness in not-being so-and so, — whether taken one by one or all together, — *are* (as *being* many others), and *are not* (as *not-being* many others).

Quite in line with the previous discussions from 253A onwards the EV insists upon the distinction that one should duly make between (using my labels) the Transcendent Form, on the one hand, and the immanent form occurring in a particular thing, (or the particular thing in as far as it possesses such immanent form), on the other. Such distinctions are what is meant by '*enantiôseis*' in the next lines.

Once the fundamental theses have been clearly summarised the EV finally pays some special attention the the stupid opponents dealt with as early as 251B (see above, *ad loc.*). He invites them to improve 'those oppositions' (*tautais dê tais enantiôsesin*, 259B8) if they mistrust them, instead of continuing "to take delight in reducing argument to a tug-of-war", since this is nothing but trivial, as was stated before (251B). Cornford and Warrington take *enantiôseis* to mean 'apparent contradictions'. However, what exactly do they here understand by 'contradiction'? No contradiction can be found at all in the preceding lines. Besides, on their interpretation, the EV would have only a poor defence against his opponents if he invited them to improve his own (*sic!*) 'apparent contradictions'. What is left, then, of the proud beginning made at 249D3–4 (see above, *ad loc.*), where the new doctrine was announced with considerable fanfare? Diès rightly has '*oppositions*'. To my mind, the word alludes to what was called earlier (258B1) *antithesis* ('setting in contrast') and refers to Plato's subtle way of distinguishing the several modes of being implied by the opposition of Transcendent Form, immanent form and particular thing. This subtlety has nothing to do with contradiction, it rather is intended to prevent it. The only other occurrence where the term seems to be similarly used[24] is in a context that contrasts it with 'making proper distinctions' (*Rep.* V, 454A8). Socrates there says that many people are unable to apply, in a discussion, distinctions according to the Forms involved to the subject under consideration and pursue purely verbal oppositions: *kata auto to onoma diôkein tou*

[24] At *Rep.* X, 607C3 it means 'antagonism'.

lechthentos tên enantiôsin, that is, "what is replied as just word against word, not entering into the matter discussed". I think that at 258B Plato is taking over the hostile term 'verbal opposition' presumably used by his opponents as a malignant characterisation of what Plato had himself introduced as *antitheseis*, that is, in fact, as his subtle distinctions, such that *tautais dê tais enantiôsesin* means: 'those pretendedly (*dê*)[25] futile oppositions', or 'that wrangling'.

Next, he contrasts their real trivialities, already exposed at 251B, in his own supposed wrangling. The puzzlements they were so glad to discover in our practice of name-giving are senseless. But his own discovery is worthwhile, and their reduction of his subtle distinctions to superficial contrarieties established in some vague way and their delight in such home-made puzzlements is childish and not genuine criticism but just the chatter of someone who has heard something about it, but has no real knowledge of the matter:

259C3–6: There is nothing clever in such a discovery and it is not difficult to make. But that what *we* have done, *that* (*ekeino*) is really difficult and worth the pains at the same time. — You mean .....?, Theaetetus asks.

The EV answers this question by contrasting, again, what he means to say with the futile activities of the opponents:

259C7–D7: Well, what I said earlier on: leaving that [viz. such trivialities] alone as useless [*anonêta*, with Richards instead of *dynata*] to be able to follow, step by step and with a sense of criticism, what is actually said[26], and when somebody asserts that what is other is, in a sense (*pêi*), what is the same as well as when he asserts that what is the same is what is other, to take ‹such assertions› in that sense and in that respect (*ekeinêi kai kat' ekeino*) in which he says they are one or the other. But trying simply to demonstrate that in some undetermined way (*hamêi ge pêi*) what is the same is what is other and what is other is what is the same and what is large is what is small and what is like is what is unlike, and to delight in continually denouncing contrarieties in my arguments[27], — that is not genuine criticism and, rather, is that kind of juvenile criticism that betrays of somebody's quite recent contact with the things that are (*tôn ontôn*).

The problems of Being and Not-being are settled, now, by showing the subtle and highly varied character of our practice of giving names. Sheer contradictions only

[25] For the particle *dê* used ironically, cf. Liddell and Scott, *s.v.* IIa, and Denniston, *s.v.* 229 ff., especially 234–6 ("*dê* .... often denotes that words are not to be taken at their face value, objectively, but express something merely believed, or ironically supposed, to be true. Hence *dê* often gives the effect of inverted commas" (234)). For Plato, see *Apol.*, 27A2–3 ("Will the "infallible" (*sophos dê*) Socrates realise ...?"); *Theaet.*, 195C7–8 ("So, Socrates, you have what you call "discovered" false opinion?"); *Laws* XII, 962E3 ("others make what is called "liberty" the object of their passion").

[26] In putting the words *tois legomenois* (to be taken with *epakolouthein*) before *hoion te einai* Plato seems to stress them; hence my rendering "what is actually said". So the words anticipate Plato's later warning (at D1–2) to take his assertions as they are meant.

[27] *Lit.* 'in the arguments, or: discussions'. Plato's opponents apparently took his subtle and clear-cut distinctions (*pêi ... ekeinêi*) as just a vague telling apart (*hamêi ge pêi*) which were not apt to prevent contrarieties in Plato's expositions.

appear to him who refuses to see the expressions in the same subtle senses and respects in which they are actually meant.

11.6. *A Corollary: Did Plato Ever Abandon His Doctrine Of Forms?*

It might be asked now, whether the Transcendent Forms, that is, the Forms seen in terms of their transcendent or 'exalted status' (to use Guthrie's label), no longer play a role in the later dialogues. This question is awkward in a twofold sense. First, the weakest suggestion of a negative answer would be contrary to the nature of Platonism. Indeed, Plato has *never* abandoned the notion of the Forms as eternal and unchanging paradeigmatic standards. Guthrie (and many other scholars who are extremely well acquainted with Plato's works and beliefs) is perfectly right in stressing this fact. That Plato, as a result of whatever criticisms, gave up the doctrine of *Transcendent* Forms, is disproved by many references to it, in dialogues commonly agreed as belonging to his 'critical period', which contrast, in the terminology of the *Phaedo*, a world of eternal, unchanging, perfect, bodiless entities with the visible world of change and becoming (see Guthrie V, 59, who rightly refers to the especially interesting passages, *Sophist*, 248E–249D [see above, 5.5] and *Philebus*, 15A–B).

But our question is nearly absurd in another sense, too. *To oppose* the immanent status of the Forms to their transcendent, exalted one, is truly Aristotelian, but entirely unPlatonic. Indeed to Plato's mind, 'immanent forms' are nothing apart from the Transcendent Forms. In point of fact the Transcendent Forms are the backbone of the immanent forms. The only (but real) importance of the latter is that the former occur in the particular things by means of the immanent instantiations representing them. As such, the Transcendent Forms still are metaphysical objects existing independently from the sensible things. From the viewpoint, however, of their activity in the transient world of change and becoming, the Transcendent Forms are only *in* that world through their representatives, the immanent forms. So they cannot be either of them set aside by anyone who tries to explain the world of becoming. Well, in his critical dialogues Plato is still of their number.

One could formulate, now, as a rule of thumb that whenever it is said: 'X is partaken in', what is meant is a relation between a Transcendent Form, (X) and its particular, 'what is x'. In any other case the immanent form is meant and the Transcendent *may* also be meant ('connoted') as well as the particular thing partaking in the Transcendent Form.

Generally speaking, our analysis of *Sophist*, 216A–259D does not give any support to the view that Plato ever abandoned his theory of the Transcendent Forms. We may try to answer, now, the main questions scholarship is so sharply divided about (see Guthrie, V, 143 ff.). They are, in Guthrie's formulation the following: (1) does Plato mean to attribute Change to the Forms themselves, or simply to enlarge the realm of Being to include life and intelligence which are not Forms?, and (2) is he going even further in dissenting from the friends of Forms and admitting what they called Becoming — changing and perishable objects of the physical world — to the realm of True Being?

The first question should be answered in the negative. It is true that Plato is defending a certain Communion of Forms, but this concerns their *immanent* status and, accordingly, the physical world primarily, rather than the 'Forms themselves' (or: 'in their exalted status' as Guthrie has it; V, 159). As to the second question, to Guthrie's mind Plato's language makes it almost if not quite insoluble. I think that if one pays Plato's expositions the patient attention he asks for at 259C–D and follows his analysis stage by stage, *the exact sense and the precise respect in which he makes his statements* (cf. 259D1–2: *ekeinêi kai kat' ekeino ho phêsi*) about Being and Not-being, Sameness and Otherness and so on, will appear. It will be easily seen, then, that there is no recantation at all in Plato's development. He still maintains, as he will maintain in his later works (e.g. *Philebus*, 14D ff.), the Transcendent Forms as being what in the last analysis are the only True Being. But Plato has now succeeded in giving a fuller sense to the old notions of 'sharing' and 'presence *in*' without detracting the 'paradigm' function of the Forms in any respect. Matter, Change and Becoming are given a better position in the Theory of Forms in that their immanent status has been brought into the focus of Plato's interest. From his *Parmenides* onwards Plato has been searching for the solution of his metaphysical problems and has actually found it in the *Sophist* in a new view of participation. Forms in their exalted status are just too eminent a cause for the existence of the world of Becoming. But their being *shared in*, i.e. their immanent status, makes them so to speak 'operable'[28] and yet preserves their dignity as paradeigmatic standards. What makes something a horse is, no doubt, the Transcendent Form, HORSENESS, but it only can *partake in* that Form and possess it as an immanent form. So the Highness of the Form and the unworthy matter can come together as matter 'informed', that is, affected by an immanent form.

Plato never was unfaithful to his original view about Forms as the only True Being. In our dialogue, too, he highlights the eminence of True Being (taken, of course, as a Transcendent Form) by saying (254A) that the true philosopher, through his devotion to the Form, 'What is' ('Being'), dwells in the brightness of the divine, and the task of Dialectic, accordingly, is described from that very perspective (see above, 8.3–8.4). Focusing on the immanence of the Forms does not detract anything from their 'exalted status', since immanent forms are nothing else but the Transcendent Forms as partaken in by particulars.

The position of the Form in the *Statesman* should be seen in this light. 'Dividing according to *eidê*' (286D) does not merely refer to some 'kinds or varieties'[29] but to Platonic Forms in their immanent status.

Finally, the *Timaeus* (whether or not this dialogue should be dated back, with Owen [1953:28], as preceding Plato's critical period) need certainly not be interpreted either as teaching a more sophisticated metaphysics based on renunciation of the doctrine of paradeigmatic Forms and a contradistinction of Being and Becoming which were to be severally opposed one to the other. On the contrary,

[28] Cf. Solmsen, 80.
[29] Which rendering would certainly suit the context; see Guthrie V, 175.

Plato takes matter and physical appearances quite seriously and makes all efforts to support their importance by showing that the *physis* of things can only be correctly understood in the light of a rational order that is modelled on the changeless, Transcendent Forms. But, again, this order is actually found in the physical world where the *immanent* forms are acting upon matter, (see also above, 11.4), reflecting there, it cannot be stressed enough, the divine order of True Being.

So there is no point in assuming that Plato in his *Sophist* "ceased to believe in those divine entities on which he lavished such eulogies in *Phaedo* and *Phaedrus*" (Guthrie's formula). The only things needed are the interpreter's full attention to the remarkable dialectical skill which Plato put to the service of his firm metaphysical belief, and his willingness to assent to Plato's request (259D1–2) to take his assertions (in 255E8–256D9; cf. above, *ad loc.*) in that sense and in that respect in which they are meant.

In his critical period Plato never ceased to believe in the Transcendent World. The important development occurring there consists in the fact that he takes more seriously than before their presence *in* matter and their activities as *immanent* forms (instantiations). In the *Sophist* he uses all his ingenuity to show that a correct understanding of the Forms may safeguard us from all extremist views of being and not-being as well as from zealous exaggerations of the 'Friends of Forms'.

Chapter twelve

ON PHILOSOPHIC AND SOPHISTIC DISCOURSE

12.1. *Introductory*

It should be recalled first that our dialogue is introduced (216C–217A) as an investigation into the exact meanings of the names 'Sophist', 'Statesman', and 'Philosopher'. The main interlocutors soon reach the insight that one could better begin by studying the Sophist and then try to bring his nature to light in a clear formula (218B–C). Well, judging the Sophist to be a very troublesome sort of creature to hunt down, they set out first to practise the method of tracking him on some easier quarry (218D). In fact the method meant by the EV is that of the illustrative division leading to a definition (see 221C5–6); above, nr. 3.3).

Seven divisions are presented, the last of which is the only one that goes to the heart of the matter in trying to make out the Sophist's true nature. A new generic characteristic of his activities, viz. Image-making, is discovered and taken as a starting-point for the seventh, final division (231B–235A); see above nr. 3.4). The division proper begins at 235D and the EV goes on to distinguish (235D–236C) the art of making likenesses (*eikastikê*) from that of appearance-making (*phantastikê*). However, the seventh division then immediately breaks off. A remarkably long intermezzo (237A–264B) must be inserted before the true nature of the 'appearance-maker', as our Sophist is supposed to be, can be adequately discerned. The intermezzo aims at scrutinising the "impenetrable lurking-place (239C7) that baffles exploration" (236D2–3). Indeed, all such notions as 'appearing', 'real being', 'not-being' turn out to yield just as many lurking-places to the Sophist. So the relations of all such notions to 'What is' (*to on*) should be investigated.

However, as before, the framework of the entire metaphysical investigation is established by the initial aim of searching for the true nature of the Sophist. The interpreter has to keep this in view time and again. So the *Leitmotiv* throughout the entire Intermezzo is the constant attempt to answer the decisive question of how can there be such a thing as an 'image' or 'false appearance'? If such a thing turns out to be completely illusive and non-existent, the malpractices attributed

to the Sophist would seem to have no object and our charge against him would accordingly prove pointless. No charge, let alone a conviction, without a *corpus delicti*.

12.2. *The Communion Of Kinds As Vital To Philosophical Discourse*

The first part (237B–259D) had to deal with 'an extremely difficult problem' (236D–E; see also above, 4.2), to wit how to find out

236E4–237A4: in what meaning (*hopôs eiponta*) ‹of the expression 'really being'› one should say, or think, that falsehoods really are (*ontôs einai*), without being caught in self-contradiction by the mere use of such words. — That statement, then, is audacious enough to assume that 'what is not', *is*, for otherwise one could not speak of falsehood.

After a long inquiry the EV and his interlocutor, Theaetetus, arrived at a revolutionary doctrine of being (249C10–D4; see above, 11.1–11.3) to the extent that the true philosopher

249C11–D4: is obliged to refuse to accept ‹. .....› that the All is static, while, at the same time, he must not for a moment listen to those who make 'what is' change in every respect. Like a child begging for "both!" he must say that 'what is' and the All consists of what is changeless *and* what is in change, *both together*.

This calls for the basically novel metaphysical view that all particular beings come into existence by partaking in some particular combination of Forms. Thus the so-called Communion of Forms (Kinds) has proved to be the pivotal notion. Accordingly, the proper task of Dialectic will be to discern

253D5–9: *one* Form entirely extended through many things, and *many* Forms completely embraced by one Form, and, again, *one* Form running throughout many wholes in its being collected together, as well as *many* Forms in their being entirely marked off apart.

Well, the EV adds, this amounts to knowing how to discern, Kind by Kind, how each set of things can or cannot have communion (see also above, 9.22).

The point of the passages involved is that the transient world (the world of appearances, that is) owes its being to the communion of Forms (Forms in their immanent status, to be sure; see above, 9.1), and, accordingly, the true philosopher's account of our world has to parallel that ontic situation. In short: logical *symplokê* is intimately connected with ontic *koinônia*[1]. Indeed, these two turn out to be equally important in the scope of true philosophy.

It should be noted, then, that the science most needed for that purpose, viz. Dialectic, has already been introduced some lines earlier as 'a guide on the voyage of discourse':

[1] Notice that at 240C1 the term *symplokê* is itself used to mean the *ontic* situation of Forms mixing together. One may compare *Statesman*, 309E10 (about interweaving vicious people with other vicious people or good people with vicious). For a similar use of *symplekein*, see *ibid.*, 311B7 ff. A nice example of the logical sense paralleled to the ontological use of the simplex *plekêin* is found in *Theaetetus*, 202B3–5.

253B10–C3: There surely is some science (*epistêmê*) needed as a guide on the voyage of discourse, if one is going on to indicate correctly which Kinds harmonise with which and which are mutually incompatible, and especially of course (*kai dê kai*) whether there are some Kinds that running through all hold them together to render their blending possible, and again, where there are divisions (*diaireseis*), whether there are certain ‹Kinds› running through wholes (*di' holôn*) that [i.e. Kinds] are responsible for the division.

It is quite natural, now, that the EV should link up the passage in which he condemns the 'isolationists' (or 'anti-Communion-thinkers', as one might label them) as destroyers of all philosophical discourse (259D9–E6) with the verdict just delivered (259A3–D7) on the same people as "juvenile critics continually denouncing contrarieties in (Plato's) subtle distinctions since they are unable to grasp the principle of the Communion of Forms". It should be remarked that the habit of many modern interpreters of seeing here a plain caesura in Plato's text just before the last main division of the argument is groundless[2]. I cannot follow Cornford either, who is of the opinion (298) that the introductory section (259D–261C) states the problem in terms which are, at first sight, puzzling in that they seem to ignore the distinctions that have just been drawn. It is true, in his view, that the subsequent analysis of falsity is as lucid as the previous account of the Communion of Forms, but this insight does not prevent him all the same from finding some obscurity in the introductory passage, "which is 'dialectical' and dramatic", he adds. However, there is nothing of the kind in our text, it would seem. What the EV puts forward at 259C–E is a quite consistent argument against the *metaphysical* views held by the 'anti-Communion-thinkers' as well as against corresponding evil practices concerning philosophic discourse. Let Plato be his own mouthpiece:

259D2–E6: Trying simply to demonstrate that in some undetermined way what is the same is what is other and what is other is what is the same ‹....› and to delight in continually denouncing contrarieties in my arguments — *that* is not genuine criticism and, rather, is that kind of juvenile criticism that betrays somebody's quite recent contact with the things that are. — Surely. — Indeed, dear boy, the endeavour to isolate everything from everything else is not only a *faux pas* but notably characteristic of somebody who is entirely devoid of the inspiration of the Muse of philosophy[3]. — Why? — Well, to isolate every single thing from everything else amounts to a radical destruction of all sorts of discourse (*pantôn logôn*); for thanks to the weaving of forms with one another (*allêlôn tôn eidôn symplokê*) we have acquired the possession of discourse (*ho logos gegonen hêmin*; lit. 'discourse is born to us')[4].

In the next lines the EV tries to throw light on the timeliness for the previous struggle in as far as it also involved the position of discourse. He stresses the vital importance for all discourse of a correct view of the ontic status of 'what is' which is all due to the Communion of Forms. Very important, indeed, since deprived of discourse, he says, one would be deprived of philosophy itself. Therefore an agreement about the exact nature of discourse is badly wanted. An investigation of that nature has to elucidate, first of all, *how* discourse owes its existence to that weaving together of Forms so passionately discussed in the previous part of our dialogue:

260A1–B2: Observe, then, how timely was the struggle we just had with the isolationists[5], when we compelled them to allow one Form to mix up with another. — Timely in what respect? — In that it justifies the position of discourse as one of the sorts of things that are. For deprived of discourse, we should be deprived (and notice that as the most disastrous result!) of philosophy. Besides that, we have at the present moment to come to an agreement about the nature of discourse; but if we were deprived of its very existence, we should obviously be able no longer to discourse upon anything whatsoever. Well, deprived we should have been if we had yielded the point that there is no mixing up of any one Form with another.

Some remarks. (1) That the parallel positions of *symplokê* (as far as the nature of discourse is concerned) and *meixis* (concerning the nature of things) still form the focus of Plato's interest can be seen twice from our passage: once, at 259E4–6 put together with 260A2–3; again, at 268B1–2.
(2) The word *genôn* at 260A5 has been rendered *kinds* (not, Kinds!, of course) by Cornford and Warrington and is here apparently taken by Plato in its wide sense. Diès, however, (in a note to 260A5) thinks of "espèces ou *formes* (his italics) de l'être" and refers to some other passages with which our passage should be compared, he thinks, in order to obtain a clear insight into the extension of the world of Forms and their nature[6]. I am afraid that he is entirely wrong. Plato uses time and again the terms *genos* and *eidos* in non-technical senses, which are quite common in Greek, for that matter. See above, 2.11.

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[2] Of course, all those critics who accuse Plato of gross confusion and fallacy on this score, miss completely the point. For that matter, Cornford rightly rejects their charges as groundless, especially Apelt's, who declares [1886: in his note to 260C] that there is no possible transition from the *mê on*, which has just been shown to exist, to the *mê on* in the sense of 'the false' and that the confusion of these two is rampant throughout the rest of the dialogue.

[3] *amousos kai aphilosophos, lit.* 'without the Muses (= 'without taste or refinement') and without philosophy'. Cornford is right in taking *amousos* as "almost a synonym of *aphilosophos*". He refers (300, n. 1) to *Cratylus*, 406A where *Mousa* and *mousikê* are derived from *môsthai* = *zêtêsis te kai philosophia*. Parallel passages are *Rep.* VIII, 548B8–C2; *Phaedo*, 61A2–3 and *Laws* III, 689D4–8 and VII, 817B–C. For philosophy as combined with *mousikê*, especially in Plato, see De Rijk [1965], 48–57 and 85–92.

[4] For the meaning of this sentence, see below, 12.42. The same view is found in *Theaet.* 134E-135C; 155C–E; 164A–B. — The rejection of the common translation of *logos* by Rijlaarsdam (who takes '*logos*' to stand for '*our* earlier discussion') lacks good grounds. For a similar use of *hêmin* for 'us, human beings' in a similar situation, see *Crat.*, 423B5: "do we not, then, require the representation (*delôma hêmin estai*) of each thing?".

[5] The text only has 'people of that sort' (*tois toioutois*), but Cornford and Warrington rightly make these words refer to all those people who (like the Antistheneans and presumably also the 'Friends of Forms') reject any Communion of Forms and isolate every Form (including Forms in their immanent status) from any other.

[6] "Ainsi le discours, l'opinion, l'imagination sont des *genres* des espèces ou *formes* de l'être (cf. *infra* 260b, 264b). Il est bon de comparer de pareils traits avec *Parm.*, 150e (homme, feu, eau, cheveu, boue etc.) et avec les énumerations classiques (égalité, grandeur, justice, beauté, etc.) pour apprécier l'étendue du monde des formes et se faire une idée de leur nature".

(3) One should notice the position of *ouden* (at 260A9), right at the head of the apodosis. Therefore Cornford's and Warrington's translation "we should not be able to discourse *any further*" seems to be rather weak. Following Diès ("ce serait nous enlever toute possibilité de discourir *sur quoi que ce fût*) I would prefer to stress the impossibility implied here of discoursing upon anything whatsoever and, by that, the frustration of any attempt to discuss the nature of discourse itself. That is Plato's point here, I think.
(4) All modern interpreters read the connective *de* adversatively at 260A7: '*but*, besides that' (*eti d'*), and conjunctively at A8: '*and* if' (*ei de*). I think one has just to read it in exactly the opposite way. At A7 an additional point is made ('moreover, we have to discuss the nature of discourse'), *but* this immediately evokes the problem that *if* we are robbed of the very existence of discourse, any discourse about the nature of discourse is no longer possible either. Well, the prospect of this odious conclusion affords the EV the opportunity of stressing again the importance of allowing the Communion of Forms and of warning that all discourse would disappear, once one yielded the point that all Forms just stand by themselves, entirely isolated (260B1–2).

Next, Plato makes Theaetetus fail to understand why agreement is needed about the nature of discourse at the present moment (260B3–4). The latter's failure to grasp this gives a welcome opportunity to Plato's spokesman to explain more thoroughly how speech and opinion are related to the Communion of Forms. The framework, then, of the next passage (260B7–261A4) may be characterised, it would seem, as a description of the Sophist's present case now that the new metaphysical doctrine of the Communion of Kinds is forced upon him, too.

12.3. *The Impact Of Plato's Novel Metaphysics Upon The Sophist's Case*

Let us recall first the Sophist's initial case. The seventh and final division proposed at 235D ff. had made the interlocutors define the Sophist as a practitioner of the art of creating images and appearances. The Sophist could take refuge, then, in nullifying the supposed object of that art by saying that it is strictly impossible to think or state 'the thing that is not' (236D–237A). However, the first part (237B–259D) of the Intermezzo has shown that 'What is not' is (*qua* Otherness) one of the Five Kinds dispersed all over the whole field of 'things that are'. This having been clearly stated, it seems quite sensible to ask to what extent the Sophist's defence has been affected by this fresh insight: does 'What is not' ('Otherness') mix up also with opinion and speech?

The EV is of the opinion that the Sophist's case has worsened together with that of all those who were unable to grasp the new doctrine and were dealt with conclusively just now (at 258E6–259D7), especially those stupid people among them who were mentioned at 251B (see above, 7.21). Indeed like them, the Sophist, can be forced to accept that his earlier retreat to the view that no one could either think or say 'what is not' has now been cut off:

260B7–D6: We saw that 'What is not' is one Kind among the rest, spread out over the whole domain of things that are. — Yes. — Therefore the next question is, whether it mixes up with opinion and speech. — Why that? — If it does not mix up with them, everything must be true; but if it does, there will be false opinion and false speech. For thinking or saying 'things that are not', *that* is, it would seem, falsity occurring in thinking and speech. — Yes. — And if falsity exists, then deception is possible. — Yes. — And once deception exists, then the whole world will be littered with images, likenesses and appearance, unavoidably. — Of course. — And the Sophist, we said, had taken refuge somewhere in that region but denying the very existence of falsity: nobody could either think or state what-is-not, could he?, because 'what is not' has not any share in being (*ousias*). — Yes, such was the situation. — But now, 'what is not' has turned out to share in 'what is'. Therefore, I would think, he will no longer attack us on that flank.

So the Sophist while granting that his previous line of defence ("nobody could either think or state 'what is not', because 'what is not' has not any share in being") has been destroyed, does not give up all the same and goes on to brood on a second line of defence. Indeed, when most generously granting, following Plato's novel metaphysical doctrine, that *qua* 'the other' 'what is not' (*to mê on*) does share in 'what is' (*to on*), he now takes great pains to argue that speech and opinion have nothing to do with the novel Kind of 'What is not' ('Otherness'). They cannot *share*, he maintains, in 'What is not', and thus become *false* speech and *false* opinion, since the combination needed for *sharing* in 'What is not' cannot possibly be accomplished:

260D6–E3: However he may perhaps say that while there are some sort of things which share in 'What is not', there are some which do not, and that speech and opinion are among the 'share-nots'. And so once more he might maintain against all opposition (*diamachoit' an*) that the art of making images and appearances, in which we have located him, *is-not*, in the absolute sense (*pantapasin ouk estin*), since opinion-and-speech *has no share* in 'What is not'; indeed falsity, he argues, *is-not*, in the absolute sense, because that combination of *opinion-and-speech* with 'not-being' does not click.

Some comments. (1) Diès translates *tôn eidôn* (at D7) as 'the forms' and, accordingly, takes speech and opinion as *forms* which do not share in what is not ("sont au nombre de *celles* qui n'y ont point de part"; at D8), enlarging, thus, the domain of forms as he explicitly did before. I think one could better follow Cornford and Warrington in taking *eidos* vaguely in the well-known sense of 'sort of thing', 'thing'. (See above, nr. 2.11.). It is still possible, for that matter, that Plato purposely makes the Sophist use the word *eidos* as a rather sarcastic allusion to the Master's revised doctrine of the Forms.
(2) The Sophist's placing of 'speech-and-opinion' among those things that do not *share in* 'What is not' (D8–9) amounts to a further nullification of false opinion, in order to show again that that supposedly damnable art of his is devoid of any object, so that he could no longer be charged with any evil practices. I am afraid that Cornford and Warrington did not grasp the true issue in the Sophist's fresh move. They seem to see him as only persisting in his rejection of the novel meaning of 'what-is-not' taken as 'the other' so as to safeguard 'things that are not' from the abyss of 'being absolutely nothing' (see above, 11.3). In fact the 'hard sort of beast to hunt down' (as Theaetetus will call him presently, at 261A7) does take for granted the novel sense of 'what is not', but at the same time useless here, since the combination of 'what is not' with 'speech-and-opinion' does not work because

the putative elements of that combination do not fit together ("do not click"; my translation of *mê synhistamenês*; see the next remark).
(3) Cornford and Warrington are also not right in translating the absolute genitive *tautês mê synhistamenês tês koinônias* simply as "without that combination" ("without which participation"). One rather should translate it as 'because that combination does not click'. As to the verb used (*synhistamai*), it should be borne in mind that it frequently has the sense of 'arising from compatible (or harmonising) parts'. See for example Plato, *Phaedrus*, 264C3 ('any discourse ought to be constructed (*synhestanai*) like a living creature'); *ibid.*, 268D3–5 ('to make a tragedy otherwise than by so arranging such passages as to exhibit a proper relation to one another and to the whole of which they are parts')[7]. In *Statesman*, 308C3–4 the question is raised of whether any art chooses *to make* any of its products *from a combination* (*synhistêsin*) of good material with bad. Of course, the *Timaeus* affords several parallels; so at 31C: two things cannot be rightly put together without a third; there must be some kind of union between them (cf. *ibid.*, 32B). *Timaeus*, 69B9–C1 is most explicit about the order required ('All these the creator first *set in order* (*diekosmêsen*), and out of them he constructed (*synestêsato*) the universe'). Similarly *Timaeus*, 57B1. *Laws* VI, 775C6 has 'the growing life must be fashioned with all due order'. Finally, *Sophist*, 262C2 provides another nice example (see below, 12.42). As one might easily expect Aristotle's biological works afford other examples where the verb is used when the author is speaking about things that arise out of *harmonising* parts. For example, *Hist. anim.*, 516a5; 554a6; 567a28. *De gener. anim.*, 733b20 and 744a22; the latter passage is interesting in that the brain's late reaching of completion is imputed to the fact that at so late a stage of its development it rids itself of its coldness and fluidity.

I think therefore that *mê synhistamenês* at 260E3 should be interpreted something like this: 'does not take shape because of the incompatibility of the component parts', viz. 'speech' and 'what is not'.
(4) So the Sophist is supposed to annihilate the possibility of falsehood, since its being would depend on some participation by speech (opinion) of 'What-is-not', which would imply some combination that is basically impossible as the elements involved in such a participation do not fit together at all. From the semantic point of view the concept 'falsehood' (*pseudos*) seen as a combination of the elements, 'speech' ('opinion') and 'what is not' is empty and is bound to lead its user to insurmountable difficulties such as those which were discussed earlier (237B7–239C3; see *ad loc.*).
(5) Of course, the supposed incompatibility of the elements 'speech-opinion', on the one hand, and 'what is not', on the other, rests on the Sophist's view of

[7] For the use of *synhistamai* when the role of the principle of organic proportion in literary composition is discussed, see Verdenius [1983], 18–9, who refers (19, n. 23) to Aristotle, *Poetics*, 1447a9 and 1450a15 (where the importance of organic coherence is also emphasised) and Aristophanes, *Clouds*, 1367 where the adjective *axustaton* must have the pregnant meaning of 'incoherent'.

'speech-opinion' as *strictly implying* Being ('What is'). Whoever speaks or thinks, necessarily has in mind (some) *being*, rather than (some) not-being. So his new move consists of jumping to the other side of the problem area: instead of arguing (as he did before) that to assign not-being to his art as its proper object is bound to nullify that very art (and the charge against him, accordingly), he now sets out to argue, starting with the very nature of 'speech-opinion', that it strictly excludes all *sharing in* 'What is not', because the very concepts of 'falsehood' (= 'speech-opinion *plus* not-being') is inconsistent and, by that, empty, with the result that its referent (viz. the object of his art) cannot possibly exist. And so he hopes to escape the charge, again.
(6) It should be noticed, then, that the crux of the Sophist's argument rests on the opposition much discussed earlier (237B–242B; see above, 4.2; 11.1–11.3) between 'what absolutely is not' (*to mêdamôs on*) and 'the 'what is not' which is interwoven with 'What is' in some way' (240C1–2); see above, nr. 4.22). As early as at 240C3–5 the EV remarked that "our hydra-headed Sophist has got us into a fix again, this time by his interweaving of 'what is' and 'what is not', compelling us to admit quite reluctantly that what is not *is* in a way". After Plato has convincingly shown that, being far from confusing, this interweaving yields a most fruitful view of 'what-is-not' and may even afford us a workable means of catching the Sophist, the latter tries to argue that any interweaving or *partaking* should be out of the question here and, as far as 'what-is-not' is concerned, the only thing that remains is 'what *absolutely* is not'. One has to pay attention to the Sophist's argument to the effect that one should speak of *sheer* Not-being rather than of any *partaking in* 'What is not'. So far modern commentators have failed to see that Plato has the Sophist lay all possible stress on the distinction between 'only *sharing* in not-being' and '*totally* (*pantapasin*) not-being'.

Our Sophist, then, can still take refuge, in a manner similar to that of his new move, in the very non-existence of false speech and false opinion. The EV rightly sees it as his proper task, now, to prove that the elements 'speech-opinion' and 'what is not' are *not* incompatible and their combination is quite possible. He grasps the nettle by investigating the nature of speech, opinion and appearance in general:

260E4–261A4: That is why we have first to investigate the nature of speech, opinion and appearance, in order that, once their nature has become manifest (*phanentôn*), we may clearly see[8] their combination with 'what is not'; and having arrived at this insight prove that falsity *is*, and, once that proof has been accomplished, to corner the Sophist there, and to see if indeed (*eiper*) he is capable of being captured, or else let him go and look for him in another area.

[8] Cornford is right in pointing (at 232A4) to the special use of *kathoran* in *Republic* VII as a synonym of *noein* in the sense of immediate intuitive vision of a prior truth or premiss to be used in the proof of a desired conclusion; he refers to a paper of his ("Mathematics and Dialectic in *Republic VI–VII*", in *Mind*, 41 (1932), 37–52 and 173–90.

Theaetetus agrees but betrays some downheartedness, since the creature seems to have a whole armoury of problems available, which he can place like so many shields in the path of his opponents. (One should notice Plato punning with the ambiguous term *problêma* [lit.: 'anything put forward']. It stands at the same time for 'something put forward as a defence' and 'something put forward as an objection or problem'). As soon as one obstacle is removed, another is raised and we shall never see the end of our troubles with him, he complains. The EV, however, thinks that after the decisive victory on account of the 'what is not' thesis which they had already scored (258C–260D), the last hindrance may be easier to get over. Thus Plato seems to be stressing, once more, that the novel metaphysical thesis which equates 'what is not' with 'the Other' should again provide the main line of the argument against the Sophist:

261A5–C4: *Theaetetus*: Well, sir, what we said at the outset about the Sophist seems true: that he is of a sort hard to hunt down. Evidently he possesses a whole armoury of things to put forward, and every time he puts one as a shield before him, we have to fight our way through before we can get at the man himself. So now, hardly we have broken through the position thrown up against us that 'what is not' *is not*, when another is raised in our path: we must, it seems, prove that falsity exists both in speech and opinion, but after that perhaps something else, and so on. And the end will apparently never be in sight.
The EV: Of good courage a man should be, Theaetetus, so long as he can make steady progress, however modest the steps be. For if he loses heart then, what will he do in other cases where he cannot advance at all or even loses ground? It will take some time, as the saying goes, before a man of that sort captures a city. No, my friend, now that we have passed the barrier you speak of, it may well be that the highest wall is already in our hands, and the rest is easier, and less formidable, indeed.

12.4. *The Nature Of The logos* (261C6–264B8)[9]

Next the EV sets about looking into whether what is not has any point of contact with speech and opinion. It should be remarked that such a relation should concern the objective content of speech and opinion, rather than the act (and attitude) of speaking or thinking itself. It seems useful to pay some attention to this, first.

12.41. *Logos As Both The Formula And Its Content*

A first glimpse of the lemma *logos* may convince the user of a Greek dictionary that this word has a lot of rather diverse senses (see also below, 13.13). However, one remarkable feature is easily overlooked, viz. that in nearly every sense the word may be used indiscriminately for both the linguistic expression and the content of the act of *legein* ('saying', 'asserting', 'arguing', 'understanding', and so on). The same holds good for *doxa*; this term, too, may stand for that which is believed as well as for the act of *doxazein*. Nuchelmans (17) rightly points out a passage in the *Philebus* (39B9–C5) where *doxai* and *logoi* are clearly identical with *ta doxazomena* or *doxasthenta* and *ta legomena* or *lechthenta*, respectively, that is, the things which are believed or asserted. Cf. Verdenius [1966], 83 ff.

[9] See the clear exposition of 261C6–264B8 found in Nuchelmans, 14–21.

The important passages on speech and opinion in the *Sophist* do not show any departure from common usage. However, the problem area of that section does not concern *logos* as an utterance (or speech act) nor *doxa* as the act of opining. The concern of all discussion here is the *content* of the utterance or the opinion and the whole gamut of semantic problems thereby involved.

First. The question of whether 'what is not' is also mixed up with opinion and speech (260B10–C3; see above, 12.3) obviously does not concern the very existence of the formula or act of opining in the first place but rather their content, so that if there is no mixing up of 'what is not' with speech and opinion, 'that which is stated or believed' would always be true. Likewise at 260E1–3 the Sophist's thesis that "opinion-and-speech has no share in what is not" does not concern either the act or expression but the contents of speech and opinion. Of course, the qualifications 'true' and 'false' may also be used in a secondary sense of the linguistic expression by means of which the act of asserting or opining is accomplished, but they primarily refer to the content of speech and opinion.

Secondly. The intimate connection of speech and opinion, which becomes apparent in the use of the singular verb '*does* not share' (*ou koinônei*) at 260E2, can better be explained when the combination 'opinion-and-speech' is held to refer to the common content of speech and opinion than if it is supposed to refer to the *diverse* acts of opinion and speaking.

Thirdly. It is the nature of speech and opinion which is considered in this section rather than their existence. What *is* under discussion is the existence of the art of creating appearances, but the impossibility of its existence is argued by the Sophist from the absence of any domain for 'thinking what is not'. Again, the domain or content of thinking and opinion is under consideration rather than the acts or expressions involved. It is the supposed incompatibility of 'falsehood' and 'having a content' that is at the basis of the Sophist's argument. Plato for his part will of course do his utmost to show that the nature of speech and opinion does not exclude 'what is not' as their domain or content.

Naturally, the act and its constitutive elements as such are not left completely out of sight. When the EV says (at 262A9–11) that a statement is never composed solely of *onomata* uttered in succession, nor of *rhêmata* apart from *onomata*, he is thinking primarily of the *logos* as a formula rather than its content, although the question of whether or not words fit together depends on their meanings: see 261D8–E2. A nice example of the ambiguity (or rather the twofold sense) of *legein* and *logos* is found at 263D1–4 where false speech is finally defined: *peri dê sou legomena* stands indiscriminately for 'what is *uttered* in sounds about you' and 'what is *stated* about you' and so similarly *logos* stands for both the '*onoma-rhêma combination*' and its (false) content; see below, 12.41.

Since the content of the speech act and expression are under discussion in the first place, it is natural that the designation of expressions (including the one-word expressions) remains at the focus of Plato's attention. now.

The nucleus of Plato's view of the matter is contained in three fundamental theses[10]:

a. there are two essentially different levels of speech activity, the *onomazein*-level and the *legein*-level

b. certain units of the *onomazein*-level must be combined in a special manner in order to obtain a unit of the *legein*-level

c. every unit of the *legein*-level, or *logos*, must be *of* something and[11] *about* something.

Theses (*a*) and (*b*) are discussed at 261C6–262E3 (our 12.42), and thesis (*c*) at 262E4–263A10 (our 12.43).

12.42. *The Contradistinction Of onomazein And legein* (261C6–262E3)

The EV opens the discussion by proposing to his companion to proceed along the lines just set out (at 260E4–5) and to investigate the nature of verbal expressions. He starts this investigation by considering their suitability for being combined, just as they had so successfully done regarding forms and letters (252E9–253A12; see above, 8.2). He is obviously referring to the fact that a *logos* cannot consist of a combination of two or more *onomata* only or of two or more *rhêmata* only, any more than a word can consist of two consonants without a vowel. The correct combination of the component parts, then, produces an account (*logos*):

261D1–262C6: Well, bearing in mind what we said about forms and letters, let us consider names (*onomata*) in the same way. The goal we have now set for ourselves (*to nun zêtoumenon*) will be attained, I would think, somewhere along this line (*pêi tautêi*). — What are you going to ask me about words? — Whether they all fit together, or none of them, or some do and some do not. — So much is clear: some do, others do not. — Perhaps something like this is what you are trying to say: words which, when uttered in succession, make sense, do fit together, while those which mean nothing when strung together do not. — What do you mean by that? — Well, just that which I supposed you had in mind when you gave your assent. The vocal signs we use to signify a substance and its attribute (*peri tên ousian*)[12] are surely of two sorts; one called 'names' (*onomata*), the other 'attributes' (*rhêmata*). By 'attribute' we mean an expression significative of actions or states (*epi tais praxesin on*); by 'name' the vocal sign used for the things themselves[13] subject to those actions or states. Well, an account (statement) never consists solely of names uttered in succession nor yet of attributes uttered apart from names. — I do not grasp that. — Well, evidently you had something else in view when you agreed with me just now, because what I wanted to say was precisely this: these words uttered in this way in a string do not make an account (statement). — In what way? — For example the words '*stalks runs sleeps*' and so on with all

[10] See also Nuchelmans, 14 and 17.

[11] *and* rather than *or* as modern interpreters commonly assume. For the importance of this '*and*', see below, 12.43.

[12] For this rendering, see below, remarks (4) and (6).

[13] The word *autos* is frequently used to signify some thing *itself* or some person *himself*, as opposed to others which (who) are less prominent. E.g. a warrior as opposed to his horses or weapons, a shepherd to his herd, seamen to the ship and, generally, a whole to its parts, or a thing to its properties; see also below, *Sophist*, 266D–E, where *things themselves* are distinguished from their *imitations*.

other attributes that signify actions, even if (*kàn*) someone utters them all [*panta*, at the head of the sentence] in succession, he is nonetheless not accomplishing an account (statement). And again, if you say '*lion stag horse*' and any other names of things that are subject to actions, from such a string an account (statement) does not yet arise either. In neither example, indeed, do the words uttered supply information about any action or non-action, or any substance as of something which is or is not, until one mixes together the attributes with the names. Then it clicks and at once the most elementary combination becomes an account (statement) of what might be called the most elementary and shortest kind.

Some remarks. (1) It should be noticed that also in this section the word *onoma* would seem to be used indiscriminately by Plato in the general sense of 'word' as well as 'name' meaning a subject of an action or condition. However, its basic sense is still 'name' rather than just 'word'. See below, 13.11.

(2) *dêlôma* and *dêloun* as well as *sêmainein* may stand for a means or an act of *giving information* about something[14] (on the *legein*-level) but also for just naming something (on the *onomazein*-level). Their twofold meaning is seen clearly at 261E5–6 where the two different levels are both called *dêloma*. One should remember moreover that the verb *dêloun* takes as its subject both persons and linguistic expressions[15].

(3) I prefer to translate *logos* as 'account' because of its peculiar structure. It is not, indeed, our 'statement' of the well-known '*S is P*' form, but rather an account of the 'name *plus* attribute' form preceded by a sentential functor, 'is the case' or 'obtains'. See below, remark 12, and 15.4–15.5.

(4) *Ousia* stands for our *suppositum*, or subject (*substratum*) of an action or state. Cornford and Warrington translate it in one context as *being* (at 261E5), and in another as *nature* (at 262C3). I think they are wrong in doing so. At 262C3 *ousia* is apparently opposed to *praxis* (and *apraxia*) which is 'action' ('inaction') or just 'state'[16]. So *ousia* should be rendered as *substance* or *thing*. Surely, the fact that the thing is of a certain nature, is connoted by the term *ousia*, but to translate it as *nature* might suggest that one is taking *ousia* formally, e.g. 'man' for 'humanity' or 'stone' for 'stoneness'. Yet the term *ousia* (and its instances, 'man', 'stone', 'tree', *etc.* accordingly) should be rather taken to mean concrete terms standing for things of a certain nature including their material conditions. The corresponding concepts 'ousia', 'man', 'stone' and so on are products of what was later called 'total abstraction' (*abstractio totalis* as contradistinguished with *abstractio formalis*, which produces formal concepts such as 'humanity', 'stoneness', 'whiteness' and so on). It seems useful to stress that the concreteness involved here has as such

[14] See e.g. *Laws* VII, 792A4 (quoted by Cornford, 306, n. 1): "Crying is to infants a *means of signifying* their desires" (*dêlôma hôn erai*). For the nature of this 'information', see below, 12.42.

[15] See above, 7.22; for *logos* and *legein*, see below, 13.13. See also Nuchelmans, 14–5.

[16] Nuchelmans (14) rightly takes *praxeis* to mean actions and states as well. One might be tempted to render it as 'appurtenances'; *German* 'Sachhaltigkeiten' has the advantage of not connoting any Aristotelian substantiality. A similar use of *ousia* as standing for the thing that performs or undergoes an action or passion is frequently found in later grammarians. See e.g. the *Scholia* on Dionysius Thrax (ed. Hilgard, 515, 13) quoted by Nuchelmans, 95.

nothing to do with existence in the outside world. The crucial difference between formal and concrete (or 'total') concepts is that the former signify abstract natures, while the latter signify concrete things together with their material conditions, but quite apart from the question of whether or not they really exist in the outside world. So in the scope of total abstraction (and concrete concepts, accordingly) the opposition between 'thing' and its 'material condition' (or *ousia* and its *praxeis*) is bound to lose much of its sharpness. It should be noticed that at 261E5 the term *ousia* refers to the substance including its attributes, as is clear from the context which states that the *two* sorts of vocal sign refer to *ousia*.

(5) In the same way it may be remarked that no reference to things in the outside world occurs until the name corresponding to the concrete concept is *actually used* to name some thing occurring in the outside world.

(6) Plato's contradistinction of *ousia* and *praxis* as 'substance' and its 'action' or 'state' is surely not a strict one. This feature is closely bound up with what was just now said (in our fourth item). Indeed, Plato's contrasting of *ousia* and *praxis* amounts to opposing the suppositum or substance aspect of some 'thing' (one might say, its being numerically one 'thing'), to its 'behaviour' in the broadest sense. Nonetheless, it is one and the same 'particular'. Therefore his use of the term *ousia* does not exclude the *praxeis*; rather it pushes them into the background. Therefore *ousia* signifies the substance but as a performer of actions, which are accordingly connoted in this use of *ousia*. Plato explicitly calls (262A6–7) what is signified by *onoma* 'the things *subject to* the praxeis involved'.

(7) The distinction of *onoma* and *rhêma* (at 262A1) is clear enough, the former designating a substance, the latter some of its actions or states. However, the equation of *rhêma* with our 'verb', which so easily comes to our minds, seems unjustified. I think those scholars (among them Stenzel)[17], are correct who are of the opinion that *rhêma* includes any predicate or attribute assigned to some entity. One has to agree that in our passage *rhêma* seems in fact to be used by Plato as a generic heading for what *we* might call 'verb-predicates' ('stalks', 'runs', 'sleeps', 'understands') and at first glance, at least[18] their functioning as *verb*-predicates seems to be quite essential to the constitution of a *logos*, a unit, it would seem, of an altogether different nature from that of its constituent parts. However, *rhêma* as opposed to *onoma* (taken as *name* rather than *noun*) should be rendered as *attribute* rather than as *verb*[19]. For that matter, whoever takes (with Warrington) *onoma* to

[17] Stenzel [1931:88] has rightly observed that *rhêma* includes any attribute or 'what is said' (*German* 'Aussage'), e.g. *kalos* in *ho pais kalos* ('the beautiful boy'). Of course, the basic sense of *rhêma* just is 'what is said' or 'what may be said'. So it may stand for 'a saying' (e.g. *Protag.*, 341E1; 343B6; *Rep.* V, 464A1; *Laws* VIII, 840C1; Aristophanes, *Frogs* 1379); also for 'phrase', 'two–or–more–words expression' (as opposed to *onoma*) e.g. *Cratylus*, and *Theaetetus*, passim. See also below, 13.12.

[18] To my mind, this results from an optical error caused by our sticking to the Aristotelian analysis of statement. See below, 15.4; 16.42.

[19] Cfr. Diès (380, n. 2): "Le mot *rhêma* a souvent, dans les dialogues, le sens large de *mot, formule, sentence.* Mais il exprime aussi l'acte de qualifier un sujet ou la qualification qu'on lui donne, plus généralement tout ce qu'on énonce d'un sujet (cf. *Crat.* 399b, *Lois*, 838 b/c

mean noun (rather than *name*, as Cornford correctly translates it) seems to be insufficiently aware of the fact that Plato is here primarily acting as a metaphysician (proceeding semantically), rather than a grammarian. Besides, as will be shown below (15.32), it is not *logos* as such but rather the *logos eirêmenos* which is of quite a different nature from its constitutive parts.

(8) A logos ('account') does not arise, Plato says, until you mix together the attributes with the names. His use of the article twice (*tois onomasi ta rhêmata*; 262C4) may be explained as a reference to the attributes and names which may fit together in every case under consideration. However, it is surely possible to make them refer to the names and attributes used earlier, so that we get the 'statements' '*a lion stalks*' and '*a stag runs*', '*a horse sleeps*'. It might be remarked that the first two sentences are typological, as they seem to describe one of the subject's characteristics. But to sleep seems to have little of the characteristic of a horse. However, it is rather difficult, I think, to substitute another verb for *katheudei* ('sleeps'), which would be acceptable from the paleographical point of view. Therefore we can better take the three examples to be merely harmless sentences about a lion, a stag and a horse.

(9) Plato's awareness of the specific nature of what has been called the *legein*-level (and *logos*, accordingly) may be gathered from 262A9 onwards. He is obviously trying to say that uttering just isolated names or isolated attributes (or, using modern terminology, predicates) does not make up a *logos*. Whoever utters them does no more indeed than calling up ('naming') something by means of that *onoma* or *rhêma*, but provides no information at all about some state of affairs concerning the thing under scrutiny. But once the words are uttered in the combination required for the constitution of a *logos*, the latter promptly emerges from the constituent parts as something of an entirely different order. Plato makes several attempts to stress the special character of a *logos* constituted and used properly. (See below, 15.3.)

(10) The text at 262C2–4 is not quite clear in all its details. The mere strings of isolated words, Plato says, do not supply any information about what we would nowadays call 'a state of affairs'. So far so good. However, should we link up *ontos oude mê ontos* with *ousian* solely or rather with the whole phrase *praxin oude apraxian oude ousian*? I would prefer the latter construction and make the EV assert that isolated words in a wrong combination do not refer to any action (or non-action), or any substance, *as of something that is* (or is *not*). The italicised phrase contains the dominant part of the sentence, it seems. The EV is trying to say that, unlike isolated words (or a haphazard combination thereof) the terms of a real *logos* asserted properly by somebody not only designate some 'thing' (their 'significate')

etc.; comparer Isocrate, *Or. XV*, 166). Le *rhêma verbe* est donc lui-même prédicat. Sa décomposition en *copule* et *participe* (Aristote, *Métaph.* 1017a28, *Anal. pr.* 51b13 et suiv.) n'est pas faite ici par Platon; l'*être* dont il parle est celui des jugements existentiels". Apart from the ill-concealed Aristotelian terminology in which the difference with the Stagirite is explained, one may agree with Diès on the general score. See also below, 13.12.

but present it as 'being' or 'not-being', that is, 'being the case' or 'not-being the case'. So in principle four different cases are involved here, given that the main division is between the *ontos* ('of something which is') and *mê ontos* (= 'of something which is not') items:

1. *it is the case* (Plato's formula runs: "of something which is")
   - 1.1. (a) stag-running
   - 1.2. (a) stag-not-running

2. *it is not the case* (Plato's formula: "of something which is not")
   - 2.1. (a) stag-running
   - 2.2. (a) stag-not-running.

It seems wrong, then, to suppose that Plato is already aware of the basic propositional scheme: '*S is P*', let alone of its basic form of 'subject, predicate, copula'. The only thing of which he is clearly aware is that an interweaving of forms (stag *plus* running) or their mutual exclusion (or rather 'being separated') may actually be the case or not the case. I am sure that in talking of the weaving together (*symplôke*) of forms to which any discourse (*logos*) is said to owe its existence (259E5–6; see above, 12.2), he means the special combination of 'names' and 'attributes' which, in the case of true speech, should reflect the actual communion of the immanent forms named, and those attributed, whereas in order for there to be false speech such a special combination needs only to be claimed.

After the EV has given this exposition Plato makes Theaetetus fail to understand it and ask the EV for further explanation. The latter tries to meet Theaetetus' wish by inserting a straightforward example which alludes to the man's own attempt to grasp the difficult matter. Next, the EV stresses the important difference between naming and asserting (stating), again:

262C7–E3: What do you mean by that?[20] — When somebody says: 'A man tries to understand'[21], do you agree that this is an account (statement) of the most elementary and shortest kind? — Yes. — Of course you do, because ‹however small his account (statement) may be› he is then already supplying information about things that are (or become, or were, or will be) and he does more that just name something: he *tells* something[22] (*ti perai-*

[20] I think Cornford and Warrington are not right in rendering it as "how do you make a statement of that kind?". Diès correctly has "Qu' entends-tu par là?" (*pôs ar' hôde legeis*;).
[21] The phrase 'tries to understand' is a one-word expression in Greek (*manthanei*). I take the EV's example as referring to Theaetetus' (called here 'a man') own efforts to understand what exactly the EV is trying to say. It is to be noted that in a dialogue *manthaneis* is often used for 'd' ye see?'. So e.g. Aristophanes, *Frogs*, 195. For Plato, cf. *Meno*, 84D5 and *Theaetetus*, 174B6.
[22] Nuchelmans (15) is right in taking the 'somebody' mentioned earlier to be the subject of the verbs *dêloi*, *ouk onomazei* and *perainei* and to be the referent of *auton* at 262D5. He indicates the *tis* of 262C9 as the referent meant. I would prefer the *tis* of 262C4 ('until *one* mixes'), as I consider C7–D1 an interruption of the EV's main exposition. — For my translation, *he tells* for *perainei*, and my emphasis on its use, see below, 15.3; 15.32.

nei), by weaving together the attributes with the names. That's why we say he states ‹something›, not merely names ‹something›, and indeed it is to this complex that we have given the name 'account' ('assertion'). — True. — So then just as some things we said [262B7] fit together while others do not, so also with vocal signs: some do not fit together, but as we said before [262C5] those that do fit make up an account (assertion). — Quite so.

Some further remarks. (11) Nuchelmans (15–7) has successfully argued for the basic importance of the 'not-yet' phrase (at 262C1–2) and the use of the verb *perainein* (at D4). He has given some striking evidence for his view that our text should be considered a starting point for the later discussions of the completeness of a thought and the twin themes of the imperfection and perfection of sense (*imperfectio et perfectio sensus*). For that matter, the difference between the *legein*-level and the *onomazein*-level is here easily seen. Someone who makes an account (or 'statement, we would prefer to say), brings about something that is a complete whole which is of quite a different nature from what he performs on the *onomazein*-level, where he only 'calls up' or 'names' some thing, without supplying any ascriptive information about it. Plato is most explicit about that (262D2–5). However, the translation 'completes something' which is suggested by Nuchelmans (Prauss: "fügt zur Ganzheit") is unnecessarily vague, since *perainein* is quite often used by Plato (and other Greek authors) to mean just 'to make one's point', 'to bring about one's message' *etc.*, as we shall argue later on (below, 15.3; 15.32).
(12) Plato now (at D2–3) makes it even clearer than before (at 262C2–4) that a most characteristic feature of the *logos* is that it supplies information about *things that are* (here enlarged into 'things in the present, past or future and those becoming'), to the extent that the sentential functor ('it is the case') is diversified ('it was the case', and so on). The text corroborates my interpretation of *ontos oude mê ontos* at 262C2–4.
(13) As a matter of fact Plato seems to give two different characteristics of *logos*: it is (a) a specific combination of names and attributes, which mirrors a (supposed) parallel communion of forms, and (b) as account-making ('statement-making') it acts on the *legein*-level and supplies information about what is, or is not, the case. It might be asked, then, whether the combination of forms as such is a *ratio sufficiens* for making up a 'statement'. One is inclined to deny that, since, for instance, a combination of 'lion' and 'stalking' may also be achieved in saying 'stalking lion', which is not a statement at all. However, in his most definite exposition Plato mentions (a) and (b) in the same breath:

262C3–5: no information is supplied about something that is or is not, *until somebody combines* an attribute with a name
D2–5: *the user of a logos* brings about something complete and states something in weaving together an attribute with a name.

Well, Plato quite certainly intends here to confine himself to the combination of forms *actually performed by someone* on the *legein*-level, either in inward or outward speech. However, it should be stressed that there is no reason to be surprised about that. Indeed, the combination of *onoma* and *rhêma* mirrors the (supposed) parallel communion of *immanent* forms, the Transcendent Forms, that is, inasmuch as they are partaken in by particular things. In fact, the latter belong, by definition, to

the world of 'things that are or become or were or will be', to use Plato's own formula (at 262D2–3). Therefore the logos *when asserted by somebody*[23], should by definition have the basic form:

> 'in the outside world it is (not) the case that
> there is (not) a combination of forms x and y'.

As a metaphysician Plato was fully aware of certain combinations of forms whether or not they were the case and neither was he entirely unaware of the semantic impact of his view. However, the notion that he already had in mind elements of the later '*S is P*' analysis of the sentence seems rather anachronistic. Such an analysis of the 'statement' was beyond the scope of his interest. And as a metaphysician he was right, the more so as this analysis surely does not square with his own metaphysics.

12.43. *On The Sentence's Reference* (262E4–263A10)

Next the EV calls attention to what he introduces as 'another small point'. We need not wonder that it is a point of major importance, viz. that every 'statement' is '*of* something and *about* something'. The latter phrase is commonly taken as pleonastic. Cornford writes (308, n. 1):

> The simple genitive *tinos* 'of something' is used; and at *263A* Theaetetus speaks of the statement about him as 'mine' (*emos*), as if this genitive were possessive. But in the same breath he speaks of it as 'about me' (*peri emou*); and that is evidently what both expressions mean.

I am afraid that the common interpretation misses a very important point in Plato's argument when it takes the phrases '*of* something' and '*about* something' as entirely equivalent. From the syntactic point of view, the genitive *tinos* is not a possessive genitive, in the first place, but rather an objective genitive. The use of the possessive pronoun (*emos*, 'mine') should not lead us astray, as this pronoun may also act as an objective genitive. This use is not uncommon in Greek. See Aeschylus, *Persae*, 699 *tên emên aidô* = 'respect *for me*'. Sophocles has (*Electra*, 343) *tama nouthetêmata* = 'warnings *to me*' and (*Oed. Tyr.*, 969) *tômôi pothôi* = 'by desire *for me*'. Thucydides has (VI, 90) *hai emai diabolai* = 'the slanders *against me*'. One could compare the English 'the Sophist's ca(u)se' for 'the ca(u)se *against* the Sophist'; perhaps also such expressions as *my* lover, '*its* description' and so on[24]. So we have to render *ho logos emos* as something like 'the statement concerning me'. A parallel use occurs in *Theaetetus*, 209A2: *ton son logon* ("the account about you"). It should be noticed that a similar 'possessive' connotation is found in

[23] That this addition is pivotal will be seen later on. See below, 15.32. It should be noted that the assertion may also be that involved in *doxa* and the so-called inward speech of the soul.

[24] For Latin parallels, see Leumann–Hofmann–Scantys, *Lateinische Grammatik*, p. 66, Zusatz: "Der Austausch von Gen. obi. und Possessivpronomen".

Parm., 142A3–4 (where the relation is expressed by a possessive *dative* in Greek): 'consequently, there cannot *be* a name (*onoma*) or a description (*logos*) *of it* (*autôi*) nor any knowledge or perception or opinion'.

So far so bad, one might think, for what on earth is the difference between '*of* me' and '*about* me'? The answer should be taken from Plato's opposition of *ousia* and *praxis* mentioned before (see 12.42, remark(6)). The blank genitive seems to refer to the referent itself or, if you want, the referent's *ousia*, as designated by the *onoma*, whereas the 'about' formula designates more what is called its *praxeis* (actions or states). Of course, the referent of *tis* in the *tinos* formula is one and the same as that of the *peri tinos* formula. No doubt about that. However, the former formula takes him as a suppositum, the latter rather as a suppositum *including* its actions and states. Whenever the opposition between the two formulas is stressed, the *peri tinos* formula tends to designate the actions and states more particularly and so to connote '*that which* is about something', so to speak 'all its appurtenances'. In Plato's mind, the latter opposition is vital to the solution of the problem of *pseudos*. As will become patently clear some sections later on, Plato is of the opinion that the falsity of a statement consists precisely in asserting 'something as (not) being the matter with (x)' (*on* or *mê on peri tinos*)[25] contrary to the real state of affairs, whereas (x), the referent itself (*tis*), is considered just on its own. To make a false statement will reduce to assigning some property to some subject existing (or taken as existing) in the outside world which, in point of fact, does not possess that property.

Let us now go back to the text:

> 262E4–263A10: Now for another small point. Whenever there is a statement, it must concern *something*; it cannot concern nothing. — That is so. — And must it not have a certain character? — Of course. — Now, let us look at ourselves[26]. — Yes, that is how it should be. — I will make a statement to you combining a thing with an action (state) by means of a name and an attribute. You are to tell me whom the statement concerns. — I will do my best. — '*Theaetetus sits*', not a lengthy statement, is it? — No, rather a modest one. — Now, it is your job to say what it is about and whom it concerns. — Clearly it is about me and concerns me[27]. — What about the next one? — Namely? — '*Theaetetus* (yes, the one with whom I am now talking) *flies*'? — Everyone would agree that this, too, concerns me and is about me.

[25] Cf. Peck [1952:35] who rightly underlines that in the case of *pseudês logos* 'that which is untrue about something' (*to mê on peri tinos*) is involved. See also Prauss, 142–4; 192; 198–200. But these authors failed to see, I am afraid, the full impact of the *peri tinos* formula as opposed to the *tinos* formula.

[26] The EV seems to be joking here in alluding to a Greek moral proverb. What he wants to say is that one should not look too far for one's examples. For that matter, he needs examples in which the referring part designates a subject whose existence in the outside world is beyond all doubt. — At *Charmides*, 160D5–6 a similar move is found where Socrates invites Charmides to engage in some introspection.

[27] Warrington's translation 'I am the subject' is surely correct, but he wrongly takes the sentence to be equivalent to 'it is about me'.

The reader may easily ask what exactly is Plato's 'additional small point'. It is commonly thought that the small point is in fact a twofold one. So Cornford is rather explicit in paraphrasing (308) our passage:

> *Two more points* (italics mine) are now added: (1) One element in the complex statement is the name of the agent, about which the statement is made. (2) Every statement as a whole is either true or false.

In the first place this interpretation takes 'of something' (*tinos*) and 'about something' (*peri tinos*) to be completely equivalent, as we have already noticed. Besides, that the statement has a certain character (*poion tina einai* as mentioned at 262E9) is supposed to refer to its truth-value or the possibility of its being a bearer of truth or falsehood. I suspect that this interpretation is a little rash. Of course, the *poion tina einai* (*lit.* 'being of a certain quality', 'being such-or-such') has something to do with what we are accustomed to label as 'the truth value' of a statement. Besides, as early as at 263A11–B5 it is explicitly said that the quality to be ascribed to a statement is its being true or false[28]. However, some doubt may still be raised.

First. It is rather striking that Plato, in contrast to many other instances, lets Theaetetus understand the EV's point at once: the latter does not hesitate to answer: 'of course' to the EV's assertion that a statement must be of a certain quality. It is quite unlikely that Plato intends to have his readers believe that Theaetetus is already thinking of the statement's truth value. It would be rather anachronistic of us to suppose that he really did. It is quite obvious, therefore, that.at this stage of the discussion the EV only wants to stress that any statement is of a twofold nature: it must concern something (be *of* something, *tinos*) and have a certain quality (content, if you want). In modern parlance: the distinction between 'topic' and 'comment' is involved [cf. Lyons, 1977, II, 501]. Obviously enough, indeed, since everything must be qualified somehow. To be more specific: 'anything asserted of something else' must be either flattering or pejorative, either good or bad, either probable or improbable and so on, and this list will also include, of course, the qualifying pair 'correct (true) — incorrect (false)'.

Secondly. Plato announces "another small point" (his text literally reads: "Besides, this small point"). However, the two points commonly found by modern interpreters (see Cornford), are rather diverse and cannot be easily treated as *one* 'small point'. Of course, we may conceive of this 'one point' rather loosely and let it refer to the two points together. It should be recalled, however, that Plato always is rather strict in articulating his arguments, as is well known to every reader of the early dialogues especially. A nice example is found in a work contemporaneous with our dialogue. *Philebus*, 39C7–8 Socrates introduces a further question with the words: "Well, if we are right so far, here is one more point in this

[28] The same is clear from the parallel found in *Philebus*, 37B–C, where, unlike pain and pleasure, opinion is among all 'things that have a quality' (37C4–6). Some lines earlier it was said that "in the case of opinion falsehood and truth supervene and it is by that (*dia tauta*) that it becomes not merely an opinion but a certain sort of opinion, true or false, respectively" (37B11–C2). See also *Cratylus*, 408C–D (our 15.21).

connection for us to consider". As early as at E8–9 a subsequent question is explicitly introduced: "Well now, here is a further question for you to answer". Therefore I would prefer to have Plato refer to two *more closely related* items when he uses the phrase 'another small point'. And, you will have them if you take the *einai tinos* ('being of something') and *poion tina einai* ('being of a certain quality') to be the two closely related requirements for being a statement.

Thirdly. It strikes the reader that the EV gives (at 262E6–7 and 14–5) as the first requirement for being a logos its being *tinos* ('*of* something') and does not use the complex formula *peri hou kai hotou* (*lit.*: '*about* whom and *of* whom'). It is true that the usual interpretation takes the addition *peri hou* to be pleonastic and only has to explain why it is missing at 262E and not introduced until 263A. To my mind the *peri tinos* (or *hotou*) phrase is actually announced as clearly as at 262E9 by the phrase *poion tina einai*.

Let me explain. When saying 'this stone is heavy' and being asked: 'what is your statement about?', you may answer in two ways: either (a) 'this stone' *or* (b) '(its) being heavy'. The first answer concerns the *thing* which you are talking about, the second mention *that which* is asserted about it. It is easily seen that the EV has introduced this distinction as early as at 262E ff. by dividing the vocal signs into *onoma* and *rhêma*. Indeed the *thing* (called *ousia* at 261E5 and 262C3) is that which is referred to by the onoma, while the 'that which is asserted' is signified by the rhêma and called *praxis* (at 262A3, 262B6,10 and C3). So the *poion tina* phrase at 262E9 refers to *rhêma* and *praxis* and is only later on (at 263B2–4) specified as 'either containing a true rhêma or a false one'. It is obvious that this specification can be elicited from the examples given at 263A1 and 8, viz. the apparently true 'Theaetetus sits' and the apparently false 'Theaetetus flies'.

It may be remarked, now, that Plato indiscriminately takes the *rhêma* and the *logos* ('statement') as being either true or false. We need not be surprised about that. Plato's solution to the problem of falsity consists in fact in locating the element of falsehood in the rhêma part of the statement. Besides the term *logos*, too, is still used indiscriminately to mean both 'statement' as a whole and just *what* is stated, the rhêma part, that is. (We may recall the use of *logos* for *definiens* as well as *definition*.) In addition, the vague borderline between *ousia* and *praxeis* (the *praxeis* always being *of* an ousia) should also be considered in that what is designated by a rhêma is always something associated with that which is referred to by the onoma[29].

To summarise, then, I think one has to view the distinction between *hotou* (*tinos*) and *peri hou* (*peri tinos*) in precisely the same way as that between *ousia* and *praxeis* which it obviously parallels. Both of them concern the vital opposition which Plato shows exists between the referring part of a logos and its rhêma part; vital indeed, as it will enable him to show how the Sophist's view of false speech implies the confusion of two basically different questions: (1) do the things designated by

[29] See also below, 13.12 and 14.4.

the diverse parts of the logos really exist?, and (2) is that which is expressed by the rhêma part linked up with the referent of the onoma part in the outside world?

12.44. *The Nature Of True And False Speech* (263A11–D5)

The continuation of the discussion confirms the previous view. The very distinction of the *hotou* (*tinos*) and *peri hou* (*peri tinos*) formulas turns out to be closely connected with Plato's solution to the problem of falsehood:

263A11–D5: Well, any statement (we say) must have a certain quality. — Yes. — Then what sort of character should we assign to each of those two statements? — One is false, it would seem (*pou*), the other true. And the true one states about you (*peri sou*) that the things-that-are *are*. — Certainly. — The false one, on the other hand, ‹states about you that› things-that-are different (*lit.*, 'other') from the things-that-are ‹*are*›. — Yes. — And accordingly, states things-that-*are-not* as things-that-*are*. — No doubt. — But things that truly [*lit.* '*being*-like'] *are* other (*ontôs de ge onta hetera*) in your case (*peri sou*). For we said before [256E6–7] that concerning everything (*peri hekaston*) many things-that-*are* (*onta*) are indeed (*pou*) the case as well as many things-that-*are-not* ‹are the case›. — Quite so. — So as to the second statement I made about you (*peri sou*): *first*, according to our definition of the minimum statement it must be said (*phateon*) to be one of the shortest possible. — We agreed about that just now. — And *secondly* ‹it must be said to be› *concerning* (*lit.* 'of') something. — Yes. — And if it does not concern *you*, then not anything at all. — Certainly. — But if it were concerning nothing, it would not be a statement at all; for we showed that it is strictly impossible for a statement *concerning nothing* (*mêdenos*) to be a statement. — Quite true. — Nevertheless (*mentoi*), what is stated *about you* (*peri sou*) but so that what is other (*thatera*) ‹is stated› as the same and accordingly (*kai*) things that are not as things that are, well, a name-attribute combination of that sort seems to be really and truly (*ontôs te kai alêthôs*) a false statement. — Perfectly true.

Some preliminary remarks first. (1) The true *logos* is defined (263B4–5) as saying about Theaetetus (*peri sou*) that the things that are *are*. The *peri* formula draws our attention to his *praxeis* first and foremost, as is also the case with the definition of the false *logos* about him (see B11). Indeed, it is not the fact that Theaetetus is a person (if you want, a suppositum) which is in danger of falling prey to a false logos, but rather his actions or states.

(2) True speech is said to state that things that *are* about some substance[30] *are*, false speech that things other than (*heterâ*) the things-that-are *are* (about that substance). It should be remarked that in a manner quite consistent with the novel metaphysical doctrine put forward before the *hetera* are explained as authentically 'being', yet 'not being the case' in as far as some definite substance is concerned. The *hetera* are, accordingly, paraphrased as 'things-that-are-not, though asserted *as* being' (B9).

(3) The next lines try to make clear that the Sophist is entirely wrong in asserting that what is falsely said is not-being. On the contrary, it most truly *is*. The common reading *ontôn* (at 263B11) turns the EV's words into a pointless repetition of the foregoing lines. Besides, this reading requires a monstrous construction of

[30] The term 'substance' should be throughout taken without any Aristotelian connotation; see below, Ch. XIV–XVI.

the sentence, something like this: "from the things that are (*ontôn*) ‹it states› things that are different about you"; where *ontôn* ('*from* the things ..') is supposed to be governed by the *following* (!) *hetera* ('different'), which is as clumsy, if not impossible, in Greek as in English[31]. For that matter, the reading *ontôn* is a conjecture by Cornarius (Janus Cornarius or Hagepol, or Hagebut (1500–58), professor at Marburg and Jena)[32]. A useless one, I think, since the reading *ontôs* found in all our manuscripts makes perfect sense[33] in that it goes with the phrase *onta hetera* and makes the EV stress that the 'different being' (= 'not-being') about Theaetetus is, all the same, '*truly* (*ontôs*) being'. Thus the following explanation may more naturally be connected with the previous lines: "for we said before (in the exposition of the novel metaphysical doctrine, at 256E6–7) that in the case of everything (*lit.*: 'about everything', *peri hekaston*) many things-that-are *are* indeed, yet many things-that-are-not *are* as well". Of course, 'things that *are*' (*onta*) which *are* indeed, in the case of something (or 'concerning something') are its real condition (or properties, etc.). E.g. saying in your case, 'you are a wise, middle-aged woman'. On the other hand, 'things that *are*' (*onta*), which are not in something's case, are all conditions, properties and so on which it does not actually have. E.g. saying in your case, 'you are a reckless young scapegrace'. So all such conditions (*praxeis*) indiscriminately *are*, as such (viz. 'wisdom', 'youth', recklessness *etc.*), but they are not all of them *in your case*".

(4) As in the earlier exposition of the doctrine, 'not-being' taken as meaning 'different being' ('otherness') is strictly opposed to 'what absolutely is not'. To the latter all existence is denied (by definition, of course), while 'Otherness' is that Kind among the famous Five Kinds that allows some thing to be some other being (a 'not-stone *thing*', 'a not-tree *thing*', and so on) and thus safeguards it from totally not-being. (See above, 11.4). Well, by the same token it safeguards false speech from 'not being speech at all'.

(5) At 263C2 Cornford's conjectural reading seems to be a must. He seems to be quite right in rejecting the MSS reading of C2: *ex hôn hôrismetha ti pot' esti logos, anagkaiotaton auton*. He writes (in an *Addendum* on p. 332):

The superlative *anagkaiotaton* throws a quite unnecessary emphasis on the obvious fact that 'Theaetetus flies' is a statement of the shortest possible type; *auton*, moreover, seems superfluous; most translators ignore it. I suspect that Plato wrote *logos anagkaiotatos* = '*the mini-*

[31] No wonder that Keyt [1973] aptly removes the flaw in this construction by changing (292) the clumsy word order of our text. However, in following the reading of all our manuscripts, *ontôs* Keyt's problem evanished, since it entirely consists in the ambiguity of the merely conjectural *ontôn* as governed by *hetera*. When opposed to *ontôs de ge onta* the *hetera* can only mean 'not being the case'. It should be recalled, time and again, that in the *Sophist* context *heteron* is used as a paraphrasis for 'not-being' and so is the natural opposite of *ontôs de ge onta*. Therefore the sentence should be read as: 'But ‹the false statement asserts›things–that–surely–really–*are*, ‹albeit true that they are› not-being in your case'.

[32] Cornarius' edition (Plato, *Opera*, Basel 1561), p. 194,11 and 43–5 (followed by Stephanus in his edition of 1578, p. 263); see Frede, 58.

[33] The reading *ontôs* is restored by Frede (58), Kostman, 192 and 209, n. 2 and Rijlaarsdam (209, n. 1).

mum statement' (cfr. *Rep.* 369D: *hê anagkaiotatê polis*[34]. It was, in fact, *tôn logôn ho prôtos te kai smikrotatos* that was defined above (262C), rather than statement in general; *auton* must then conceal the main verb, perhaps *phateon* as at 263B 2).

I have followed his suggestions.

Cornford introduces (311) our passage with a poorly veiled reproach to Plato:

> The language in which Plato now states his solution is extremely simple, and consequently vague and ambiguous.

After six pages containing his own explanation of the exact sense of Plato's solution, Cornford's epilogue is not flattering to the Master either (317):

> It is certainly surprising that Plato should be content with a statement of his solution so brief and ambiguous. Presumably the fact that Forms are involved and the relevance of all the earlier discussion of their combination was so clear to his mind that he took the reader's understanding for granted.

Surely Plato is not guilty of prolixity. However, his solution had been sufficiently well prepared by the previous distinctions to enable him to deal clearly and concisely with the paradoxical thesis that false speech amounts to talking about nothing and is, for that matter, intrinsically impossible. The nucleus of his equipment is the contradistinction of the *onoma-ousia-hotou* (*tinos*) area with that of *rhêma-praxeis-peri hou* (*peri tinos*). The job is actually done by the *hotou* (*tinos*)– *peri hou* (*peri tinos*) opposition.

It is quite clear, indeed, that every time the *peri* formula (*peri sou*) is used, the EV has in mind the assignment of a (true or false) *rhêma*, the *rhêma* being liable to a change of truth value. By the same token the corresponding *praxeis* are involved, as is clear from Plato's explicit reference to an earlier passage (256E6–7; see above, 11.1), where the ontological state of everything (*hekaston*, equivalent to *ousia*) is explained by saying that many 'things' (read: *praxeis*) are linked to it and many other 'things' are not. So the *rhêma-praxeis-peri* area is that of *may be yes – may be not*. This is the *first* thing (*prôton men*) to be asserted about any statement 'of the shortest possible sort' (263C1–3). Secondly (*epeita*, C5) the *hotou* (*tinos*) formula comes in and goes to work. The variable *praxeis* designated by the *rhêma* are no longer under consideration: rather it is the stable and indispensable thing (*ousia*) referred to by the *onoma* part with which the statement is concerned. This thing cannot possibly fail to be. No more talk, then, about *may be yes (true) – may be not (true)*, for the very existence of the statement is in question, then (263C9–11). This having been firmly established, the EV goes on to explicitly oppose (*mentoi*) the import of the *peri sou* formula, to wit the 'logical difference' which is responsible for any possible occurrence of falsehood. Indeed, whenever the *rhêma* part connects you with things which are non-existent in your case *as* existent, or existent ones *as* non-existent, falsehood intrudes (263D1–4).

[34] 'the indispensable minimum of a city' at least (*ge*) (*Rep.* II, 369D11); cf. Aristotle, *Politica* IV, 1291a12 where when referring to Plato's *Republic* Aristotle says: "Socrates asserts that a state is made up of the four indispensable ‹skilled craftsmen›" (*ek tettarôn tôn anagkaiotatôn*). For other examples, see Liddell and Scott, s.v. *anagkaios* no 4.

12.45. *On False Opinion And False Appearing* (263D6–264B9)

The EV is understandably keen on making the final move in their long argument against the Sophist. Any puzzle about the possibility of false opinion and false appearing is close to a definitive solution in the wake of successful attempts to penetrate the enigmatic nature of false speech. And once the tricky character of false opinion and false appearing will have been elucidated, the very domain in which our Sophist has, time and again, taken refuge will offer him no longer that 'impenetrable lurking place' to elude final detention.

To understand the importance of the final step we should recall the problem situation as found in the first stage of the Intermezzo (237B–259D). After the EV had argued (235B8–9) that the area in which the Sophist lurks should be quartered *without further delay* by dividing the art of Image-making, he had to agree that the correct definition of the 'appearance-maker' could not be properly given until the entire problem area covered by such notions as 'appearing', 'real being', 'not-being' had sufficiently been mapped out. So the leading question of the Intermezzo was: how can there be such a thing as 'false appearance', which is the Sophist's trade mark? The EV thinks it 'an extremely difficult problem' (236D9). In what sense can falsehoods be said to have 'real being'? One has to assume, audaciously enough, he agrees, that 'what is not', *is*, for otherwise one could not speak of falsehood at all (236D9–237A4; see above, 12.3).

The expression 'to utter a falsehood' was scrutinised, then, by clearing up the assumption made earlier that 'what is not, in a way, *is*'. First the interpretation of this expression as 'to say what *absolutely* is not' was rejected (237B7–239C3; see above 4.21). A fresh start was made by re-examining the characterisation of the Sophist as an 'appearance-maker' and trying to define its main ingredient, 'appearance'. It is opposed to 'really being' (*ontôs on*). However, this surely does not amount to asserting that it is deprived of any sort of being. As it is still '*something* which is not genuine' (*mê alêthinon*), it must be some *thing*, or to use the EV's words, you have to call 'appearance', 'something which not really is not' (*ouk ontôs ouk on*), and which (Theaetetus firmly supplies) *is*, at least in some way (*all' esti ge mên pôs*). A strange conclusion seems to be unavoidable, the EV and Theaetetus must conclude:

> 240C1–4: 'What is not' does seem, I am afraid, to be interwoven with 'what is' in some such way, and quite strange it is. — Quite strange, indeed. You see that our hydra-headed Sophist has us got into a fix again, this time by his interweaving 'what is' and 'what is not', compellling us to admit, quite reluctantly, that what is not *is* in a way (*einai pôs*).

Quite strange, it was. But the Intermezzo has made it perfectly clear that the *einai pôs* should be taken as 'Otherness' ('being different'); see above, Chs IX–XI. So the interweaving of 'what is' and 'what is not' which was denounced at 240C as an evil practice of the Sophist has turned out, now, to be a quite honorable deed which may be based on the ontic character of the transient world. One need not

be surprised to find the nature of logos reduced (at 259E) to the weaving together of forms.

The reader might be puzzled when comparing the above passage with what is said at 263B–C, where the EV seems to stress that the "things that are not in your case" and "*are-other*" are to be considered, all the same, *ontôs onta* ('being really'). In the earlier passage (240B–C), however, there seems to be a strict opposition between *einai pôs* and *ontôs onta*.

To see a contradiction here would lead one to fall victim to an optical error. There is no material opposition between what is labelled as *on pôs* and *ontôs on*. As the EV has twice remarked (256E6–7 and 263B11–12): for everything it can be said that many things that *are* are the case, and as many that *are not* are equally the case. For instance, as far as, say this milestone is concerned it may be said that 'stoneness', 'heaviness', 'roughness' *etc.* are the case, whereas 'horseness', 'lightness', 'smoothness' (and rationality, invisibility *etc.*) are not. However, 'horseness', 'lightness', 'smoothness', 'rationality' and the rest of that infinite number[35] of (instantiations of) 'other' Forms surely *are* (*ontôs onta*), but only are not the case in as far as our particular stone is concerned. So in the case of (x) all those things with which it is *not* endowed *are*, in a way (*pôs*), concerning (x), i.e. as its 'not-beings' (*ouk onta*), its 'ontic shortcomings' so to speak, labelled by the collective name of 'its otherness'. They are (x)'s *onta pôs*, but, considered alone said nonetheless to be 'really being' (*ontôs onta*), either as Transcendent Forms or *as* instantiations found in another particular thing, say (y).

Besides, there is sometimes some confusion about the meaning of *ontôs*. There is a famous passage in the *Phaedrus* (247C7) where the (feminine) phrase *ontôs ousa* is used in the most sincere metaphysical sense: "It is there (beyond the heavens) that true being (*hê... ousia ontôs ousa*) dwells, without colour or shape, that cannot be touched; reason alone, the soul's pilot, can behold it, and all true knowledge is knowledge thereof" (247C4–D1). However, the word *ontôs* frequently serves just to designate that the term involved is rightly used. An example of this use may be found in *Rep.* VI, 490A9 ('the real lover of knowledge'; *ontôs philomathês*). *Sophist*, 216C6 has *hoi mê plastôs all' ontôs philosophoi* ('the genuine, not the sham philosophers'). Similarly, *Soph.*, 240B11 has 'really a likeness' (*eikôn ontôs*). In *Laws* II, 656E6 it is said of the phrase 'ten thousand years ago': "I mean the expression not loosely but in all precision" (*ouch hôs epos eipein all' ontôs*). The phrases *ontôs te kai alêthôs pseudês* (*Soph.*, 263D3-4) and *to pseudos ontôs on pseudos pephykos* (*ibid.*, 266E1) may hardly be viewed as evidence of a sublime use of *ontôs*. Therefore in the phrase *ontôs on*, too, the *ontôs* is intended to make clear that the term *on* is rightly used.

The EV's words at 240B should be understood in the same manner. There a

[35] One should recall Plato's words at 256E6–7: "Well, obviously in the case of any form whatsoever 'what is' (*to on*) is 'manifold' but 'what is not' (*to mê on*) is 'unlimited in number' (*apeiron de plêthei*)".

likeness (of a thing) 'being in a way' (*on pôs*) is not only opposed to (that thing's) 'real being' (*ontôs on*) but also recognised as 'really being a likeness':

240B7–13: Then if you are to call 'what is like' ‹'something› not genuine' (*mê alêthinon*) you call it, by implication 'something which not really *is not*'. — Indeed, it *is*, at least in a way (*ge mên pôs*). — But not in the genuine way (*alêthôs*), you say. — No, indeed, except that it *really* [= genuinely, according to B3] is a likeness (*eikôn ontôs*). — Therefore, while it *not really* is 'what is not' it *really* is what we call a likeness.

Briefly, its being 'other' is something which really is, or, in Plato's words, the likeness (*eikôn*) is a real 'thing'. (One should notice the conciseness of the formula at B11: *plên ge eikôn ontôs* where *ontôs* suggests the genuineness of the *eikôn* rather than determines the *esti* to be supplied from B9.)

It seems useful, now, to parallel what is said at 240C–241E about false opinion and the exposition which is given at 263D–264B on that score.

As early as at 240C1–5 the EV is trying to state what in the end will turn out to be the correct solution to our problem: false appearance owes its existence to a (logical) interweaving of 'what is' and 'what is not' and his logical (or epistemological) move is supported by the ontic situation where 'what is not' is actually interwoven with 'what is'. What is put forward (quite hesitantly) only as a suggestion at 240C ff. is expounded as a firm doctrine at 263D ff. It is interesting anyhow to see how false opinion is discussed in the earlier passage.

The EV suggests (240D1 ff.) that, under the influence of the Sophist's art, our mind comes to opine (think) what is false (*pseudê doxazein*). He defines false opinion (thinking) as 'opining, (thinking) things contrary to the things that are' (*tanantia tois ousi*) or opining (thinking) things that are not (*ta mê onta*). He then looks for the exact meaning of this formula (for a broader context see below, 15.25):

240E1–241A1: Does this mean opining (thinking) that the things-that-are-not, are not, or that the things-that-are-not absolutely (*mêdamôs*), in some way *are*? — It must at least mean opining that things-that-are-not, in some way *are*, if anybody is ever to be in error about some thing (*ti*) albeit to the smallest extent. — And also, of course, opining that things that certainly *are*, are not in any way at all? — Yes. — That, too, is falsehood? — Yes, that as well. — And as to false speech, I think, it is to be regarded along the same lines as stating that the things-that-are, *are not* and that things-that-are-not, *are*?

The Sophist is understandably set to fight this view by charging his opponents with a lack of consistency, in that they have just said that falsehood exists in opinion and speech, which is the same as assigning 'what is' to 'what is not' and yet maintaining that this is altogether impossible (241A8–B3). They are forced to the sad insight that anyone who talks about false *logos* or *doxa* as being 'images' or 'likenesses' or 'copies' or 'appearances' will almost inevitably contradict himself (240E1–6).

Let us consider to what extent the EV could be, at the present stage of the discussion, more specific about false opinion and false appearing, now that false speech has proved to be surely possible and its nature uncovered.

He starts by showing the connecting link: 'thinking', 'opinion' and 'appearing' are all three liable to truth and falsehood. Theaetetus' failure to grasp the import

of that gives him a nice opportunity to supply more information. For that matter, the account of thinking as 'discourse–without–vocal–utterance' is taken over from *Theaetetus*, 189E and 206D.

263D6–E8: And next, as to thinking (*dianoia*), opinion (*doxa*) and appearing (*phantasia*), is it not clear that all these sorts of thing occur in our minds both as false and as true? — How is that? — You will understand more readily if you will first allow me to give you an account of their nature and of how each differs from the others. Well, thinking (*dianoia*) and discourse (*logos*) are the same thing, except that what we call 'thinking' is nothing else than an interior dialogue carried on by the mind with itself without spoken sound. But the stream that flows from the mind through the mouth is called 'discourse'.

Thus it becomes manifestly clear that as is the case with false speech, there may be some false opinion. Cornford strangely distinguishes between *doxa* as intended here by Plato and the *doxa* (opinion) which is opposed to real knowledge (*epistêmê*) elsewhere in Plato's works. He takes the former to mean 'judgment' and is followed in this by Warrington. I think they are wrong in doing so. *Doxa* is, as everywhere else in Plato, opinion as contradistinguished with real knowledge arrived at by intellectual thinking (*dianoia*)[36]. Opinion is one of the stages of the cognitive process, such that "correct opinion (*orthê doxa*) comes midway between wisdom (*phronêsis*) and ignorance" (*Sympos.*, 202A7). The only difference between Plato's use of the term *doxa* in his other works and that in our *Sophist* passage is that the former takes the *doxa* to be an (objectionable) *final* stage in the cognitive process, while any connotation of that sort of unphilosophical narrow-mindedness is absent in the latter.

Next consideration is given to another characteristic of both (inward) thinking and (vocal) discourse, viz. assertion and denial:

263E10–264B4: Moreover there is a thing which we know occurs in discourse. — You mean? — Assertion (*phasin*) and denial (*apophasin*). — Yes. — Well, whenever this occurs in the course of silent thinking, can you call it anything but opinion? — No. — Now, when opinion occurs, not independently, but through perception, can such a state of mind be called anything but 'appearing'? — No. — Well we have found, then, that (*a*) there is true and false speech; (*b*) of the aforesaid mental processes thinking is a dialogue of the mind with itself; (*c*) opinion is the result (*apoteleutêsis*) of thinking, and (*d*) what we mean by 'it appears' is a blend of perception and opinion. Hence it follows that these, too, ‹thinking, opinion and appearing› since they are of the same nature as statement, must be, some of them and sometimes, false. — Of course.

Referring to Theaetetus' earlier complaint (at 261A–B) that it looked as if the end of the argument against the Sophist would never come in sight, the EV remarks (264B5–8) that they have discovered the nature of false opinion and false speech sooner than they had expected to do a while ago when they feared that their undertaking to search for them would prove an endless task. Thus the area which seemed to baffle all investigation has been finally mapped out.

[36] For the place of *doxa*, *dianoia*, *phantasia* etc. in Plato's epistemology, see our Index *s.vv.*

12.5. *The Sophist Finally Defined* (264B10–268D5)

The EV is anxious to reap, at long last, the harvest of so much effort. The Sophist can be located, now, as his art does have a proper object, to wit the 'imitations of the things that are' (264D4: *mimêmata tôn ontôn*).

Two sorts of Production are first distinguished, the one Divine, the other Human (265B). The products of Nature are works of Divine Art, as things made from them by man are works of Human Art (265E). Each of these two are further divided into two parts, in that both Divine and Human Art are said to be 'productive of originals' (*autopoiêtikon*) as well as 'productive of images' (*eidôlopoiikon*; 266A9–10). All living creatures and the elements of natural things (fire, water and the like) are originals, the offspring of divine craftmanship. But corresponding to each one of these products are images which are not the things themselves (*auta*; 266B6) yet owe their existence in just the same way to divine craftsmanship. Asked for some explanation, the EV answers:

266B9–C5: Dream images and in daylight all those naturally produced appearances (*phantasmata autophyê*) which are called 'shadow' when a dark object interrupts the light, or 'reflection' when the light from the eye fuses with light from something else on a bright and smooth surface and so produces a shap giving rise to a perception that is the reverse of the normal direct view.

It should be noted that in also attributing a kind of Image-making to Divine Art, Plato implies that Image-making as such has no pejorative connotation as far as he is concerned. Indeed, the deliberate intermingling and fusing of the light proper to the eye (*oikeion*) with light belonging to something else (*allotrion*) yields quite an honorable product, reflection. It is, I think, significant that Plato here gives, so to speak, an instance of the divine intermingling of a proper, authentic element with something 'other' or 'different', with the result that the product does not represent the original thing truly and, accordingly, as something representative, it *is not*, in a way, but, *as* an image, it *is* all the same. Of course, the comparison with human speaking should, as ever, not be pressed, but it is noticeable that even Divine craftsmanship does not think it beneath her dignity to produce images by means of 'other' elements.

What about Human Art, then? It seems correct to say that in building it produces an actual house (the Greek text reads: a house itself: *autên men oikian*) and in painting some 'other' house (*tin' heteran*), as it were, "a man-made dream for waking eyes" (266C9–10). And so in all cases of human production, we once again find twin products occurring in pairs: one, the thing itself (*to men auto*) as the result of the 'art of making real things' (*autourgikê*), the other, an image produced by Image-making (*eidôlopoiikê*; 266D). In the rest of the discussion the EV confines himself to Appearance-making of the human type.

Next he moves on to clarify the Sophist's specific art, which is recognised, first, as a 'Productive Art' (as contrasted with 'Acquisitive Art'). The main purpose of the subsequent exposition seems to be that the nature of any Productive Art is, so to speak, double-focused. Any such art has by nature, (1) its own techniques and procedure and (2) its proper object. As to the Art characteristic of the Sophist (that of 'Appearance-making'; *phantastikê*) the former issue aptly opens our eyes

to the fact that it is a kind of Mimicry, while the latter draws our attention back to 'Opinion' (*doxa*).

The EV starts the discussion by introducing another division of Appearance-making (267A): some appearances are produced by means of tools, in another sort the producer uses his own person as an instrument, viz. when somebody uses his own body or voice to counterfeit your traits or speech. He proposes the name 'Mimicry' for the latter. In this manner the *way* or procedure of that production is clearly established as 'mimicking'.

Some mimics know the thing which they counterfeit, others are ignorant of it although they are certainly successful in their efforts to produce an 'appearance'. In fact, even if they have no knowledge about the thing itself, yet they do have some sort of opinion (the text reads: 'opining in some way', *doxazontes de pêi*; 267C3) about it, and may be successful in producing appearances. He proposes, though the expression may seem rather daring, for the sake of distinction to label their art, (the 'mimicry guided by opinion'): 'conceit-mimicry' (*doxomimêtikê*; 267D10). However, matters are still complicated enough. There is the simple-minded type who imagines that what he believes ('opines') is knowledge and the opposite type, well-versed in discussion, who seems to be aware that what other people hold to be his knowledge is in fact ignorance. Thus conceit-mimics are of two sorts, the sincere and the insincere ones. The latter are divided, again, into two types: the ones who can keep up their dissimulation publicly in long speeches to a large assembly and the others who use brief arguments in private circles and force their interlocutor to contradict himself. Nobody needs to discuss the matter much to see that 'the real and authentic Sophist' is of the latter type: he is indeed a contradiction-maker, using the insincere type of mimicry guided by opinion. As far as he is concerned, this is the true sense of appearance-making.

Before the Sophist is finally defined, he is explicitly contrasted with the wise man, where a special flavour is afforded by the paronyms used (*sophon ê sophistikon*; 268B9). Theaetetus catches the hint and is glad to have come at long last to a true definition of the seemingly elusive fellow:

> 268B10–C4: We cannot surely call him wise since we set him down as ignorant. But as a mimic of the wise man he will clearly assume a title derived from his. And now I see that here at long last we have got the fellow who must be truly described as the real and authentic Sophist.

Then, the EV proposes to collect all the elements of the description from the end to the beginning, and, "tie the threads together in a knot" (*symplexantes*). As Cornford remarks (331, n. 1), the construction of the final definition is obscured by Plato's effort to frame it so as to mention in the correct order all the specific differences 'from the end to the beginning', i.e. the starting-term, Productive Art. It runs:

> 268C8–D4: The art of contradiction-making, descended from an ironical type of conceit-mimicry, of the appearance-making breed, derived from image-making, distinguished as a portion, not divine but human, of production that presents a shadow-play of words — whoever says that the authentic Sophist is "of such blood and lineage", will speak with perfect truth, it would seem.
> — I entirely agree.

THE FRAMEWORK:

SEMANTICS AND PHILOSOPHY IN PLATO

Chapter thirteen

PLATO'S SEMANTICS IN THE *CRATYLUS*

13.0. The subject matter of Plato's *Cratylus* is the correctness of names (*orthotês tôn onomatôn*) as is declared repeatedly within the dialogue. The work has most definitely nothing to do with the origin of language as is sometimes said[1]. The search for the correctness of names, then, neither starts from any doubt about the subject nor is part of any linguistic theory set up in its own right[2]. Rather it is linguistic speculation serving an epistemological end and mainly an investigation into the (whether natural or merely conventional) appropriateness of names to what they signify.

Of course, at the basis of all this lies the intricate question of whether there is any guarantee that our speaking about things effectively deals with the things signified and does not reduce to a set of mere noises in the end. The basic question, accordingly, is to what extent 'things that are' (*ta onta*) are adequately represented by linguistic expressions[3], names in particular, as far as our dialogue is concerned[4].

It seems to be useful to precede our discussion of the *Cratylus* by a survey of the different uses of some key-terms, viz. '*onoma*', '*rhêma*' and '*logos*', in Plato's works.

13.1. *Preliminary: onoma, rhêma And logos*

Plato's *Seventh Letter* contains a famous passage (342A–B) on the possibility of

[1] For example, Hamilton and Cairns in their prefatory note to the translation of the dialogue (p. 421).

[2] As is wrongly asserted by Nehring (33) and Leroy (129), who does rightly, but rather surprisingly, observe (131) that the correctness of names is the dialogue's proper subject. For the correct view, see Sprague [1971:367–9] and Rehn, 3.

[3] The correct view is found in Nehring, who recognises (13) that the Greek philosophers' own interest in language had decidedly epistemological motives. See also August Wolf (28), Derbolav, [1953:35–44; 80].

[4] See at 421A where Hermogenes asks Socrates to investigate also why *onoma* ('name') is called 'onoma', "since 'name' is the theme proper of the discussion".

knowledge and its preconditions. Of the five 'things' required for true knowledge[5] *onoma* and *logos* are first mentioned. Together with 'image' (*eidôlon*) they are the *sine quibus non* of knowledge[6]. As will presently become clear, in spite of its different meaning, *rhêma* shares the privileged position of *onoma* in this respect, as it is an *onoma* occurring in a specific position (see below, 14.4).

13.11. *Onoma*

Onoma admittedly has more than one sense in Plato as commonly in Greek. However, it always has the connotation of 'referring to', 'representing' some thing designated by the name. So it is never completely equivalent to *epos*, which originally meant just 'utterance' or 'word' (e.g. as opposed to 'deed'; for instance, Homer, *Iliad*, XV, 234; *Odys.* 2, 272; Herodotus I, 90 and III, 134; Plato, *Laws* IX, 879C: *ergôi te kai epei* = 'in act and speech'). See e.g. Pindar, *Ode* 13, 98: *paurôi epei* = 'in short utterance'. One may compare *kat' epos* = 'word by word'; *pros epos* = 'at the first word ‹somebody speaks›'; *heni epei* = 'in one word', 'briefly' and *hôs epos eipein* = 'so to speak'.

The last expression is especially interesting on this score since whoever uses it actually wants to qualify the proper meaning of an expression as not quite appropriate, from the semantical point of view, in the case under discussion and say that it is not applied in its exact meaning. For Plato, see *Apology*, 17A4, where Socrates says that his accusers said *so to speak nothing* true. *Gorgias*, 456A8 has: 'rhetoric includes *so to speak all* other faculties under her control'. *Phaedo*, 78E5: 'are they .... *so to speak never* constant?'

So *onoma* always has the sense of 'name' although this translation is sometimes somewhat peculiar in English as Richard Robinson is quite right in remarking:

> in English names are primarily proper names like 'Socrates' and to call 'man' a general name is a little peculiar, though it is done and the dictionary recognizes it; but in Greek 'man' is every bit as good an *onoma* as 'Socrates'.

Kahn [1973²], too, has observed (159–60) that for Plato *onoma* is not restricted to proper names but also applies to common nouns (such as 'man' and 'horse' at *Crat.* 385A7) "and indeed to all denotative and categorematic words in nominalized form. That is, although *onoma* seems not to be used in the *Cratylus* for finite verbs, it does apply to the corresponding nominal forms, for example to the action noun *stasis* (from *histamai*) and to the participles *deon* and *ion*". (See also Kretzmann [1971], 126, n. 1, quoted below.)

Rijlaarsdam refers to the Academy of Lagado (in *Gulliver's Travels, Voyage to Laputa*) where it was already taught that "Words are only Names for Things". She supplies some remarkable parallels from German (Kant, Nietzsche and Günther Grass)[7]. For that reason onomata are basically '*significative* words'. It

[5] For the whole passage, see below, 13.14.
[6] See Guthrie V, 403–4.
[7] [1978], 65. She failed to see, however, that in those German parallels, too, the term 'Name' always stands for *significative* word and is not a precise equivalent of the neutral

should be additionally noted that as in Greek *onoma* never has the sense of just 'word' (as equivalent to *epos* or *phasis*), similarly *onomazein* (= 'to name', 'to appellate', 'to assign a name' or 'to use as a name') never has the bare sense of 'uttering a word'.

Thus we come to distinguish the following items:

1. 'significative word' (where the connotation 'significative' is never missing as we might expect after what was observed above).

As a matter of fact Plato uses (*Timaeus*, 49E4) the word '*phasis*' ('utterance', 'expression'; *phasis* is a *nomen actionis* derived from the root *pha-*, found also in *phanai* = 'to say', 'to assert') as the general heading 'word', 'term', covering *onoma* and *rhêma*; see below, s.v. *rhêma*. So *Gorgias*, 489B7–8 which Rijlaarsdam quotes in support of her view that *onoma* and *rhêma* are completely equivalent and interchangeable therefore, is only a seeming exception. There Socrates is accused by Callicles of deliberately confusing the names of *nomos* ('convention') and *physis* ('nature') and is accordingly rebuked for it by his interlocutor ("are you not ashamed to be captious about 'words'?; *onomata thêreuôn*); to interchange *their* respective *meanings*", he immediately adds; see also 489B4–5: "invoke 'convention' if somebody says 'by nature' and 'nature' if he says 'by convention'?". Therefore '*onoma*' definitely here means '*significative* word'. It is true, at 489B1 the word *rhêma* seems to be used in the general sense of 'word', 'term', where Socrates is said to consider it a godsend if one makes a slip in an expression (*rhêmati hamartêi*). However, unlike *onoma*, the original meaning of *rhêma* admits of such general use; see below s.v. *rhêma* (our nr. 13.12).

The significative function of *onoma* also clearly appears from its definition: see below, 14.1.

2. 'word' = '*name*', '*appellation*'[8], (whether or not attributively used). Of course, this sense is hardly to be distinguished from (1), only that, unlike (1), the examples of this lemma do not even allow the translation as 'word':
E.g. *Cratylus*, 385A2–3: 'the name (*onoma*) of each thing is that whatsoever one imposes (*thêi*) ‹on a thing› to name (*kalein*, lit. *call*) it'. Similarly in *Cratylus*, 399B1; 425A1–3; see below, s.v. *rhêma*; and 431B3–6; see below, s.v. *logos*. Also *Crat.*, 427C6–8, where it is said of the 'law-giver' (or 'name-giver') that there is a lot of the letter '*o*' mixed up in the 'appellation' ('name', *onoma*), *goggylon* ('round'). The significative function of this onoma is clearly revealed in what follows, where the name-giver is said to make from letters and syllables, for each of the things that are (*hekastôi tôn ontôn*), a name (appellation) to designate it (*sêmeion te kai onoma*).

See also *Apol.*, 17B–C, where Socrates promises to speak only the truth and

term '*Wort*' (as used e.g. in "und sagte kein einziges Wort" = 'without speaking a single word'). See also below.
[8] It is remarkable that as early as in 1852 Friedrich Michelis emphasised (154) that, in the *Cratylus*, Plato discusses 'appellation' ("die Benennung der Dinge"). He was followed by Uphues [1882], 6–15.

unlike his accusers not to use 'flowery language' but straight-forward speech in which the things are just named by their own names, without any embellishment; in Socrates' own words (17C2): *eikêi legomena tois epitychousin onomasin*, lit.: 'what is said at random, in the first words that occur me'. These 'words' really are *appellations*, or *names* of the things that have happened, which should be opposed to the abundant expressions used by his accusers to describe (quite malignantly) those things. For example, in contrast to the flowery expressions of his accusers (see e.g. at 19B–C) Socrates uses the appellation 'wise man' (*sophos*, in Greek a one-word expression) to be understood in the sense of the famous Delphian oracle (see 21A). That this 'name' ('appellation') was primarily used by the Oracle to refer to (or 'to name') Socrates (as an appellative noun), is clear from 23A7–B4: "It seems to me that the Oracle ‹in using the appellation '*wise* man'› is not referring properly to me, Socrates but has additionally used (*proskechrêsthai*)[9] my name".

Several other examples may be given:

Euthydemus, 304D–E where Crito scornfully refers to some people as 'nonsense-talkers' (*lêrountôn*) and 'swankers' (*peri oudenos axiôn anaxian spoudên poioumenôn*)[10]. Socrates assures (304E6) his audience that Crito used these very words (*onomasin*, appellations, indeed).

Phaedrus, 234C7–8; Phaedrus asks Socrates about a speech by the rhetor Lysias: 'is not it extraordinarily fine, especially in point of the names (appellations) used (*tois onomasin*)?'.

Gorgias, 489D–E; Socrates has asked for the precise meaning of such expressions as *tous beltious, tous ischyroterous* ('the better', 'the stronger') and reproaches Callicles that he is playing with such appellations, yet revealing nothing (lit.: you speak words ('names') but make nothing clear; *onomata legeis, delôis de ouden*; 489E6–7).

Epist. VII, 342B4–5 makes the significative function of a name perfectly clear: 'circle is something designated by speech which has as its name just that which (viz. that word) I have just uttered (viz. 'circle'). See also below, 13.14.

Rep. V, 463C–D where the 'names' ('appellations': *onomata*), 'father', 'mother', 'son' and 'daughter' are discussed. At *Rep.* V, 454A8 there is a clear opposition between *onoma* and 'thing' designated. There are also quite a number of examples in the dialogues where *onoma* is used in juxtaposition with *rhêma*; they are discussed s.v. *rhêma*[11].

I shall wind up this enumeration with the well-known passage from *Laws* X, (895D1–896A4), which is rightly understood by Guthrie (V, 404) as a preliminary sketch of the more elaborate classification found at *Epist.* VII, 342A. Here the Athenian remarks that three items may be noted about anything; for one, its

[9] For the sense of this verb, see *Crat.*, 435C5: 'to employ in addition' and *Rep.* VI, 510D4 where the students of geometry are said to make use *in addition* ‹to the 'absolute assumptions'› of the visible forms ‹of the various figures›.

[10] Of course the Greek phrase is not *one* onoma but composed of a number of onomata each of which, Socrates assures, Crito really used.

[11] For other examples taken from the *Cratylus*, see below, 13.12.

being (*tên ousian*), for another, the definition (rather *definiens*; *ton logon*) of this being, for another, its appellation (*onoma*). And thus there are two questions we can ask about everything which is; sometimes the bare appellation is propounded and one asks for the definiens; sometimes, again, the definiens is given and the corresponding appellation asked for. That *onoma* here stands for attributive *appellation* rather than *name* is clear from what the Athenian adds in order to explain what he is trying to say: "There is, as you know, bisection in numbers, as in other things. Well, in the case of a number, the 'appellation' (*onoma*) of the thing is 'even' and the definiens (*logos*) 'number divisible into two equal parts'". Then he further explains: "We are designating the same thing, are we not, in either case, whether we are asked about the definiens and reply with the appellation, or about the appellation, and reply with the definiens. It is the same thing we designate indiscriminately by the appellation 'even', and the definiens 'number divisible into two equal parts'", where one has to supply: "whenever we say 'this even ‹thing›' or 'this number divisible into two equal parts'".

It should be noticed, now, that *onoma* always stands for a simple term, a one-word expression, as is explicitly stated in *Cratylus*, 385C7–9: 'is a logos resolvable into any part smaller than a name (*onoma*)? — No, that is the smallest'[12].

It is useful to quote Kretzmann's note [1971:126, n. 1] on Plato's 'very broad interpretation' of the term *onoma*:

> The correctness of names is a broader topic than it might seem. The Greek word regularly translated as "name" was used at the time of Plato and Aristotle where we would use "noun", "proper name"[13], "common name", "definite description", "adjective", "participle", and occasionally also where we would use "infinitive" and "subject" ..... His examples of *onomata* are mainly names, proper and common, but he does introduce adjectives (433E) and infinitives (414A–B) as well[14].

One has to bear in mind, however, that, despite the *diverse* modern equivalents which follow from the modern practice of differentiating the points of view (either semantical, syntactical or merely grammatical), the Greek term *onoma* has for

[12] Rijlaarsdam asserts (66) that sometimes *logos* (always a "more than one-word expression"; see *ibid.*, 64 and Verdenius [1966], 82) and *onoma* are used interchangeably. She refers to *Soph.*, 220D and *Crat.*, 396B set beside 410D. The *Cratylus* passage, however, does not give any support to her view as in both instances the term *onoma* refers to the one-word expression '*Zeus*' (analysable into *two* names, *Dis* and *Zeus*), not to its etymology, '*di hon zên*'. As far as *Sophist*, 220D1–4 is concerned it may be noted that the Eleatic Visitor first calls the two-word designation '*plêktikê thêra*' (lit. 'hunting by means of a blow') a *logos* and asks Theaetetus if he can find a better one. The latter answers (D4): "Never mind the name (or 'appellation' = 'never mind how one names it'), for *that* will do *as well* (*kai touto*)". Rijlaarsdam takes *touto* to be *touto to onoma*. However, I think that Cornford is right in taking *touto* to stand for 'that which you suggest' and so actually to refer to the previous two-word designation.

[13] So e.g. *Apol.*, 18C9 and 23A8.

[14] Kretzmann [1971:126, n.1] refers to Peters [1967:144–6] and Ackrill's note to Arist., *Categ.*, 16a19 [p. 115].

Plato just one connotation, namely that of 'significative word', 'name', 'appellation'.

Another remark should be made. Rijlaarsdam [1978:65] is right in remarking (following Robinson) that *onoma* is used where modern languages prefer to have just 'words', but she holds *rhêma* to be the common term for 'word' and then takes *onoma* and *rhêma* to be synonyms and interchangeable. This is entirely mistaken. It is true that *onoma* and *rhêma* may both be used where we would use 'words' (so e.g. *Statesman*, 307B2 and 7, where *onoma*, however, still has the connotation of 'designation', 'appellation') but modern usage does surely not affect the proper meanings of the ancient Greek terms which are still different. *Onoma* has always kept the main connotation it had from the outset, that of 'one-word name' intended to pick up some 'thing' out of the outside world. (See also below, 14.1–14.3). *Rhêma* has quite a different connotation, as will be clear from the next item.

13.12. *Rhêma*

Unlike *onoma* the semantic development of *rhêma* starts from a rather vague sense. Derived from the root *rhê-* ('to say', 'to speak') it originally only meant '*that which is said* or *spoken*'.

The neutral sense 'word' is found in, for instance, *Phaedrus*, 228D2: 'I have not got *the words as such* (*ta ge rhêmata*) by heart', where the general tenor (*dianoia*) of the speech under discussion is opposed to its wording. A similar opposition between the wording used and a speaker's intention is found at *Symposion*, 187A4–5 where the same phrase occurs: *tois ge rhêmasin* (the insertion of *ge* should be noticed again): 'which is, perhaps, what Heraclitus *means* to say, for he is not very clear, in his wordings at least (*ge*)', but the specific sense of 'attribute' is surely connoted; cf. below. Sometimes any explicit opposition 'wording-intention' is missing, as at *Crat.*, 421B3 ('by this word '*alêtheia*'). Besides, *rhêma* need not be just a one-word expression, as can be seen from *Euthydemus*, 287C2, where it is said of the expression 'I don't know what to do'.

A first specification is found where *rhêma* has the sense of 'that which is pointedly said' and may stand then for an utterance of a poet or of another wise man. E.g. *Protag.*, 341E1 (referring to a saying of Simonides) and 343B6 ('this saying of Pittacus'). At *Rep.* V, 473E6 *rhêma* refers to Socrates' 'saying': 'there should be a conjunction of political power and philosophical intelligence' (473D) and *Laws* VIII, 838B8–C1 to the saying 'they are all unhallowed, abominations to God, deeds of blank shame'.

Another specific sense is that of 'that which is said of something' → 'qualification', 'attribute', or even just 'determiner' (later on also 'verb', not with Plato, however, in its technical sense)[15].

[15] Liddell and Scott s.v. *rhêma* turn matters upside down by saying that "from the fact that a Verb usually forms *the predicate* (Arist., *De int.* 16b6), *rhêma* is applied to an Adjective *when used as a predicate*". — For *rhêma* as used in *Sophist*, 257B7 ff., see above, *ad loc.*

I shall start with the numerous passages in Plato's works where one finds the juxtaposition of *onoma* and *rhêma*, since they are well suited to clarify the specific differences between the two terms. A passage in the *Cratylus* is most elucidating in that respect. There (399A–B) the conversion of a *rhêma* into an *onoma* is mentioned (as an instance of changing accents):

> *Crat.* 399A9–B3: Take, for example, ‹the expression› '*Dii philos*' (lit. 'beloved to Zeus'); in order to convert this from an attribute (*rhêmatos*) into a name (*onoma*), we took out the second iota and sounded the middle syllable grave instead of acute.

Thus the attribute (*rhêma*) '*Dii philos*' has been converted into *Dîphilos*, in Greek a (proper) name, (for example, the name of a comic poet from the fourth century B.C.). It should be noticed that the attribute 'beloved to Zeus' may indiscriminately be used attributively ('*anthrôpos Dii philos*' = 'a man beloved of Zeus') or predicatively ('*anthrôpos esti Dii philos*'; 'a man is beloved of Zeus'). This is, however, not the point at issue. What really does matter here is that unlike an onoma a rhêma does not deictically 'name' or 'designate' a thing; it rather describes or qualifies it.

Similarly some lines further (399B6–C6) the onoma 'anthrôpos' ('man') is derived from the rhêma '*anathrôn ha opôpen*' ('viewing narrowly that which he sees'). Again an attribute, 'viewing *etc.*' which was originally used to describe something, has been changed into a means of designating or naming it. For that matter, it should be borne in mind that this passage is quite erroneously cited as giving evidence of Plato's use of *rhêma* to mean 'verb'. For example Leroy [1968:129, n. 1] is entirely mistaken in thinking that the *rhêma* from which *anthrôpos* is derived is *opôpen*; it is most surely the entire expression *anathrôn ha opôpen*; in Leroy's explanation the letters *anthr* in *anthrôpos* are left out of consideration.

In *Cratylus*, 421D–E the etymological analysis of onomata into their constitutive parts is discussed. The latter are rather surprisingly, it would seem, called their *rhêmata* (421E1). However, as the two previous passages may show, to give the etymology of names comes down to analysing them into certain attributive formulas, e.g. '*anthrôpos*', into '*anathrôn ha opôpen*, (*Crat.*, 399C6).

The mere juxtaposition of *onoma* and *rhêma* is also often found. In *Apology*, 17B8–C2 Socrates assures his fellow-citizens that he will not use "flowery language [like that of his accusers] embellished with (fine) qualifications and (nice) appellations" (*rhêmasi te kai onomasin*); see above, 13.11.

Symposion, 199B4 supplies a nice example. There one finds talk of the "names and the assignment of attributes (*thesei rhêmatôn*)". Some lines before, at 198B5 Socrates had been speaking of Eryximachus holding all his listeners spellbound with the beauty of the names and attributes (*tôn onomatôn kai rhêmatôn*) he had used in his speech about Eros.

Theaetetus, 168B6–C2: "The further question whether knowledge is, or is not, the same thing as perception, you will consider as a consequence of these principles, not, as you did just now, starting from the common use of the names and appellations (the Greek has the inversed order: *rhêmatôn te kai onomatôn*) which the vulgar twist into any sense they please and so perplex one another in all sorts of ways".

There are also some passages which contain a juxtaposition of *onoma*, *rhêma* and *logos*. They will be dealt with in our section 13.14.

Sometimes the phrase *onomata te kai rhêmata* ('names as well as attributes') seems to serve only to suggest the completeness of the enumeration. So *Cratylus*, 425A1–3: "from syllabes names and attributive terms are made and thus, at last, from the combinations of names and attributes (*ek tôn onomatôn kai rhêmatôn*) we shall compose a great and fine ensemble: as a painter makes a picture, so we make a discourse (*logon*)". A similar enumeration is found *Symposion*, 198B5 and 221E3; *Republic* X, 601A5 and *Theaetetus*, 168B8; 184C1; 206D1–2.

There are good reasons, I think, for also rendering the word *rhêma* as 'attribute' where it stands on its own. So *Lysis*, 220A8 speaks of the incorrect assignment of the attribute (*rhêma*), '*philos*' ('dear') whenever the thing we love for the sake of another beloved thing is called 'dear' instead of the latter. Similarly, *Rep. V*, 463E–464A the qualification 'mine' (used as an attribute assigned to what properly belongs to *any* fellow-citizen) is twice referred to by the term *rhêma*.

Phaedo, 102B6–7: "Do you agree that in the statement [the Greek text has the article, *to* only] '*Simmias is taller than Socrates*' truth does not correspond to the attributes as they stand (*hôs tois rhêmasi legetai*)?" It appears from the next lines that 'being taller' (*hyperechein*) is taken to be the rhêma[16].

Theaetetus, 165A5–7: "One might commit oneself to even stranger admissions, if one were as careless in the use of attributes (*rhêmasi*) as we commonly are in our assertions and denials". It should be noted in this connection that, particularly in Plato's view, careless assertions and denials are due to the wrong assignment of attributes.

Hippias maior, 292C4–5: Socrates says Hippias that he will pretend to be an awkward fellow "but not using to you qualifications (*rhêmata*) such as he would to me, offensive and grotesque as those are (*chalepa te kai allokota*)". Indeed, those qualifications were not quite friendly. "He will say I feel sure (Socrates continues): 'Do you not think, Socrates, that you *deserve a thrashing* after *chanting so badly out of tune so long and so irrelevant* to the question you were asked?"

At *Sophist*, 237C–D *rhêma* is also found with the sense of 'attribute'. It is there used for the attribute (we would say, quantifier) 'some', which may be assigned to everything in the domain of 'what is'; 237D1–2: "the 'atribute' 'some' (*to ti touto to rhêma*) is always used of 'what is' and cannot occur just by itself in splendid isolation". For a similar use, see *Timaeus*, 49E1: 'using in addition the rhêma 'this' or 'that', where *rhêma* is also taken as a kind of 'determinative attribute', which is, of course, no more than a 'determiner' to modern eyes. At *Soph.*, 257B7, it is suggested that when we call something 'not-tall' (*mê mega*), we may just as well by that attribute (*tôi rhêmati*) mean what is equal as what is short.

Cratylus, 426E1–4 gives an enumeration of six possible 'attributes' or 'predicates' (being in point of fact all of them (infinitive) verbs), that contain the letter *rho*,

[16] At 106B7 the plural *rhêmasi* is found since the example is a double one: "Simmias is taller than Socrates *and* shorter than Phaedo" (see 106B3–4 and B6–7 *plus* C4–5).

which is supposed to be expressive of motion: *krouein* ('strike'), *thrauein* ('crush') and so on. That, from the (later!) grammatical point of view, they all are *verbs* does not matter. The point at issue is that when they are used as attributes or 'predicates', they are wellsuited to express the unstable nature of the things to which they are assigned.

Finally, *Symposion*, 187A4–5 should be recalled, where Eryximachus maintains that not only are medicine and gymnastics and the agronomic arts under the sole direction of the god of Love, but also music, as must be obvious to the most casual observer. This, he goes on, "is perhaps what Heraclitus means to say though he is not very clear, in his wording at least (*tois ge rhêmasin*)". These *rhêmata* are, in fact, those by which he assigns a number of attributes to 'the One' (*to hen*). He describes the One as 'in conflict with itself' (*diapheromenon auto hautôi*), although this strange qualification is made a bit more acceptable in that Heraclitus compares the situation with the harmony of the bow and of the lyre[17]. From Eryximachus' next remarks appears that as might be expected, indeed, it is especially the combination of the attributes, 'holding together' and 'being in conflict with itself' that causes the obscurity of Heraclitus' pronouncement: 'of course it is absurd, he says, to speak of a concord being in discord, or as arising out of elements which are still in conflict'. Thus, in point of fact, *rhêma* stands here for attribute.

13.13. *Logos*

The word *logos* underwent a development fairly akin to that of *rhêma* in that it started from quite a similar vague sense. As a verbal noun of the same root '*leg-*' as the verb *legein* it has a great number of senses corresponding to those of the verb.

The root '*leg-*' basically means 'collect', but, always with the connotation of an orderly procedure, discernment *etc.* and it never has the sense of just haphazardly gathering together[18]. For that reason, the words sharing this root seem to often connote the subject's intention to 'clear up' some situation, to dispose of vagueness or unclarity, or 'to be more precise'.

[17] Heraclitus, *fragm.* 51: "They do not grasp how by being at variance it agrees with itself, an adjustment of opposite tensions like that of the bow or lyre", where the oxymoron occurring in Plato's version [*diapheromenon* vs *sympheresthai* (187A5–6), lit. 'in being drawn apart it is drawn together'] should be noticed. For this fragment, see Guthrie I, 436–51, esp. 439, nn. 2 and 3).

[18] See Boeder, 84–90 and Prauss, 61–2. The original sense of the root is also found in Latin *legulus* ('olive-gatherer' or 'fruit-picker'; see Varro, *De lingua latina* VI, 66). See also Verdenius [1966:81–6] whom I do not follow in every detail of his valuable exposition of the semantic development. He rightly rejects [82, n. 4] Guthrie's attempt (I, 420–3) to derive all senses of *logos* from the sense 'anything said' and other attempts starting from *logos* = 'word'. He also starts from *logos* = 'collection' ('Sammlung') but, like Boeder, he does not pay much attention to the selective moment and the aspect of 'order', or 'structure' which seem to be involved in every act of collecting. In fact *legein* never stands for 'gather haphazardly'. Verdenius seems to connect (83) the 'order' element only with the main senses 'speak' and 'count'.

The verb has three main senses:

I. the original sense of 'picking out', 'choosing'. E.g. Homer, *Iliad* XXIII, 239 ('let us gather the bones ‹of the slain heroes›'); *Odys.* 18, 359 ('picking out stones for building walls'); *Odys.* 24, 108 (pick out (choose) for oneself the bravest men').

II. 'count', 'tell', 'reckon'. E.g. *Odys.* 4, 452 ('he counted us among the seals'); 9, 335 ('I reckoned myself among them as the fifth one'); *Iliad* III, 188 ('I was counted (reckoned) among these'); Aeschylus, *Prometheus* 973 ('I count you among them'). A sense rather close to 'considering' is found in Sophocles, *Antigone*, 183 (*touton oudamou legô*: 'I count him as naught').

III. 'recount, 'tell one by one', 'enumerate', 'relate', 'narrate in order'. All these senses have in common the connotation of 'picking out the relevant details of an event and recounting them in due order'. So in Homer, *Odys.* 11, 374 ('you tell (recount) me all the marvellous deeds'); 23, 308 ('he told (summed up) her of all the disconfiture he had inflicted on his foes'). *Iliad* XIII, 275 ('why need'st thou tell this in all detail?', where the Greek only reads *ti se chrê tauta legesthai?*). Aeschylus, *Prometheus* 633 ('let her with her own lips relate the events'): *Persae* 292 ('this calamity is so great as to pass all recount'); *Agamemnon* 555 ('for were I to recount our hardships').

The well-known sense 'say', 'speak', is not clearly found before the fifth century, it seems[19]. However, from the Tragic Poets and Herodotus downwards the verb *legein* is frequently found to designate all kinds of *oral* communication. Boeder (91) thinks that in this main sense the verb *legein* basically means some kind of 'letting know' or 'putting in the picture'. This is certainly correct but, to my mind, this qualification does not hit the mark, all the same. The sense of *legein* as 'to communicate' rather closely reflects the original connotation of the root '*leg-*' and *legein*, accordingly, more properly means 'to bring order', 'to structure' and, consequently, 'to make comprehensible or understandable or intelligible' or just 'to make clear', 'to give an insight'. Withing this framework the whole gamut of different uses may be seen ('say', 'speak', 'tell', 'assert', 'maintain', 'call', 'command', 'mean', 'recite', 'send word').

The verbal noun *logos* has senses which all correspond to the three main senses of the verb. In fact, the counterpart of the first main sense of the verb *legein*, 'pick out', 'choose', is not found for *logos*. So *logos* does never stand for just 'act of gathering', 'choice', or the like. However, as a basic connotation this sense is never entirely absent from the different uses of the word, in as far as the idea of 'consideration', or 'deliberation' (as opposed to any haphazard procedure) is always present. The basic meaning of *logos* = 'reasonable or intelligible structure' (as in the

[19] Liddell and Scott mention Hesiod, *Theogony* as a possible first use. In fact Hesiod has (*Theog.*, 27) *pseudea polla legein*, which may surely be taken to mean the same as our 'to tell many lies', but it properly means, I think, 'to *recount*, (narrate) many things *falsely*'.

Heraclitean *Logos*) is still found when it stands for 'reason', 'law exhibited in the world-process' as at *Rep.* VI, 500C4–5 ('which all are in harmony and reasonable order' (*kosmôi de panta kai kata logon echonta*). This should be compared, of course, with 'the divine order' of Stoic philosophy as well as with those regulative and formative forces derived from the Intelligible Order and operating in the sensible things (e.g. Plotinus, *Enneads*, III, 8, 4). A similar sense (without the cosmic connotation) is found in the expression *ouk echei logon*, (e.g. *Phaedo*, 62D5) standing for 'is not explicable'; see above, 5.2.

Thus two main senses of *logos* may be distinguished:

I. *counting, reckoning, computation.* E.g. Herodotus III, 142, 5 ('you ought rather to account for the money you have had your hands on') and 143, 1 ('he intended to show them his accounts').

As is easily seen from such examples the *logon didonai* is not just 'to communicate the computation, reckoning or account' but rather 'to render the accounts', 'to account for' or 'justify'. Thus also Plato, *Laws* VI, 774B4 ('all shall be bound to render account thereof ('payments and debt *etc.*) at the audit' (*en tais euthynais*; the public *examinations* of the conduct of officials are meant, which were usual at Athens). It naturally leads to main sense II; see below).

Several sub-senses may here be distinguished. For example, 'enumeration' in *Theaetetus*, 206E7–8 and *Statesman*, 285E2 ('when someone asks for an account (enumeration) of these sensible likenesses'); then, as applied to things (not) worthy of account and consideration: 'consideration', 'esteem', 'repute' (cf. Sophocles, *Antigone*, 183 for the parallel use of *legein*; see above). So Herodotus I, 120 ('to be of no account (repute)'; *logou oudenos gignesthai)*. Plato, *Rep.* VIII, 550A4 ('held in slight esteem'; *en smikrôi logôi ontas*). *Laws* XII, 964A9: 'a man of any account'. Besides, the whole cluster of 'mathematical' senses, 'measure', 'proportion', 'ratio'; e.g. Herodotus III, 99 ('that measure of old age'); Plato, *Laws* V, 746E3: ('no utensil shall be of other than the standard size'; *koinôi logôi*); 'relation', 'correspondence', 'proportion'; so Aristotle, *Hist. anim.* II 17, 508a2 ('the spleen is proportionally (*kata logon*) small'). Aristotle, *Eth. Nic.* V 3, 1131a31 ('equality of ratios', being the definiens of *analogia*); *Metaph.* A 5, 985b32 ('the ratios of the musical scales'). The adverbial expression *ana logon tinos* ('analogous(ly) to' or 'analogically') is rather frequently found; so, apart from the mathematical authors, e.g. Plato, *Timaeus* 29C1 ('be likely and analogous to'; *eikotas ana logon te... ontas*); *ibid.* 37A5 ('in due proportion').

II. The second main sense quite logically derives from the first one: 'account', *etc.* → explanation, exposition'. Such an 'account' may be indeed of many varieties, ranging from 'speech', 'talk' (as a means of any communication aiming to 'giving an account' or 'accounting for') to quite sophisticated uses, such as 'argument', or 'essential description'. Plato gives a nice survey of possible 'accounts' at *Protag.*, 336A–D:

Protag. 336A5–D3: If you want to hear Protagoras and me, ask him to go on answering me in the way he did at first, briefly and keeping to the point of my questions. If not, how

can we have a discussion (*dialogos*)? Personally I thought that companionable talk was one thing, and public speaking another. — But, do not you see, Socrates? Protagoras is surely right in thinking that he is entitled to discuss (*dialegesthai*) in the way that suits him, just as much as you are. — Here Alcibiades broke in (*hypolabôn*): "no, no Callias; Socrates frankly admits that long speeches (*makrologias*) are beyond him and gives way to Protagoras. But in discussion (*dialegesthai*) and the ability of give-and-taking of account (*logon te dounai kai dexasthai*) I doubt if he would give any man best .... Let Protagoras continue the discussion with question and answer, not meeting every question with a long oration (*makron logon*) trying to elude the (given) arguments (*tous logous*) and refusing to render account (*didonai logon*) ‹of his own view›, spinning it out until most of his hearers have forgotten the proper issue".

One may compare Socrates' eulogy of skilful discourse ('*logos*') in the *Phaedrus* after Phaedrus has praised 'the recreation that a man finds in words' (*en logois*):

Phaedrus, 276E4–277A4: Yes, indeed dear Phaedrus. But far more excellent, I think, is the serious treatment when somebody employs the art of discussing (*têi dialektikêi technêi*), selects a soul of right type and in it plants and sows his accounts founded on knowledge (*met' epistêmês logous*), accounts that can defend both themselves and him who planted them, accounts which instead of remaining barren contain a seed whence new accounts grow up in new characters.

I think, that one could better start from the vague sense, 'speech', 'talk'[20].
— 'speech', 'talk', where the formula '*logos esti peri*' (*lit.* 'there is speech (talk) about'; cf. Dutch: *sprake*) is equivalent to *legetai peri* = 'there is spoken of (about)'. So *Apol.*, 26B8; *Euthyd.*, 289E9; *Phaedo*, 89B4; *Symp.*, 211A7: 'his vision of the Beautiful will be neither something spoken of nor something known (*oude tis logos oude tis epistêmê*); *Statesman*, 285E3: 'without any account in words' (*chôris logou*). *Timaeus* 87C4: 'to speak of the good' (*agathôn peri ischein logon*). *Phaedrus*, 276C8 has 'sowing by means of words' (*speirôn ... meta logôn*). At *Timaeus*, 37B7 there is spoken of the correct way of speaking (*ho alêthês logos*).

So speech is often contrasted with practice or deed (*ergon*) or 'reality' (*ta onta*). E.g. *Rep.* II, 382E10: 'God is simple and true in deed and word (*en te ergôi kai en logôi*); cf. *Laws* XI, 935A1–3.

In the well-known passages *Theaetetus*, 189E4–190A1 and *Sophist*, 262E3–264B8 *logos* is contrasted with *dianoia* as 'inward speech'; see above, 12.45 and below, 15.23.

Sometimes the contrast involves a pejorative connotation of *logos*. So *Timaeus*, 51C5: 'is such an intelligible Form.... nothing but a word?' (*ouden... plên logos*;).

[20] Hackforth rightly remarks regarding *Phaedo*, 101A1 and A4 [1955:138] that "to find an English word for *logoi* which would suit both A1 and A4 appears impossible because there is a shift of meaning — *at least for us, though perhaps a Greek reader would not be conscious of any*" (italics mine). I think, his remark could easily be generalised to include all the possible senses and sub-senses which modern readers are inclined (and entitled) to distinguish. One has to be aware, besides, that such a need is clearly differentiated according to the user's native idiom. For example, the English word 'account' happily covers a number of senses of *logos* which Dutch or German or French idiom does not allow us to designate with one single word. See also below, n.23.

At *Epist.* VII, 342E3 Plato speaks of the 'inadequacy of language' (*to tôn logôn asthenes*).

The following sub-senses may be distinguished as found in Plato's dialogues:

1. — 'continuous speech', 'narrative oration', 'report', 'story', 'account', '(long) discourse' and the like. It is, in fact, the first sense of *logos* discussed at *Theaet.* 206D1–6 (see below, 13.14). E.g. *Apol.*, 34E2: 'whether I am brave or not in the face of death is another 'story' (*allos logos*). *Phaedo*, 61B4: 'tales rather than true stories' (*mythous all' ou logous*); *Timaeus*, 27A1: 'my discourse of yesterday' (*tôn chthes logôn*); similarly *Laws* IV, 713E4; XI, 927A4 and *Epinomis*, 977D6: 'an exposition still longer than what has gone before'. A nice example is found in *Cratylus*, 424D–425A, where verbal exposition is compared with painting:

Cratylus, 424D5–425A5: And when we have well considered all this [viz. the classification of things and all stages of name-giving], we shall know how to apply each letter with regard to its suitability, whether one letter is to be applied to one thing, or whether there is to be an admixture of several of them, just as painters, when they wish to depict anything, sometimes use purple only (or any other colour), and sometimes mix up many colours, as when they are making a man or anything like that, employing each colour, I think, as the particular picture appears to require it. And so, too, we shall apply letters to the objects (*epi ta pragmata*), using one letter for one thing when required, or many of them together, and so we shall form 'syllables', as they are called, and in turn combine syllables, from which 'names' as well as 'attributes' (*ta te onomata kai ta rhêmata*) are combined. And thus, at last, out of names and attributes we shall compose (*systêsomen*) something great and fair and complete. Just as in our comparison we made the figure, by the art of painting, so now we shall make discourse ('exposition'; *ton logon*), by the art of name-giving or of rhetoric or whichever that art may be[21].

As (1 a) one might add the sense of 'common talk', 'tradition'. E.g. *Philebus*, 18B7 ('the tradition that there was some such person in Egypt called Theuth'); cf. *ibid.* 65C5; *Laws* IV, 715E8 ('as the old saw has it'); *ibid.*, X, 886B–C.

2. — 'consideration', 'exposition', 'discussion', 'debate'. E.g. *Protag.*, 314C4; 329C3; *Gorgias*, 506A6: 'the debate should be carried through to the end'; *Rep.* I, 343A1; *Philebus*, 42E1: 'a question that is not to the point' (*lit.*: 'nothing in respect to the debate; *ouden pros logon*); *Meno*, 74D4 ('suppose, then, he pursued the discussion'). *Phaedo*, 67C6: 'in our discussion' (*en tôi logôi*). The well-known passages *Theaetetus*, 189E; 190A and *Sophist*, 263E and 264A speaking of *logos* as 'the inward dialogue carried on by the mind with itself without spoken sound' (see *Sophist*, 263E3) should also be subsumed under item (2).

3. — 'understanding', 'view', 'doctrine', 'theory'. E.g. *Rep.* VI, 497C8: 'having the same view (conception)'; *Phaedo*, 73A8 and 94A1; *Statesman*, 310C4; *Timaeus*, 56B4; *Laws* III, 696C10; *Epinomis*, 977D2: 'correct understanding': (*orthos logos*); *Timaeus*, 37E7: 'but only 'is' applies ‹to Eternal Being› according to true insight

[21] This passage should be set beside *Crat.*, 431B–D where a similar comparison with painture and picture is found.

(*kata ton alêthê logon*, where *logos* surely also connotes (truly) 'speaking')'. *Rep.* II, 361B5–6 has: 'let us set, in theory ('in thinking') the just man at his side'; cf. II, 379E11, *Rep.* VII, 525E2 reads 'to cut up the 'one' mutually' (*tôi logôi temnein*); cf. *Sophist*, 234E1; *Laws* V, 736B6; VI, 778B6; VII, 814D1. Sometimes the contrast ('theory', 'abstract reasoning' *vs* 'outward experience') goes with depreciatory emphasis on the former. So *Phaedo*, 99E5: 'so I thought I should take refuge in theories and study in them the truth of the things that are'. Cf. *Sophist*, 234E1 where *logoi* are opposed to deeds or actions. *Rep.* I, 353D1 has 'according to the same way of viewing' (*eis ton auton logon*); cf. *Rep.* X, 610A5 and *Cratylus*, 393C9. At *Phaedrus*, 270C9 Hippocrates' view is called *logos*; cf. *Timaeus*, 27B1–2. At *Phaedo*, 100A1–3 the 'theory' (*logoi*) is opposed to actual things. Also *Timaeus*, 30B7–8: 'we may say according to the suitable way of viewing' (*kata logon ton eikota dei legein*), rather than Jowett's 'using the language of probability'; cf. B1: 'the creator reflecting (*logisamenos*) on the things' and B4: 'on the ground of this conception' (*dia dê ton logismon tonde*) and 48D2 where the *eikotes logoi* are apparently taken as opposed to 'a strange and unwonted inquiry' (*atopou kai aêthous diêgêseôs*) mentioned at 48D5.

At *Epist.* VII, 342A3–5 Plato calls his metaphysical doctrine expounded at 342A7 ff. a *logos*: "there is a true doctrine, which I have often stated before (*logos alêthês.....pollakis men hyp' emou kai prosthen rhêtheis*) that is repugnant to anyone who would dare to write even the least thing on the matter involved".

Symposion, 211A7 may also be mentioned here: "It will be neither a theory or knowledge nor something that exists in something else". At *Parm.*, 142B3 *logos* seems to have rather the sense of 'possible verbalisation'.

The same word *logos* is also used for any momentous part of an exposition or theory and may stand for 'oracle', or 'proverb' and 'argument', 'formula', or 'sentence' as well. This leads us to the following senses:

4. — 'divine utterance', 'oracle'. E.g. *Phaedrus*, 275B7 ('prophetic utterances from an oak tree'). Cf. *Apol.*, 20E5.

5. — 'saying', 'proverb'. E.g. *Phaedrus*, 240C2 ('the old proverb'; *ho palaios logos*); *Philebus*, 65C5.

The next items are of philosophical importance[22]:

6. — 'thesis', 'sentence', 'formula', 'phrase', 'account', 'description', 'definition' (or rather: 'definiens'). E.g. *Protag.*, 344B7 ('developing a thesis'); *Apol.*, 26D9 ('the writings of Anaxagoras are full of theses like these'); *Laws* X, 891C9 ('consider every thesis'); *Cratylus*, 385B5 ('true and false account'); B10 ('to say 'what is' and 'what is not' by an account'); *Sophist*, 240E10 ('a false account is *etc.*'); *ibid.*, 259E–264A: 'sentence'; see above, 12.2 ff. and below, 15.25; cf. *Philebus*, 38E3.

[22] Cf. also the cosmological (metaphysical) and logico-epistemological senses ('intelligible structure' and 'reasonability') mentioned above.

Rep. I, 343A2 ('the definition of the just')[23]; VII, 534B3 ('an account of the essence of each thing'); *Phaedrus*, 245E4 ('the essential definition of the soul'; *psychês ousian te kai logon*); *Theaetetus*, 148D2 ('a definition of knowledge') and 148D6–7 ('just as you found a single character (*heni eidei*) to embrace all that multitude, so now try to find a single formula (definition; *heni logôi*) that applies to the manifold kinds of knowledge'). The sense of 'account', 'formula', 'definition' is also often found elsewhere: *Rep.* V, 473E7; *Phaedo*, 99E5 and 100A1–4; *Cratylus*, passim; *Parm.*, 142A5 ('And if a thing is not, you cannot say that it *has* anything or that there is anything *of* it. Consequently it cannot *have* a name (*onoma*) nor a description (*logos*) nor can there be any knowledge or perception of opinion *of* it'). *Theaet.*, 201E–202B; see above, 7.22; *Sophist*, 218C1; *Statesman*, 267A5 ('the definition (*logos*) of the name (*onoma*) 'political science'); 271C2: "this race was 'born from the earth'" (or: "earthborn"): hence comes the name and the account ('qualification', 'description'); (*houtôs echein toùnoma kai ton logon*; the common translation of 'legend' (for *logon*) is entirely mistaken; the 'legend' was designated earlier (at B3) by the plural *tôn logôn*).

7. — 'explanatory thesis', 'argument', 'argumentation', 'reasoning'. E.g. *Apol.*, 18B10 ('make the weaker argument defeat the stronger'); *Gorgias*, 465A7; *Theaet.*, 201C9 ('with explanation'; *meta logou*); *Sophist*, 218B7; 265C9; *Laws* III, 696B6 ('listen to my argument, first, and decide, then, the point').

Ad (I), (II), and (III): Finally it should be remarked that *logos* is also used to mean the *faculty* that enables people to choose *etc.* to count *etc.* and to speak *etc.*, as is also frequently found in Plato. E.g. *Rep.* III, 402A2; IV, 440B3 and D2; *Sophist*, 238B5; *Timaeus*, 29A7; 46D4 and 70A5; 71D4–5: 'it had no share in mind and thought' (*logou kai phronêseôs ou meteiche*); *Philebus*, 50A6.

13.14. *Logos In Juxtaposition With onoma And rhêma*

Sometimes *logos* is found together with *onoma* and *rhêma*. First, the passage from the *Apology* mentioned above, 17B7–C1: 'but from me you shall hear the whole truth — not, I can assure you, gentlemen, phrases (*logous*) embellished with fine names and attributes (*kekalliepêmenous ge..... rhêmasi te kai onomasin*). See also above, 13.11-12. At *Rep.* X, 601A4–B1 the poet's doings are described: "the poet himself, knowing nothing but how to imitate, lays on with names and attributes (*onomasi kai rhêmasin*) the colours of the several arts in such fashion that others equally ignorant who study things (only) through verbal descriptions (*ek tôn logôn*) will deem what he says most excellent".

[23] The coherence of the distinct senses of *logos* in Greek cannot be better clarified than by quoting *Rep.* I, 343A1–2 where the senses (quite distinct in modern opinion) 'discussion' and 'definition' are found in one and the same sentence. ("When we had come to this point of the discussion (*enthauta tou logou*) and it was clear to everybody that his definition of the just (*ho tou dikaiou logos*) had suffered a reversal of form".)

Cratylus, 431A–C also offers a nice example:

Crat., 431A9–C1: If there is, then, such an assignment here, too [i.e. of names, too], the one assignment of them we may call true speech (*alêtheuein*), the other false speech (*pseudesthai*). Now if this is so and it is indeed possible to wrongly assign names (*ta onomata*) and to give to each thing not the appropriate name, but sometimes inappropriate ones, — well, there may be, then, also the possibility of giving the same treatment to attributes (*rhêmata*). And if it is possible to impose (*tithenai*) names and attributes (*rhêmata kai onomata*)[24] in this way, then this necessarily holds also good for descriptions (*logous*). For descriptions (*logoi*), I would think, are the combination of them (viz. names and attributes).

Another example is found in *Theaetetus*, 206C–D. There the question is discussed of what can really be meant by saying that an account added to true belief (*meta doxês alêthous logon prosgenomenon*) yields knowledge in its most perfect form. Three senses of *logos* are distinguished. The description of the first one associates *onoma*, *rhêma* and *logos*:

Theaet., 206D1–6: The first will be giving overt expression to one's thought (*dianoian*) through vocal utterance making use of names and attributes (*meta rhêmatôn te kai onomatôn*), casting an image of one's notion on the stream that flows through the lips, like a reflection in a mirror or in water. Do you agree that a thing like that is a 'description' ('account'; *logos*)? I do. We say indeed that whoever does so (*auto drônta*) 'makes an account' ('*describes*'; *legein*).

Of course, *logos* here has the general sense of 'continuous speech'. *Parmenides*, 142A5, where name and description (or definition) are juxtaposed, has already been mentioned, above, 13.13. At *Sophist*, 262A9–11, a similar use is found as at the *Cratylus* passage above mentioned. At *Statesman*, 265C2–4 the opposition between *onomazein* and *logos* is implicitly found: 'Divide then the science of rearing walking herds into two sections assigning for each part a definiens (*logôi*) ‹to the generic name›; for if you are anxious about giving each its own name (*an gar onomazein aula boulêthêis*), the task will be complicated needlessly'.

Laws XII, 964A explicitly opposes *onoma* to *logos*: "if somebody has competent knowledge of anything whatsoever which has not only a name but also a definition, is it enough that he should know its bare name (*monon.... tounoma*), while being unaware of its definition (*ton de logon*). Is not any such ignorance in a man of any account disgraceful, when the matter at issue is one of utmost importance and dignity?".

Finally, there is the famous passage in the *Seventh Letter*, where Plato feels himself called upon to expound his metaphysical view once more (*Epist.* VII, 342A3 ff.). At the outset he sums up the essential 'things' involved in any case of 'knowledge'. As always Plato uses 'the enviable Greek privilege of omitting nouns, thus dispensing with tiresome makeweights like 'things' or 'factors', which, vague as they are, may not seem appropriate to all of a group which the Greek can call *tria* or *pente*', as is rightly observed by Guthrie (V, 404, n. 1), who is also quite to the point in remarking that for us it would be anomalous to include in a single list the objects of cognition as well as its modes and conditions. However this may be, Plato's native language even conspired to make it easy for him to associate the trio *onoma*, *logos* and *eidôlon* in this connection:

Epist. VII, 342B1–9: We have then, first, a name (*onoma*), second a definition (*logos*), third an image (*eidôlon*), and fourth, knowledge. Well, take one particular case; if you want to understand what I am now trying to say, ‹try to do so› about a single case (*peri hen*) and apply ‹it›, then, to everything (*lit.* 'think ‹it› in this way about everything; *pantôn.... peri*). *Circle* is something designated by speech (*ti legomenon*), which has as its name (*onoma*) the very ‹word› I have just now uttered. Its definition (or rather 'definiens'; *logos*) is item two, which is composed of names and attributes (predicates; *ex onomatôn kai rhêmatôn*). For example ‹the formula› 'the thing having everywhere equal distances between its extremities and its centre' would be the definition of that which has as its name ('appellation'; *onoma*) 'curved ‹line›' and 'circular ‹line›' and 'circle' (*strongylon kai peripheres kai kyklos*).

It may be noted, first, that the *logos* which Plato here has in mind does not contain any verb and should be termed 'definiens' rather than 'definition'[25]. It is, accordingly, a many-worded expression designating or describing or ('defining') some thing. It should be borne in mind, in this connection, that the Greek here has a participle (*apechon*), not a finite verb: 'a thing *having* ... *etc.*' where English might prefer: 'a thing which has ... *etc.*'.

Secondly. The word *strongylon* stands (here acting as a substantivated adjective noun) for the 'name' ('appellation') 'curved ‹line›'. For this sense, see *Meno*, 74D–E (and 75A) where *to strongylon* ('the curved ‹line›') is opposed to *to euthy* ('the straight ‹line›'). Similarly the adjective noun *peripheres* is substantivally used and stands for 'round ‹figure›' or 'circular ‹line›'[26]. For its opposition to *euthy*, see *Parm.*, 137E1–5: "curved–linear (*strongylon*) is that whose extremity is everywhere equidistant from its centre ..... and straight–linear (*euthy*) is that of which the middle is in front of both extremities". Both appellations here are considered *qua* (putative *and* rejected) qualifications ('predicates' if you want) of 'the One' (*to Hen*). However, the absence of such qualifications from the One is expressed in terms of participation (137E1: "the One does not partake in 'the curved' nor 'the straight'"; *oute gar strongylou oute eutheos metechei*).

Summing up it may be stated that any onoma may be part of a logos and as such act as a 'name' in the strict sense (designating some 'entity') or as an 'attribute' (a rhêma, in fact), added to the main onoma of some phrase, whilst the logos thus composed of onomata (or rhêmata, i.e. onomata in attributive function) mostly act as a definiens describing some other thing, but may be used as well to 'name'

[24] The inverse order in Greek is also found at *Theaetetus*, 206D2 (see next quotation in the text).

[25] See above, 13.13.

[26] The Greek idiom allows one to use such substantivations as *to euthy* (lit. 'the straight', ‹viz. thing›) where in English one can only have 'the straight *line*'. It should be noted that, in some cases at least, modern languages are equally permissive. So German 'die Gerade' (= 'die gerade Linie') and Dutch 'de rechte' (= 'de rechte lijn') for 'the straight *line*'. A lack of awareness of this usage has led to a misunderstanding of Aristotle, *Poster. Analytics* I 4, 73a34 ff. See also below, 14.2, n. 13.

that entity in saying, for instance 'that curved thing....' and sô on. We have to come back to all this in our Chapter XIV.

13.2. *A Survey Of The Discussion Of The Cratylus*[27]

Hermogenes starts the discussion by saying that Cratylus has been arguing that names (*onomata*) are natural, not conventional, and that there is a natural correctness in them (383A). He cannot convince himself, however, that there is any principle of correctness in names other than convention (or custom, *synthêkê*) and agreement (*homologia*) between their users (384D). He concedes to Socrates that what he is trying to say is that "the name of each thing is that whatsoever one imposes on the thing to name it" (385A2–3) and the latter correctly infers from that definition that if somebody calls 'man' what everyone else calls 'horse', no one can challenge him for that. Socrates, then, objects that there exists something like true and false speech (*alêthê legein kai pseudê*; 385B2–3), and therefore true and false accounts (*logoi*), the latter being defined: "a true account says that what is, and a false account says that what is not" (385B7–8). Well, he concludes[28] *pace* Hermogenes, that as they are parts of true and false accounts, names may likewise be true or false (385C16–17).

Two conclusions are drawn, then: (1) whatever anybody affirms to be the name of something, *that* is for each of them its name, and (2) when somebody assigns any names to anything, it will have that many names all the time he uses them (385D2–6). However, if each object has as many names as anyone chooses to assign to it, Protagoras must be right in saying that things are to each one of us just as they appear to him (386A). They agree, however, in rejecting Protagoras' thesis and recognising that every thing has a stable 'being-ness' (*ousia*) irrespective of our believes (*tôi hêmeterôi phantasmati*) about it (386C–E).

Well, the same applies to actions, such as speech (*to legein*; 387B9–10) and Hermogenes has to concede that it is not true that someone speaks correctly if he speaks as he pleases, but rather that one speaks correctly if one speaks "in the way prescribed by nature, and as things ought to be spoken, and with the natural instrument" (387B13–C2). And since naming is a part of speaking, we are bound to infer that names, too, are to be given according to a natural process and with a proper instrument and not at our pleasure (387D4–8). The proper instrument is *onoma* (388A8). The speech act is defined as giving information to us and as discerning things as they are and the dual function of *onoma*, accordingly, is seen as being that of an instrument for teaching and discerning being (388B10–C1). This dual function and Plato's subtle exposition of it will be discussed in our next chapter (14.21).

[27] See also Guthrie III, 206–10 and V, 6–15, Derbolav [1972:40–9], and Gaiser, 20–4. A penetrating interpretation and evaluation of Plato's views has been given by Kretzmann [1971]. Derbolav [1972:231–308] gives a survey of all studies of the *Cratylus* up to 1971.
[28] The soundness of Socrates' argument was rightly defended in the 19th century by Uphues [1882:8–13] after many others, and, in our days, by Prauss; see 14.4; 15.1.

Hermogenes has to concede now that even his conventionalistic theory can only be upheld by assuming that there must be some lawgiver who is specialised in coining the correct names, just as a specialised craftsman, the carpenter, is needed whenever a shuttle is to be made (388A–389A). The analogy is further elaborated and the master name-giver is said to coin names "in keeping an eye on just that which a name is"[29], i.e. the very characteristic of a name (389D6–7), just as when a shuttle is broken the carpenter makes a new shuttle by looking to the form according to which he made the broken one, and that form may be labelled 'just that which a shuttle is'" (389B5–6). So naming can hardly be a trifling matter and has to pass under the critical review of that user of names *par excellence*, the dialectician. Socrates agrees with Cratylus that things have names by nature and that not every man is an artificer of names but only he who looks to the name which each thing by nature has and is able to put that name's (*autou*) form into letters and syllables (390D–E).

Hermogenes persists in his ignorance of what it is that Socrates labels "the natural correctness of a name" (*tên physei orthotêta onomatos*; 391A3). Socrates is of the opinion that Hermogenes is asking too much and emphasises that the only conclusions drawn so far are that a name has, by nature, a correctness and that not every man knows how to impose a name on a thing (391A9–B2).

But again, what is the nature of this 'correctness of name'? This question still waits for an answer. Socrates starts by elucidating what the correctness of names might consist in by means of a true torrent of etymologies (391D–427E), which are supposed to show that names do indeed reveal the true nature of their 'nominates'.

The whole collection is discussed by Pierre Boyancé [1941] who argues that it is to be taken quite seriously and conveys much valuable evidence of Plato's debt to the Pythagoreans. We owe to Gaiser the first attempt to interpret the section on etymologies (in fact by far the greater part of our dialogue; 391D–427E) in the general framework of the dialogue. He convincingly points out that the section on etymologies also considers language as a vehicle for acquiring knowledge about the things of the outside world. The configuration of Rest and Change (Movement) as found in the outside world is etymologically 'discovered' in names and so names show some natural affinity, he argues, with both the transient and fluctuating (Heraclitean) world of appearances and the Unchanging World of stable natures behind them[30]. Kretzmann, too, is among the rather few interpreters who

[29] For the precise meaning of that phrase, see below, 13.31.
[30] See Gaiser, 45–80, who also gives a survey of the etymologies (54–7) and of the mass of different interpretations of Plato's intention (whether serious or not) regarding the etymologies (45–9). Nehring, who also defends Plato's seriousness adds an amusing anthology of modern linguists' attempts to etymologise '*anthrôpos*' (16–7): "Plato explains this word for 'man' as 'he who looks up at (*anathrei*) and considers what he has seen (*opôpe*)". This sounds like a bad joke; but let us compare some of the many modern etymologies of the word. F. Ribezzo assumes an original form *an‹d›rôpos*, derived from *nôrops* (*chalkos*) with the sense "'faccia lucente' sentito come 'occhi neri'" and therefore influenced by *anthrax* 'coal'. H. Güntert derives *anthrôpos* from *anthereôn*, 'beard', so that it would originally have

rightly take Plato's etymologies to be not just philological fun (so e.g. Weingartner, who explicitly talks (24) of Plato poking fun at various other theories of language of his own time and the recent past), but, for the most part, he attempts to illustrate the first stage of the special theory of the correctness of names (134). For that matter, Kretzmann's evaluation should be preferred to Gaiser's, since Socrates' objections to the Heraclitean interpretation of the etymologies and his counterexamples of seemingly non-Heraclitean etymologies supporting nature's stability and standstill, appear to be meant to qualify the etymological approach as such to the problem of the correctness of names, rather than make the etymological and ontological picture more adequate. This is quite clear from 436E–437C (discussed below) where Socrates assumes all those names which seem to express that things are at rest to be ill-framed.

After they have explained a mass of names by analysing them into their elements, the problem arises of what to do about the simple and elemental names themselves. How should their correctness be tested, namely their fitness for disclosing the nature of their nominates?

Socrates takes it for granted, then, that his interlocutor will acknowledge that there is just one single way for all names, elemental as well as compound, to be correct and that there is no difference in their being a name. Hermogenes agrees (422C) and Socrates goes on to determine that single way by recalling that the correctness of all the names they had been explaining so far, consisted in their showing how each of the things (i.e. *dynameis*) that are is (*dêloun hoion hekaston esti tôn ontôn*; 422D2–3). Supposing that we had no voice or tongue, Socrates says, we surely should, then, make signs with our hands and heads and the rest of our bodies in order to designate things to one another. We should imitate[31] the nature of a thing, designating lightness and upwardness by the elevation of our hands to heaven, and heaviness and downwardness would be expressed by letting them drop to the ground (422E–423A). Well, likewise a name seems to be a vocal imitation of that which one tries to imitate and whenever he imitates, the vocal imitator is 'naming'. Hermogenes thinks this to be an acceptable definition of 'name', yet Socrates rejects it (423B–C), since it contains too loose a concept of 'imitating', to wit that people who imitate a sheep or a cow by saying 'Baa' or 'Moo' would 'name' such an animal by that. He aims at giving, therefore, a more strict sense to 'imitating' and eventually suggest the following description of naming and the name-giver. "Well, if somebody could imitate just that, namely the being-ness (*ousian*) of each thing in letters and syllables, would he not disclose each thing in its being?" (423E7). Of course, they agree, *he* must be the name-giver for whom they have been searching all the time (*ho onomastikos*; 424A5–6).

been a word for the male only with the meaning 'being with a bearded face'. According to F. Holthausen *anthrôpos* is a compound of *anthêros* 'blooming' and *-ôpo...* with the meaning 'with a flourishing face'. Finally O. Hoffmann explains *anthrôpos* as a derivation from *athreô* 'to watch' (!) as meaning 'looking at a goal with both eyes'.

[31] For the role of mimesis in the *Cratylus*, see Koller, 48–57. See also Peters, 118–9.

The passage concludes with Socrates remarking (427C6–D1): "This is what the law-giver (or name-giver) did, impose on each of the things that are a significative name (*sêmeion te kai onoma*) with letters and syllables and by imitation compound out of them the other ones. That's my view, Hermogenes, of the correctness of names, but I should like to hear what Cratylus has to say to all this". Hermogenes joins him in demanding from Cratylus whether he has to offer something better than what Socrates had been saying about names and their correctness.

Cratylus agrees that the correctness of a name consists in its manifesting how a thing is and names, accordingly, are given in order to inform (428E1–5). Well, Socrates argues, some name-givers do a better job than others and so one name is likely to be better than another. But Cratylus energetically rejects this view and maintains his position that *all* names, if they are names at all, are correctly imposed (429B). Socrates asks Cratylus whether one not would be uttering speech (false, of course) if one were to call him (Cratylus) 'Hermogenes'[32]. Cratylus stubbornly remarks that such a man would only be making idle noises and his word would be a meaningless sound like the noise of hammering on a brass pot (429E8–430A5).

Socrates insists that each name is an imitation of the thing involved, so that they may be compared to pictures. After Cratylus has agreed, Socrates presents his view on the correct and incorrect attribution of both sorts of imitation, pictures and names. If one attributes the portrait of a man to that man or of a woman to the woman in question, the assignment may be called correct. But if one mistakes the portrait of a man for one of a woman, or *vice versa*, the assignment is wrong. The same holds good, Socrates asserts, for assigning names (430C–D). But Cratylus wants to differentiate the two cases. Pictures may be wrongly assigned, he concedes, but names may not; they must be always correct (430D–E). Socrates does not see the difference. You may indeed show somebody his picture and say "this is *your* picture" and likewise tell him "this is *your* name". And using the kind of imitation which is a name, may we not call him 'man' or (wrongly, of course) 'woman'? Cratylus rather surprisingly agrees (431A–B). Well, Socrates infers, if one can assign names as well as pictures to things, we may call the correct assignment of a name 'true speech' (*alêtheuein*), and the wrong assignment 'false speech' (*pseudesthai*). And if so, the same holds good for the assignment of attributes (*rhêmata*) and phrases (*logoi*). Socrates now goes on to compare the elemental names to pictures. As with pictures one may either give all the appropriate colours and figures or only a selection of them, in the same manner as someone who by syllables and letters imitates the nature of things: if he gives all that is appropriate he will produce a good image (i.e. a correct name), but if he substracts or perhaps

[32] Kahn has rightly remarked [1973²:161, n. 13] that the appellation applied to Cratylus at 429E4–5 ("Hail, Athenian stranger, Hermogenes, son of Smicrion"), is part true, part false. Cratylus *is* an Athenian and his father's name is presumably Smicrion (since we know that Hermogenes' father is Hipponicus; see 384A8 and 406B8). The only thing which does *not* fit in his speech act is precisely the name "Hermogenes".

adds a little, he will make an image, it is true but, not a good one; and so it may be said that some names are well made, others ill made (431D).

Next Socrates goes on to press the imitation character of names. As images they are a long way from having qualities which are the exact counterpart of the things they represent. It would be ridiculous indeed if the names were exactly the same as their objects and difficult to discern from them. Socrates has now cornered Cratylus sufficiently to make him subscribe to the following conclusions:

> 432D11–433C2: Well, be courageous enough to admit that one name be correctly and another incorrectly given and do no insist that the correct name should have all its letters and allow the occasional substitution of a wrong letter. And if of a letter, then also of a name in a phrase (*onoma en logôi*). And if of a name, then also of a phrase in another one which is not appropriate to the things (represented). And recognise that the thing may be named and described (*onomazesthai to pragma kai legesthai*) as long as the distinctive character (*typos*) of the thing which you are talking about, is retained. ..... When that character is maintained, even if some of the proper letters are wanting, the *thing* will still be the subject matter of the discussion (*lelexetai*). ..... If you do not admit that, you have to find out some other notion of correctness of a name and no longer maintain that a name is a representation (*dêloma*) of a thing in letters and syllables, for if you say both, you will be inconsistent with yourself .... Now that we are agreed thus far, let us consider whether a name correctly imposed ought not to have the proper letters, ... the latter being those which are like the things.

However Cratylus' agreement turns out to be only superficial. Once it comes to incorrectly assigned names, he stubbornly returns to his initial thesis that such names are not names at all (431C3–10). Socrates does not allow himself to be discouraged and makes a fresh start by discussing the representative function of the elemental names and the letters out of which they are formed. If Cratylus admits that elemental names are representations of things and still prefers representation by likeness to (Hermogenes' notion of) representation by any chance sign, then the letters from which the elemental names are composed must also be like things. Returning to the comparison with the picture: how could anyone ever compose a picture truly resembling something 'of the things that are', if there were no pigments in nature which resembled the things pictured, out of which the picture is made? Well, in the same way names could never resemble any thing unless their elements (*stoicheia*, the letters) bore some sort of resemblance to the things of which the names are the imitations (433C–434B).

Next the name *sklêrotês* ('hardness') is considered in order to clarify Socrates' point. Despite the fact that the letter '*l*' depicts softness and ought to have been an '*r*', which is expressive of hardness, the name *sklêrotês* still is intelligible to us, for when somebody says *sklêros* ('hard'), we know what he means. Well, the explanation of that fact is custom, as Cratylus has to agree (434C–E). Socrates is keen to infer, now, that "the correctness of names turns out to be convention, since letters which are unlike are manifesting equally with those that are like, if only they happen to be sanctioned by custom and convention" (*ethous te kai synthêkês*; 435A8–10). So custom and convention must be assumed to contribute to the manifestation of what we are thinking when we speak. Socrates therefore is of the opinion that names should as far as possible be like the things named. But in point of fact,

that preponderance of resemblance seems to be a shabby thing and in order to get things in balance we are compelled to employ in addition that rough measure, convention, to establish the correctness of names. The latter is indispensable, unfortunately, for if we could always, or nearly always, use names which are like the things named, i.e. appropriate to them, our speech would be completely perfect (435C).

Next Socrates dismisses the opposition of 'by nature' and 'by convention' and prefers to switch over to a more concrete subject, the force of names and their function when actually being used. Cratylus defines their force as instruction ("to inform"; *didaskein*, 435D4) in that he who knows names, knows, by that, the things which are named, simply because names and things named are similars. However, Socrates goes on, what is the nature of the information about things which the names supply; is it the best sort of information? In Cratylus' view it is the only and the best sort of information, and the discovery of the correct name is one and the same with that of the nature of the thing named (435D–436A).

Socrates objects that he who first gave names to the things, imposed them according to his own conception of the things involved, so that if his conception was erroneous, we who are his followers are bound to be deceived by him in using those names. Cratylus first takes refuge in his initial thesis that if the man's names were erroneously coined, they would not be names at all (436C). But, in point of fact, he adds, the inventor of names did not miss the truth as is clear from the fact that his achievement so perfectly fits in with the common character of all things, as Socrates must have himself observed before. However, the latter strongly denies that and sets out to clarify instead that the numerous names which seem to express that things are at rest (which is just the opposite of their natural status) must have been badly coined (436E–437C).

Socrates steps over for a moment to the connected question of whether the first lawgivers, who were the coiners of the names, including the elemental names, did or did not know the things which they named. The answer is yes. But how could the lawgiver have learned or discovered things from names if the elemental names were not yet given; how can we suppose indeed that the givers of names had knowledge of the things to be named, as long as all 'knowledge is supposed to depend on names'? Cratylus cannot help assuming that "a power more than human imposed on things their elemental names which are necessarily their true names" (438C). Socrates now comes back to his earlier objection that some names are (erroneously) expressive of rest, others (correctly) of motion, but Cratylus cannot think of anything better to do than to repeat his fundamental reply that incorrect names are not names at all. Socrates is right in ignoring the answer as being of no relevance now and asks for a reliable criterion to discern between correctly and wrongly framed names (or, if Cratylus wants: 'seeming names'), and comes to the important insight that there are no other *names* to which appeal can be made and that there must be another standard which, without using names, will clarify the situation by showing by itself the truth of things (438C–E).

Now Plato thinks the soil is sufficiently prepared to erect his own construction, the doctrine of Unchanging Forms, e.g. Beauty Itself. Things that are (*ta onta*)

may be known, indeed, both by discovering their natural affinities when they are akin one to another, and through themselves (438E5–7). Holding on to any kind of 'naturalism' (e.g. Cratylus' view of 'names being by nature') is only possible in the framework of a metaphysical theory which truly coordinates names, things and their True Natures. That this is the general drift of this stage of the discussion is clear from what follows. At this point in the discussion, it is true, Socrates quite clearly goes no further in establishing how the things that are (*ta onta*) are to be studied or discovered but remarkably he emphasises again their foregoing conclusion that the knowledge of things cannot be derived from names, they rather must be studied and investigated in themselves (439B). However, the latter statement should not lead people astray in drawing their attention to the things in the transient world, which they had more than once described as "being in motion and progress and flux" (436E; cf. 411B–C). No, warns Socrates, I should not like us to be imposed upon the appearance of such a multitude of names, all tending in the same (but wrong) direction. It is true enough that the name-givers did really give the names under the impression that all things were in motion and flux, but their sincere opinion was, in point of fact, completely mistaken.

Socrates thinks (439C4–5) them to be the victims of a kind of whirlpool which continually carries them round, (and could not help troubling their sight in seeking for the true nature of things). By that, Plato apparently alludes to what he had in mind at an earlier stage in the discussion when he made Socrates demonstrate the mournful situation in which the original name-givers (together with many 'modern philosophers', he scornfully adds) are to be found. They are all in their search for the nature of 'the things that are' (*ta onta*), always becoming dizzy from constantly turning round and round, and then they imagine that the world itself is going round and round and moving in all directions. So their own internal condition of dizziness makes them think that things themselves are unstable and in permanent flux and motion (411B–C)[33].

The right view of unchanging Being is suggested then, in the form of a dream[34]

[33] Cf. 386D8–E4: "things have their own proper and stable 'being-ness' (*ousian*) without reference to us or influenced by us. They do not vary, swaying one way and another according to our believes. No, they exist by themselves according to their own being prescribed by nature". The same metaphor is found in *Phaedo*, 79C6–9 and 90C1–6 where Plato again portrays the other thinkers as becoming dizzy and as having projected their own inner confusion into the nature of things. See Kahn [1973²:176, n. 30] and Goldschmidt, 179–81, who rightly observed that Plato emphasised the negative role of human mental or psychological conditions (dizziness and misologia, for example) when it comes to pursuing the true nature of things.

[34] For Plato's use of the dream metaphor to give a first sketch of hiw own theories, see Prauss, 161–74, Gallop [1971:187–201], and Burneyat (103–6), who rightly remarks that when the *Cratylus* introduces (439C) a version of the theory of Forms as something which Socrates often dreams, the general tone of the context shows that what is expressed thereby is neither a romantic wish that it were true nor an ironic conviction that it is true but a refusal to take a firm stand for or against a view that keeps pushing itself forward as worthy of attention but which needs a hard examination before one can commit oneself to its truth. For, on the epistemological plane, a dream is something to look back on as dim and doubt-

(439C–440D). Neither a theory of names nor a theory of knowledge can be built upon the quicksands of the Heraclitean world view:

439C7–440D2: Shall we assert that the Beautiful itself or the Good itself, (and so on as to each of the things that are) *is something*, or not? — So let us consider Beauty itself while not asking whether a particular face is beautiful, or anything of that sort, for all such things appear to be in a flux. Is not, in our opinion, the Beautiful itself always such as it is? — Can we, then, if it is always passing away (*hypexerchetai*), correctly (*orthôs*) appellate (*proseipein*) it, first ‹saying› that it is 'a thing over there' (*ekeino*), then, that it is such-and-such (*toiouton*). Or must it inevitably, in the very instant in which we are speaking, become something else and pass away no longer be such as it is now? — But how can *that* be something which is never in the same state? ‹.....› Nor can it be known by anyone, for at the moment when he who seeks to know it approaches, it becomes something else and of another nature. ‹.....›. And if the transition is always going on, there will always be no knowledge and, along this line of argument, there will be no one to know and nothing to be known. But if that which knows and that which is known *are*, and *the* Beautiful and *the* Good and so on as to each single thing of the things-that-are (*hen hekaston tôn ontôn*), *are*, then all those things we are talking about cannot resemble, I think, a flux or motion. Now, whether this is so or as Heraclitus and his followers and many others say, is a question hard to determine. And it is no proof of good sense, accordingly (*oude*), to put oneself or the education of one's mind under the control of names, confident of the names and their coiners as to declare as if one really knew, and to sentence against oneself and all other things that are that there is absolutely nothing healthy but that all things are flowing like leaky pots, and, in a word, imagine that the things are like people suffering from catarrh, flowing and running all the time.

Socrates exhorts Cratylus to not accept such a doctrine easily and to reflect well on the matter, for he is young and of an age to learn. Cratylus is willing to do so, he answers, but he can assure Socrates that he has been considering the problems and that the result of all that troublesome consideration is that he still inclines to Heraclitus.

13.3. *The Doctrinal Content Of The Dialogue*

The dialogue presents itself as a discussion of two diagonally opposed views of the correctness of names under the direction of Socrates who was asked to adjudicate the dispute[35]. Cratylus, presumably an adherent to the Heraclitean doctrine,

ful (*Sympos.*, 175E), from which one wakes to discover with a shock that one does not know what one seemed at the time to know (*Statesman*, 277D); see Burneyat, 104–5. One may also compare *Charmides*, 173A–D. The above view is already found in Luce (25–8) who rightly refers to Collin's [1952:93–6] findings concerning Plato's use of *manteuesthai* (where it is observed that the use of the metaphor is always epistemological) and Festugière [79, n. 9]. Kahn [1975] is right in observing (169) that the existence and immutability of the Forms is not *established* in the final section of the *Cratylus*, but taken for granted at the outset (439D) and comments (in his *Appendix* 1, 169–71) "On the "Argument" for the Forms at *Cratylus*, 439B–440B".

[35] We owe to Kretzmann [1971] a clear exposition of the leading question of our dialogue and an interesting evaluation of Plato's answer. Much profit can be taken from consulting his paper as well as Pagliaro's study [1956]. Unlike these scholars Derbolav [1952] offered a philosophical interpretation which suffers much from rather speculative, and quite anachronistic views going back all of them to his "transzendental-dialektische Interpreta-

maintains that there exists naturally a 'correctness of name' that is the same for all people, and every 'incorrect name' is not a name at all[36]. His position may be called, with Kretzmann [1967:360] 'a kind of semantic naturalism'.

Hermogenes' opposing thesis, which may be considered 'a kind of semantic conventionalism', holds that no name exists by nature but rather by the law and usage of those who use the name and call things by it. Whatever name someone imposes on a thing is the correct one. There is no correctness of a name, accordingly, other than convention and agreement[37].

Both parties to the dispute apparently assume[38] that words have to be posited in any case, whether they are natural or not, and the origin of language is not their concern. They also take it for granted that a correctness of names exists. What really divides them throughout the dialogue is the general question of what the correctness of a name consists in and likewise the special one, 'what makes a particular name a correct name?' In point of fact the specific relation to things is under discussion[39]. Kretzmann [1971:127] clearly sums up the rival answers:

> Cratylus' answer is that there is something about the relation between names and their *bearers* that makes certain names "naturally" correct, regardless of what the *users* of the names might think about it. And Hermogenes' answer is that names are correct only "conventionally", that the *users* of the names are the ultimate arbiters of their correctness, regardless of any consideration of the nature of the *bearers* of the names.

How does Socrates adjudicate the dispute? Some interpreters are of the opinion that the dialogue only aims to destroy Cratylus' thesis of the natural correctness of names[40], others have found a Platonic compromise between 'conventionalism' and 'naturalism'. They commonly refer to the well-known passage 435B–C, where Socrates says that convention and usage are indispensable for the disclosure of what we are thinking when we speak, but that, nonetheless, names should be as far as possible like the things named. Kretzmann [1971:138] spells out this reconciliation this way:

> where actual languages are concerned, Hermogenes is right in this respect, that convention and agreement are the only operative criteria of correctness and for certain purposes essential to a language the only possible criteria of correctness; but Cratylus is right in this other respect, that there is a natural correctness of name, the same for Greeks as for barbarians, the linguistic manifestation of a correct conceptual schema, on which every acceptable language is ultimately based to the extent to which it is acceptable.

What Kretzmann means by 'correct conceptual schema' has been clarified by him earlier (131) where he speaks of the "correctly framed concept of the Form of the bearers of the actual name". I basically agree with Kretzmann's view as well as his evaluation of Plato's settlement of the main question of the dialogue and shall try to show that if one is entitled at all to speak of a 'reconciliation' between the two rival theories, there is absolutely no trace of a 'compromise' between 'conventionalism' and 'naturalism' as defended by Hermogenes and Cratylus, respectively. What Plato really does is nothing but reinterpret those views and assign to them, then, their proper places in the framework of his own theory. Hermogenes and Cratylus are both allowed to join Plato but simply and solely on the Master's terms.

13.31. *Plato's View Of The Proper Task Of Naming*

After the interlocutors have come to the insight that the process of naming needs its proper instrument, the *onoma* (387B–388A), the function of *onoma* is defined as teaching something and discerning being. (For the text, see below, 14.1.)

This ideal description of our practice of imposing and using names is able to satisfy the requirements put forward earlier when the proper nature of naming was defined (387D4–5): "Therefore names too, should be assigned according to the way in which nature has made things[41] and governs name-giving"[42]. For that matter, in developing the former passage (388B7–C1) where our (ideal) practice of name-giving was described, Plato returns to the passage I have just quoted (387D4–5). Indeed, in discussing (388C–389D) the proper task of the ideal name-

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tion" (58; cf. 63–9 and 85–90). Even his correct rejection (57 ff.) of any explicit *chôrismos* or any hypostatisation of 'essential concepts' in the *Cratylus* seems to be entirely dependent on his 'transcendental-dialectical' interpretation of the dialogue. For that matter, Derbolav takes (104) the *chôrismos* of the classical dialogues (*Phaedo*, *Symposion*, *Republic*) as characteristic of that stage of Plato's philosophical development before the critical dialogues (*Parmenides etc.*) in which, unlike the narrow-minded 'friends of Forms', the master himself had come to reject the *chôrismos* as being a device belonging to the area of ontological interpretation, instead of the more fruitful 'transcendental-dialectical' approach. Derbolav's other study [1972] sets out to be "not an original but informative and useful book" (24) and has an appendix (*Anhang*) containing (221–308) a very useful survey of 150 years of *Cratylus* studies.

[36] *Crat.*, 383A–B; 390D–E; 427E; 428E; 429B–E; 430C–E; 431C; 432A; 433C; 435D; 436C; 438C.

[37] 384D–385E; 433E. See also 431D: an incorrect name *is* a name, nonetheless.

[38] See also Robinson [1969:106], Pfeiffer [1968:64], Wolf [1971–72:28], Rehn [1982:9] among others.

[39] See also above, 13.2.

[40] See e.g. Robinson [1969:125] and Rehn, 11 and 21–2. Rehn in particular is too inclined to reject all and everything Socrates puts forward in his discussion of Cratylus' thesis (see especially pp. 11–22 where he repeatedly argues that Plato is not serious; but what should we make, then, out of Socrates' explicit thesis at 391A–B where he quite seriously states that they have discovered that names have by nature a truth? Cf. 390D7–8). This has often blocked, I am afraid, the way to a correct evaluation, on his part, of Plato's own doctrine as put forward in the *Cratylus*.

[41] In line with what is said later on (at 388B10–C1) one should here think of how nature has made things exist in the outside world rather than the Transcendent Natures. See also, below, the next chapter (14.21), n. 4.

[42] The Greek text has "to name and to be named" and so also involves the *specific nature* of the act of naming, not only the specific (different) natures of the things to be named. — Loriaux has well observed [1935:158] (cf. Diès [1931:102]) the vital role accorded to language in Plato's metaphysical enquiries and given a useful survey of 54 passages where terms such as *prosagoreuein*, *eponomazein* and their cognates are used in technical senses in *Sophist* and *Statesman*. A quick glance at Brandwood's *Word Index* may suffice to make clear that Loriaux's list provides only a modest selection.

giver ('law-giver') he not only elaborates the craftsmen parallels ('weaver-carpenter', 'awl-smith'; thus, by analogy; 'teacher-lawgiver') but also makes explicit what he had implicitly said about naming as prescribed by the nature of the things to be named and that of the act of naming as well. That is how the *different* expressions 'just that which a name is' and 'that name which is naturally fitted for each thing' are to be understood. Just as say, a shuttle must not only have the form of 'shuttle' prescribed by nature (i.e. the nature of 'shuttle') but, as a specialised shuttle adapted for special uses, (for example a shuttle for weaving the stuff for a thick woolen cloak), must also satisfy some special conditions (prescribed by the nature of the diverse objects), — so too must the names satisfy, to begin with, the proper nature of 'name' and, then, each of them, its special task corresponding to the proper nature of the thing which it intends to designate:

389A5–390A8: Well, consider what the lawgiver has in view when he gives names; consider this in the light of the previous examples. What does the carpenter have in view when he makes a shuttle? Does he not look to that which is naturally fitted to act as a shuttle? ‹.....›. Might not *that* be correctly called 'just that which a shuttle is' (*auto ho estin kerkis*)? — I think so. — And whatever shuttle is wanted, for the manufacture of garments, thin or thick, of flaxen, woolen or other material, won't you agree that it must in every case have the form of a shuttle, but also that whatever shuttle is naturally best adapted to each kind of weaving, *that* type must be produced to each special task? — Yes, indeed. ‹.....›. Then, as to names, must not the law-giver both[43] know how to embody in sounds and syllables that name which is fitted for each thing (*to hekastôi physei pephykos onoma*), as well as, with a view to just that what a name is (*auto ekeino ho estin onoma*), make and give all the names, if he is to be an authoritative giver of names. And if not every lawgiver embodies it in the same syllables, we must not forget this name for that reason, for not every smith works with the same iron though making the same tool for the same purpose; yet, as long as he produces the same form (*idean*), even though not in the same iron, still the tool is as it should be, whether it is made here or among the barbarians. ‹. .....›. Will you not judge the lawgiver in the same way, whether here or among the barbarians: as long as he embodies the form of name proper to each thing in no matter what syllables, he will be equally good as a lawgiver, whether here or anywhere else.

Some preliminary comments. The lawgiver has to consider two things: (1) how to embody in sounds and syllables *that name which is naturally fitted for each thing*, and (2) to keep his eye fixed upon *just that which a name is*. Modern scholarship rightly opposes 'the name naturally fitting for each thing' (*to hekastôi physei pephykos onoma*) to 'just that which a name is' (*auto ekeino ho estin onoma*), and the latter formula is understandably paralleled by 'just that which a shuttle is' (*auto ho estin kerkis*). However, the two formulas are commonly taken as referring to some Platonic *eidos*, namely the *Form* of name. Thus Kretzmann (who is quite right in associating (129) the formula with the requirement that each name must be suited first to the essential purpose of any name — separating things according to their natures) thinks that this general purpose is hypostatised as "the absolute or ideal

[43] 'both... as well as', where the Greek text reads *kai ... kai*. It should be noted that the phrase '*with a view...* etc.' (*bleponta pros* etc.) immediately follows the latter *kai* and so is emphasised.

name" analogous to "the absolute or ideal shuttle", which he apparently takes both of them as Platonic Forms.

I think that most interpreters (e.g. Leroy, 133; Gaiser, 41; Kahn [1973²], 162–5), are entirely mistaken in either thinking here of a Transcendent Form in the case of names or in the case of shuttles. To begin with, it is disputed whether Plato believed in Forms of artefacts (such as beds, shuttles *etc.*) and the assumption of such Forms also seems to have been debated in the Academy. In the case of nearly all passages where he seems to introduce Forms of artefacts (for the testimonies, see Cherniss [1944:241]) Plato is only illustrating his view of the relationships between Forms of natural things and particulars. The one place where artefacts (*skeuasta*) are commonly held to be included unmistakably among particulars of which there are Transcendent Forms, is *Epist.* VII, 342D5. However, the translation commonly given raises some doubts (see e.g. Bluck [1949] *ad loc.* and [1947], 75–6) in that the conjunction *te kai* is erroneously taken as having a distributive force over 'all bodies' (*sômatos hapantos*). The correct translation should be "in regard to each body which is both artefact and has come into existence according to nature" (*skeuastou te kai kata physin gegonotos*). I think, therefore, that Plato here refers to what he calls elsewhere (*Soph.*, 266A–C) the products of *divine* craftmanship, i.e. "all mortal animals and all things that grow", "the coming-into-being of which out of non-being" is attributed to divine production. See also above, 12.5.

It should be recalled in this connection that Aristotle (*Metaph.* Λ 3, 1070a18) is most explicit in testifying that Plato held that there were Forms of natural objects only. He would surely have charged Plato of assuming Forms of artefacts, too if he, just as his followers, had done so (see Arist. *Metaph.* M4, 1078b30–34) who really hypostatised *all* universal classes of which Socrates had sought definitions, and thus went so far as to assume Forms of *everything* spoken of universally, including artefacts.

Everything considered, there is no sound argument for holding that Plato recognised Transcendent Forms of artefacts, but there is much pleading against this view[44]. For that matter, the assumption that Transcendent Forms correspond to epistemic entities such as names, statements, accounts and so on, just sounds awkward and should be seen as unPlatonic. Of course, Plato's assumption (or rather, use) of *concepts* of Forms (in either their Transcendent or immanent status) is quite a different thing.

It may be remarked in this connection that the formulas containing the phrases '*auto ekeino*', '*auto kath' hauto*' and so on should not be indiscriminately taken as

[44] See the useful account of the dispute in Guthrie IV, 548–51, who rightly rejects as absurd the assumption of "an eternal, invisible but intelligible bed". Luce [30, n. 32], too rejects transcendent Forms of 'shuttle' and 'name', the latter seeming "even more unlike a transcendent entity". (There is some inconsistency, however, in his calling a 'general term' the 'proper name' of a Form and offering as an instance of that the words (35): "Thus, in his [Plato's] view, *kerkis* ['shuttle'] is ultimately a designation for the unique substantial reality from which shuttles derive their being".) See also Weingartner, 19 and Gallop, 97.

referring to Transcendent Forms[45]. So in *Phaedo*, 65E6 the expression *autêi têi dianoiai* simply means 'with thinking only' (without taking into account any of the senses, that is) and certainly does not connote any Platonic 'Form of Thinking'. In *Timaeus*, 89D8–E2 there is talk of "a minute discussion of the subject alone, just by itself" (*auto kath' hauto monon*), that is, without any additional discussion. It would be senseless to think here of any Transcendent 'Form of Discussion'.

Therefore one could have better taken *auto ho estin kerkis* and *auto ekeino ho estin onoma* to mean 'just that which a shuttle is' and 'just that which a name is' without any connotation of a corresponding Platonic Form[46]. The formulas stand for 'just that property which characterises a shuttle or a name', respectively.

The problem of the two kinds of the *eidos*, 'Name' is, accordingly a pseudo-problem which is merely due to a mistaken interpretation of the phrase 'just that which a name is'. It should be noted besides that Plato does not use the term *eidos* in this context[47].

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[45] See also our section *On the different uses of kath' hauto*, above, 9.4. Ignoring the general meaning of the *auto kath' hauto* formula Kapp (133–42) comes to a most remarkable point of view. He rightly rejects the Platonic Forms such as SHUTTLE and NAME (141), but taking the '*auto ho esti kerkis* (or *onoma*)' formula as strictly conveying the notion of a Platonic Form he makes (133) Socrates use "a remarkable fake, perhaps unique in the history of deliberate sophistry, namely the fictive notion of one and the same idea of name", which idea is "but a curiosity in the history of doctrine of ideas". Kapp did surely not recognise the fundamental notion of 'the name as such', 'that which just renders whichever name a name', i.e. the significative element of any name. — As early as some 70 years ago Professor David Gillespie rightly observed that, of the two formulas *auto ho estin kerkis* and *to tês kerkidos eidos*, the former "represents the object of defining thought as opposed to the object of sense; it can easily be shown to have arisen from the dialectical question '*ti estin*?'", whereas the latter "uses *eidos* in the sense of nature, form, *physis* (a frequent synonym for it in the *Cratylus*) thus bringing it into close connection with the scientific (*sc.* pre-Platonic) conception of *eidos* as form" (quoted by Luce, 36, n. 47). — No better remedy, I think, against the scholarly habit 'overtranslating' Plato's words where he only is using common Greek expressions than reading a short *Phaedo* passage. At 103B1–5 the *auto to* formula is used in order to designate 'just what is opposite' (*auto to enantion*), where it stands indiscriminately for an immanent eidos or a transcendent Form, as is explicitly stated by Socrates (at B5). But, on quite the same Stephanus page (at 103A6) precisely the same expression *auto to enantion* means harmlessly 'the very opposite of what is now being said' (*tôn nuni legomenôn*).

[46] The correct interpretation is given by Ross, 228–9; cf. 18–9; and Luce, 30, n. 32. When Socrates speaks of the *eidos* of a shuttle (389B3, and 10) he simply means the characteristic form or shape of that instrument as the skilful artisan has it in his mind's eye, and definitely not a Transcendent Form, SHUTTLE which the man's soul should have contemplated before his embodiment. Neither does the phrase *hekastôi eidei hyphasmatos* (389D1) refer to anything else than just every *kind* of weaving. Cf. a similar use of *eidos* (*idea*) at 386E and 418E, and also above, 2.11. Nehring's equation (14) of Plato's 'just what the word is' (Nehring has 'the very idea of the word') with "what Kant would call the word *an sich*" can only be seen as an enormous hawler which betrays the author's complete lack of acquaintance with Kant's philosophy.

[47] Of course the 'name as such' (i.e. that exactly which 'a name' is) even if not being a Platonic Eidos, should still be distinguished from what Kretzmann so happily labelled 'model correct name' which is different for each kind of thing. (See also Kahn [1973²:162–5].) Crombie [1963:477–8] fails to recognise this. However, any talk of *two different eidê* (so

The second formula (*to hekastôi physei pephykos onoma*; 389D4) concerning the *diverse* names proper to the corresponding (different) things, returns at 390A5–6 in a slightly different form: 'the kind of name proper to each thing' (*to tou onomatos eidos to proshêkon hekastôi*), where the term *eidos* has again nothing to do with any (supposedly Transcendent) Form. Kretzmann rightly calls [1971:129 f.] this *eidos* each thing's 'model correct name', this being a translinguistic entity which cannot be identified with any sounds or marks, as Greek *hippos* and French *cheval* embody the same model correct name for a horse, in spite of the diverse ways of embodiment in sounds and syllables. The nature of this translinguistic entity will be further discussed in our next section.

This much seems to be certain so far, namely that the only entities involved in this stage of Plato's discussion of the correctness of name are the 'stable characteristics' of the things occurring in the outside world which are to be named. So the later doctrine of Unchangeable Forms has been prepared here as it was in the earlier stage of the discussion, at 390D–E and 391A–B, and was even more explicitly formulated as early as 386D9–E4 where Socrates infers from the foregoing discussion that it is manifest that "things have their own proper and stable being-ness (*ousian*), not with regard to us or influenced by us, fluctuating according to our fancy; no, they are by themselves, only related to their own being (*ousian*) prescribed by nature" (*hêiper pephyken*).

However, I fully agree with Luce (among others) that the *Cratylus* constitutes an important stage in the development of Plato's thought about Transcendent Forms, but a stage distinctly prior to the position reached in the *Phaedo*. Luce rightly rejects (21–2) any interpretation which claims that the *eidê* of the *Cratylus* are as 'separated' as those of *Phaedo* and *Republic*. He has successfully argued (23–36) that there is no trace of separated Forms in the *Cratylus* but the stage is set for this doctrine to appear. He writes (36):

> The logical function which, at 389A5–390E4 *eidos* had acquired in his dialectic of definition is combined with the Socratic doctrine of functional excellence (*ergon* and *eupraxia*). The

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e.g. Calvert, 26–34; Derbolav [1972:84], Gaiser, 41 and Rehn, 18–21) is not correct either. For that matter, Calvert is surely right in distinguishing between *eidos* and *physis* of 'shuttle' and 'name', but he is entirely mistaken when he thinks we have *accordingly* to distinguish between 'Form' and 'Proper Form' in the way he does (I quote his exposition on p. 34): "Plato seems to characterise the Form as that which is contemplated and, I am inclined to think, separate and disembodied, as opposed to the Proper Form which can be, and is, embodied. It could be that there is the beginning of an exploration of the notion that the Proper Form acts as a link between this world and the world of Forms. However he [Plato] only concerns himself here with terms such as "shuttle" and "name", which have a strongly functional flavour. It is difficult to be sure what Plato would reply, if we asked what were some possible Proper Forms of more typical transcendental entities like *auto kalon* or *auto agathon*." The fact that the Proper Form is not taken up again at the end of the dialogue inclines Calvert to the opinion that "the distinction of which Plato himself may have been only half aware, merely reflects bewilderment in his thought at the time of writing the *Cratylus*". — For the intrinsic invalidity of any such interpretation procedure, see above, 0.2, n. 23.

eidos then becomes the norm of craftmanship and .... is on the way to becoming a substantial *paradeigma en têi physei*.

Similarly at 439B10–440D7 'stable natures' are contrasted with the Flux doctrine fathered by Heraclitus, developed by his school, and apparently justified by the linguistic speculations of Cratylus. Those natures are invested with the character of permanence, but this does surely not imply, at the time, that they are detached from the transient world as 'separate' Entities (see *ibid.*).

13.32. *The Pivotal Role Of The 'Significate'*

Maurice Leroy is perfectly right in observing (148–9) that the fundamental (and exordial, see *Cratylus*, 383A) question raised in the *Cratylus* is that of the relationship of *significans* and *significatum* ('signifiant' – 'signifié'), as had been clearly shown before by Pagliaro (184 ff.). Most unfortunately Leroy did not fully exploit this view nor see the philosophical impact of the findings of Pagliaro, who successfully linked Plato's view of 'name' to the later Stoic distinction between meaning and referent (*tynchanon*).

Gaiser has pointed out (39–40) Socrates' numerous attempts to determine the entities designated by a name. They are called *pragmata* or *onta* ('things', 'beings' = 'entities' or 'things there are') and the terms are indiscriminately used by Socrates to mean things appearing in our transient world or just their substantial natures as conceived of. In fact, Socrates does acknowledge the phenomenal origin of many names coined by the name-givers. Moreover, the mental process which led them to their activities is surely not confined to the highest form of knowledge and indiscriminately described by terms such as 'seeing' (*horôntes*; 397D), 'opinion' (*doxa*; 401A–B), 'they meant' (401D and 436B, where *hêgeisthai* is used as *oiesthai* at 440C–D) but as well by 'insight', as at 397D and 399D (where *(kata)noein* is used), or 401A–B and 439C (where *dianoia* and *katagignôskein* are found).

However, Gaiser did not clearly distinguish between Socrates' description of the facts (or supposed facts) and his evalution of them. As is easily seen from the first passage (411B–C; quoted above, 13.2) Socrates was not content with the situation and was himself rather inclined to refer our imposition and use of names to 'what the things named just *are*' or their nature; so e.g. 393B–394E where their *genos* and *ousia* are taken into consideration, or at 423C–424A where their *ousia* is mentioned as the most important entity as far as name-giving is concerned. A similar approach is brought even more into relief at 430A–435C where the definitive introduction of the 'true natures' (at 439C–D) is prepared.

We may safely draw the conclusion that, from the very outset of the dialogue, Plato is involved in a continuous attempt to comprehend the exact nature of the extralinguistic entity to which we refer in using names. The present section aims to show that in the *Cratylus* Plato was the first to discover the pivotal role of what, from the Stoa onwards[48], was called the *significatum* (*sêmainomenon*; 'significate')

[48] The Stoic logicians in fact considered three 'things' to be involved in speech: (1) what is conveyed by the linguistic sign, viz. the word's *sêmainomenon* or *significatum*, (2) the linguistic sign itself (*to sêmainon* or *significans*), and (3) the 'referent' (object or event) that happens to be designated by the word (*to tynchanon*). See Sextus Empiricus, *Adv. Math.* VIII, 11 and Kretzmann's useful exposition [1967:364] and that by Pagliaro [1956:70 ff.]. See also Kahn [1973]. It should be noted that the verb *tynchanein* (*lit.* 'to happen to be somewhere') connotes the casualness of the *sêmainon* happening to designate (this time) *this* particular thing instead of many others, rather than refers to the contingent nature of the thing designated, as it is often interpreted. Just like the two other technical terms *sêmainon* and *sêmainomenon* the term *tynchanon* has a logico-semantic sense, rather than an ontological one. Nuchelmans is quite right in observing (70) that since the Stoics could not use the word *pragma* (the Stoic sense of which is: 'something *thought*', especially the action or passion *thought*) in the way it was commonly used in Greek, for the thing denoted, they introduced the term '*tynchanon*'. He thinks that some ancient evidence (e.g. Clement of Alexandria, *Stromateis* VIII, 9, 26, 5) suggests that they took the word in the sense of 'that which gets the name' (from *tynchanein* = 'obtain', 'meet with').

and that his rejection of both Hermogenes' view and that defended by Cratylus is based wholly on their failure to recognise that role.

As has been remarked before (above 13.3) Plato's own position cannot be properly called a compromise between Hermogenes' 'conventionalism' and Cratylus' 'naturalism'. He prefers to settle the original question about the correctness of names by inquiring into the subject matter from his own philosophical point of view. We need not be surprised, then, that when searching for the referential framework of names, the true and stable nature of things forms the focus of his interest. One would do better to consider, therefore, his criticism of the two rival views along this line.

Kretzmann has rightly observed [1971:127; see above, 13.3] that Hermogenes' answer to the main question of the correctness of name is that names are only correct 'conventionally', and that the users of names are the ultimate arbiters of their correctness, regardless of any consideration of the nature of the *bearers* of the names. It is now easy to see that Hermogenes' omission of the phenomenal thing's 'natures' from consideration is bound to provoke Plato's criticism. He cannot possibly agree with Hermogenes that, in point of (linguistic) fact, there is nothing except names *used* and phenomenal things which are actually designated by them, so that only operative criteria of correctness were involved, namely convention and agreement. The main tenor of Socrates' attack is to shift the emphasis of the discussion from the users to the bearers of names, or from the names as used to the names as taken on their own. The actual defeat of Hermogenes' position is accomplished as early as 386D–E, where he feels himself obliged to reject any subjectivism as far as the things themselves are concerned:

> *Cratylus*, 386D8–E4: But if it is neither the case that all things equally belong to all men at the same moment and always nor that each of them is proper to each man individually, it is evident that things *are* while having some fixed being-ness (*ousian*) of their own, which is not relative to us or caused by us while swaying one way and another according to our imagination (*phantasmati*); no, ‹they are› on themselves, behaving (*echonta*), with regard to their own being-ness (*ousian*) according their proper nature (*hêiper pephyken*).

In fact Hermogenes cannot help entering the rival camp in that from now on the line of argument concentrates on the bearers of names, instead of their imposers and users. This gives Plato, as in Cratylus' case, the opportunity to denounce the real shortcoming of both Hermogenes' and Cratylus' views, namely that they ignore the fundamental role of the 'significate'.

2) Let us consider, now, the opposite view in this regard. Cratylus is of the opinion that no name is better (more suited to do its special job, that is) than another, just as no law is better than another. They are true names *or* not names at all. Whoever designates him, Cratylus — he says — with the name, 'Hermogenes' is not using a false (incorrect) name; rather he is not naming him at all and, accordingly, not using a name either. Being a name implies *per se* being rightly imposed, as is most clearly stated at 429B10–11. To him any name *is* just a deictic function; whenever it does not do its job, it is not at all.

It is most remarkable that, in the case of pictures, Cratylus recognises some significative entity apart from the picture taken materially, to the extent that, then, wrong assignment is possible. However, in the case of using names, he argues, no wrong assignment is possible (430D; see above, 13.2). But, for the sake of argument, Cratylus is ready to agree, for a while, to admit that there is something like an incorrect assignment of names (431A6–E8). The tenor of the putative agreement between Socrates and Cratylus is that the former has the opportunity to spell out all views implied by the position (supposedly) agreed. At 431E9 Cratylus abruptly terminates the agreement and goes back to his obstinate thesis that there are no incorrect names. Even if we only add, or substract, or misplace a letter, the name is not so much written wrongly, it rather is not written at all, and, in point of fact, becomes something other than a name.

It is quite evident that Cratylus makes every effort to evade the assumption of an entity other than the name or the phenomenal thing designated by it; in his view, if no phenomenal thing is actually designated, there is no act of naming at all and what looks like a 'name' is, in fact, nothing but a meaningless sound. Socrates, for his part, sees certain weak spots in Cratylus' position. He rightly emphasises that 'perfect imitation' is a self-destructive idea; the 'perfect name' would then be a perfect, or exact, representation of the phenomenal thing; which would be absurd, for perfect names would be the doubles of the things named and no one would be able to distinguish between the thing named (*to men auto*) and the name (432D5–9). Therefore Cratylus should acknowledge that it is the thing that is still being named (*onomazesthai*) and described (*legesthai*) as long as the distinctive character (*ho typos*) of the thing about which one is talking is retained (432E5–7).

This attack ought have brought Cratylus to the insight that there is something inbetween 'name' and 'phenomenal thing named' which is able to correct the shortcomings of a linguistic expression considered materially (German: *Lautgebilde*). However, Cratylus' obstinacy cannot help prevent him from seeing this and he declares, again, (433C8–10) that he cannot be satisfied that a name which is incorrectly given is a name at all.

Next, Socrates undertakes a new assault, starting, this time, from a name's representative function (433D ff.). He succeeds in making Cratylus concede that names could never resemble (i.e. represent by likeness) any object unless their original elements bore some degree of resemblance of their own to the corresponding objects (434B4–7). When asked what is the force of names and their use Cratylus replies: to inform (435D4). This answer at long last gives Socrates the opportunity to introduce the name's descriptive force and to dispose of Cratylus' exclusive attention to its deictic function. The poor fellow had himself laid the axe to the tree's roots by clarifying the informative character of a name with the addition (435D5–6): "he who knows names the things (*ta pragmata*) also knows". Socrates makes the most of this chance and suavely pegs him on his generous statement: "I suppose you mean to say, Cratylus, something like this (*to toionde*) that as the name is, so also is the thing and that he who knows the one will also know the other .... and whoever knows the names will also know the things" (435D7–E4). Cratylus walks into the trap, quite unaware of the unavoidable outcome and readily answers that Socrates is quite right. However, once he has ascribed some informative force to the name as such (as a lexical item, that is, quite apart from its being used), Cratylus is forced to consider what is the nature of this information about things which is inherent to names, and to do this, to be sure, with Socrates' willing guidance (435E6–9).

The reintroduction of the name-givers (437E–438A) who indeed coined names for subsequent use and could not, accordingly, have any knowledge of subsequent phenomenal things except for their 'stable nature' as such (which, admittedly, they used to describe as 'in constant flux'; see above, 13.2), reinforces Socrates' attempt to devote his whole attention, now, to what ought to be considered the true nature of a thing. Well, they must have known the thing's nature in order to coin its proper name and, therefore, before the name had come into existence (438B–C). And the criterion proper for correctly coining names must be the things' 'true natures' devoid of any Heraclitean instability (439A–440D).

It should be borne in mind that Plato has only implicitly turned attention from the name's deictic force (Hermogenes) or function (Cratylus) to its descriptive force. In fact, it is the thing's true and stable nature that is at the focus of his attention throughout the entire dialogue. However, he tries to direct our attention to those imperishable and 'unmoving' entities (whether or not they should be already taken as real Platonic Forms as in the classic dialogues, *Phaedo* etc.)[49] in

[49] For the discussion, see Guthrie V, 22, n. 1 where some recent literature is also mentioned. I agree with Ross, and Luce who thinks [1965:21] that the *Cratylus* represents a stage in Plato's development distinctly prior to the position reached in the *Phaedo*. To my mind the opponents of this view fail to see the important difference between 'considering on itself' (*kath' hauto* etc.) and ontological 'separation'. See above, Ch. II. — Kahn's position seems to be a little bit ambiguous on this score. He finds [1973:162–5] the Platonic Forms, Shuttle and Name in the *Cratylus* and even sees (175) the occurrence of the Platonic Form of Piety as early as in the *Euthyphro*, but, nonetheless, thinks (168) that "the philosophic function of the dialogue is not to state this doctrine but to *prepare for its statement by clearing the scene* (my italics) of those theories of language and reality that could be regarded as the chief rivals of Plato's own view".

clarifying the *descriptional* shortcomings of names. In other words: whenever an object, say, an actual tree, is designated by the word *dendron*, the designation of the individual object is easily accomplished such that the deictic function of the name has been successfully accomplished. However, any information which the word may supply about the object's true and stable nature will depend on the word's fitness as a name to correctly describe that nature, quite regardless of its successful designation of the object according to its mere individuality ('this *thing* named tree'). Plato is of the opinion, then, that the name cannot supply any real information unless it refers to the object's true and stable nature taken as such.

That is the philosophical outcome of the dialogue, no doubt the only one intended by its author[50]. From the linguistic, or rather semantic, point of view, however, the most important result of the discussions is Plato's recognition of the name's *descriptive* force, which belongs to what Kretzmann[51] has called 'the model correct name', introduced by Plato as early as at 389D ff. (see above, 13.31). Indeed, this translinguistic entity is nothing but a name's 'significate'[52].

No doubt, the discussions in the *Cratylus* were of paramount importance in the development of the theory of Transcendent Forms, although it is true that Plato's position is not yet that of *Phaedo* and *Republic*[53] (see above, 13.2). It may well have been *that* singling out of the decisive role of the 'significate' that impelled Plato to make a sharper distinction and stronger opposition between a particular thing and its nature *as such*, represented by the name's 'significate' and led him, as an ultimate consequence of doing so, to hypostatise the logico-semantic significate as a metaphysical Transcendent Entity, existing on its own in a Separate World.

Levinson seems to be quite right in asserting (282) that "from the position so emphatically asserted at the end of the *Cratylus*, Plato never for a moment withdrew: language is no oracle, no fountain of verity in its own right. The wisdom of words is vicarious only". As to the epistemological digression of *Epist.* VII, he does not see any basic disagreement on this score: "the Letter is preaching good Platonic doctrine when it warns us, with one hand, against confusing the word itself with the reality of which we are in search, while with the other it directs us to the word, and especially to the living, spoken word, as to an indispensable aid — in short, in total agreement with the *Cratylus*, it reaffirms faith in the word as the "didactic and diacritic tool" of thought" (283–4).

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[50] As is rightly stressed by several scholars; among them Kretzmann [1971:130–1] and Kahn [1973²] who holds (152–3) the *Cratylus* to be really concerned with the "sign function of language".

[51] The reader is once more referred to Kretzmann's clear exposition of Plato's doctrine, esp. 127–31.

[52] See also Gaiser, 41 and 90. Of course, for Plato — who was first and foremost a metaphysician rather than a logician — the translinguistic entity is an *ontic* one, in any final analysis (from *Phaedo*, *Republic* and *Phaedo* onward, that is) the Platonic Form itself. From the semantic point of view one needs not go beyond the Platonic Form *considered in its mental status* and may define the translinguistic entity as the name's connotation or intension, being the set of notions pertaining to any thing to which a given name is correctly applied. So Kahn [1973²] is not entirely correct in taking (173) the Form to be "the sense of a predicate" or "a model for true predication or for the correct application of a name" (175), nor in saying (on account of *Protag.* 349B–C; see below, 14.2; 16.12) (175) that "the sense or signification of a given term will always be a Form, but the denotation or extension will consist of (A) those Forms "contained" in the first Form as parts, and (B) those particulars which *participate* (his italics) in the Form". As a matter of fact, a significate must not be identified with a Transcendent Form but with that Form (or the corresponding immanent form) as conceived of, that is, in its mental status.

[53] For the connection in this regard between *Cratylus* and *Phaedo–Republic*, see Festugière's discussion of *noêton* and *nous* (94 ff.).

Chapter fourteen

NAMING AND REPRESENTING

14.0. Plato's semantics centres around the notions, *onoma*, *rhêma* and *logos*. Of them, *onoma* may be considered the key notion as it is the key ingredient in the other two. So one has to start from Plato's view of *onoma* as it is found, either explicit or implicit, in his works.

14.1. *The Representative Nature Of Onomata*

As we have already seen (above, 13.11), Plato takes the general condition which any name must satisfy, viz. that it be the sign of an extralinguistic entity, to be the proper nature of a name; in his own words, this is 'just that which a name is' (*auto ekeino ho estin onoma*)[1]. So his recognition of the sign relation between an onoma and 'its' extralinguistic entity is beyond all doubt. However, two questions, at least, may arise: (1) what should one understand by 'its'?; (2) what is the nature of the representation involved?; in modern terms, does Plato have any notion of the deictic function of names *as opposed* to their descriptional function[2]? The first question concerns the main discussion of the *Cratylus*, viz. the correctness of names, which has been the subject of our earlier consideration (see above, 13.2–13.3). We have to deal now with the nature of the representation the name performs.

To begin with, Plato clearly distinguishes 'name' and 'thing'. It would be ridiculous, Socrates remarks (432D5–10), if the names were exactly the same as their objects and difficult to distinguish from them, for they would be their 'doubles' and nobody would be able to determine which were the names and which the

[1] *Crat.*, 389D6–7. The formula does not refer to any Platonic Form, NAME but only posits a name's proper character; see above, 13.31.

[2] I have 'deictic' where others prefer to speak of 'referential', 'denotative', 'extensional' (the area of Frege's 'Bedeutung'), and 'descriptional' where others have 'connotative', 'significative' (in its strict sense), 'intensional', corresponding to the semantic field of Frege's 'Sinn'. The main reason for doing so is my preference for considering names as *names used* rather than as lexical items; see also below, 15.1 and 15.32.

objects. Therefore they must be different entities and the question of their correctness amounts to a request for a clarification of the relation between the two, the sign and the object signified. Plato seems to be fully aware of the sign relation. One has only to recall the numerous places throughout his works where he uses formulas such as 'to assign (a name)' (*epipherein*; *(epi)tithenai*), or 'being assigned' (*epikeisthai*), or 'call (some thing) by means of a name' (*prosagoreuein*); some clarificatory examples will be given below[3]. For that matter, the whole issue of the correctness of names arises from the fact that the name has such a relation to extralinguistic entities.

Of course, the idea also clearly occurs in Plato's definition of *onoma* in the famous *Cratylus* passage. It is most significantly introduced by a discussion of the instrumental character of onoma as compared with that of a shuttle (*kerkis*). Socrates remarks that that which has to be named, has to be named 'by means of something' (387E4) and one comes to agree (388A6–8) that this instrument is an *onoma* ('name'). Next, Socrates tries to come closer to what exactly a name is, by inquiring what we are doing when we actually *use* names: "the name being an instrument, what do we do when we name?", he asks. Hermogenes does not know what to say and Socrates sets out to explain it himself:

> *Cratylus*, 388B10–C1: ‹when we name› are we not teaching something (*didaskomen ti*) to one another and discerning things (*diakrinomen ta pragmata*) according to their mode of being[4]? — Surely we do. — Well then, a name is an instrument of teaching[5] and of discerning ‹the things'› being-ness [*tês ousias ‹tôn pragmatôn›*, mentioned before].

Finally, at 388C7–8, it is stated that using a name well (*kalôs*) is the same as using it 'informatively' (*lit.* didactically, *didaskalikôs*). It is important to bear in mind that the verb *didaskein* (and its cognates) has the connotation of 'leading to true insight', as is clear from the findings of structural semantics[6].

The same point is taken up at 423B, where Socrates starts again with our desire

[3] It is evident that the assignment of names is, as such, independent of any special theory of the correctness of (the assignment of) names, such as Cratylus' 'naturalism' or Hermogenes' 'conventionalism', since the fundament proper of the assignment ('nature' or 'mere convention') is left out of consideration here.

[4] *lit.*: "along the lines they behave" (*hêi echei*). Notice that the Greek has *echei* ('behave'), not *estin* ('are') which seems to imply that the ontic conditions of things as existing in the transient world are under discussion rather than their (transcendent) natures as such. So what is under discussion here is the thing's *immanent* forms, as is usual in the earlier dialogues. See above 2.12 and 2.2.

[5] 'instrument of teaching'; the Greek text has *ti didaskalikon* ('something didactic'), where, of course, the Greek formula cannot stand for 'teaching something' as at 388B10, since *tinos* would then be required instead of *ti*; cf. the genitive case *ousias* after *diakritikon* at C1.

[6] See Lyons [1963], who points out (151) the semantic relation of consequence between *didaskein* and *epistasthai* and refers to *Euthyphro*, 4C–5A; 9C; 12E; 14C; *Apol.*, 33A–B; *Charmides*, 155C–157B; *Laches*, 181E–182E; 184B; 188B–189A; *Protag.*, 350A–E; *Gorg.*, 514B; *Meno*, 70A; 81C; 85D–E; 89D–97B; *Euthyd.*, 276A–277C; *Crat.*, 391B–C; 427E; 435E–436A; *Phaedo*, 73B–C; *Symp.*, 187D; 196D–197B; *Rep.* I, 338B and 344D; III, 392D–E; *Phaedrus*, 268C–269B; *Parm.*, 135A–B; *Theaet.*, 163B–D; 198B–D; *Philebus*, 16E; *Laws* IV, 720B; VI, 763B; VII, 813B and 820B–D; XII, 949B. See also Lyons [1963], 184; 187.

"to disclose ‹anything› (*dêloun*), either by voice, or tongue, or mouth", where "the disclosure (*dêloma*) takes place whenever, in any given instance, an imitation (*mimêma*) is accomplished by these means" (423B4–7). The suggestion is made, then, by Socrates that the name should be "a vocal imitation of that which is imitated and whoever imitates with his voice, *names* that which he imitates" (423B9–10). The definition is rejected by Socrates himself as it starts from too vague a notion of 'imitation'. Another attempt at defining the name and the act of naming seems to come nearer to the mark: what one is supposed to be imitating in coining and using names is the 'essential nature' of things (in Plato's words: their 'being-ness'):

Cratylus, 423E1–424A1: Here is another point. Has not each thing being-ness (*ousian*), just as it has colour and the other qualities we just mentioned? Indeed, have not colour itself[7] and sound itself each of them being-ness, primarily[8], and anything else as well which deserves this appellation, 'being' (*prosrhêseôs, tou einai*)? Well, then, if someone were able to imitate just that (*auto touto*), ‹a thing's› being-ness (*tên ousian*) by means of letters and syllables, he would disclose each thing in its being[9], would he not?

Later on, in his discussion with his other interlocutor, Cratylus, the definition is confirmed: "Do we assert that the correctness of names consists in showing (*endeixetai*) how a thing is?; might we say that this has been successfully (*hikanôs, lit.* 'coming to the point') asserted? [Cratylus agrees.] Names, then, are assigned in order to teach (*didaskalias heneka*)? Surely" (428D9–E6).

14.2. *Does Plato Know Of An Extensional Approach?*

As is easily seen from these passages, for Plato, the representative character of a name is the decisive constituent in its being a name. Yet, when Plato seems to speak of the dual function of names used (see esp. *Crat.*, 388B10 ff.), one might think, at first glance at least, that he contradistinguishes the descriptional disclosure ('sense') and the deictic one ('reference') (whether or not in terms of teaching and discerning). Such a view, however, would be entirely mistaken. As a matter of fact, in *Cratylus*, 388B10 ff., Plato enumerates the two important aspects of any act of naming things, namely giving information by discerning the characteristics of 'the things that are' (*ta onta* or *ta pragmata*) or, if you want to be closer to Plato's formula, by discerning them according to their (different and, by that, discernable) modes of being.

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[7] In adding *auto* (itself) to 'colour' (and 'sound', *apo koinou*) Socrates does not refer to some Platonic Forms; this use of *auto* is quite common in Greek to contradistinguish two things related in some way or another, e.g. of a warrior: his fightingkit and the man *himself*. (See above, 12.42, n. 5.) So here colour and sound are opposed to things having a colour and things vocally imitated. A nice parallel is found in *Crat.*, 432D5–9 where the name is opposed to the thing named (*to men auto*, lit. 'the thing itself').

[8] The Greek has the adjective noun *prôton* which is predicatively used (*lit.* 'as its very first thing').

[9] '*hekaston ho estin*, where the phrase is epexegetically added to the main verb *dêloi* ('discloses'). For this construction, see below, 16.21, n. 22.

This does not imply, of course, that Plato was not aware, say that a name's deictic function is not quite the same thing as its descriptional function. What counts is, however, that the two functions are always completely interwoven. A few examples will suffice to make this clear.

At *Charmides*, 163D after he has mentioned the endless distinctions which Prodicus used to draw concerning names Socrates generously remarks that he does not object to Critias imposing on names any signification he pleases, if only the man will tell him to what he applies those names (*eph' ho ti an pherêis toùnoma ho ti an legêis*; D6–7). One might think, then, that Socrates would be satisfied if the names used perform their deictic function (i.e. do refer, at least, to some particular(s) in the transient world). However, from what immediately follows it is easy to see that Socrates' generosity is still focused on the application of a name to some 'significate', ('F-ness'), quite irrespectively of the existence of particulars having the property *F*. "Do you mean, Socrates asks Critias, that this 'doing' or 'making', or whatever appellation you would use (*onomazein*), of good things is temperance?" (163E1–2). Apparently, the name's descriptional use is under consideration here, not its deictic force, by which it designates this or that actual thing.

One might say the same thing in emphasising that the clear occurrences of an extensional approach (class-inclusion) in Plato are always such that the descriptive force of the name is not only involved but even quite essential.

We have to establish, first, whether or not Plato recognised something like what moderns label 'the extensional use' of a term. As a matter of fact Kahn is of the opinion [1973:174] that Plato does not systematically develop the idea of reference, denotation, or extension of a given name, but that we can construct a quasi-Platonic theory of denotation from a few passages in his work. He admits (*ibid.*) that there are in fact many passages in which Plato clearly describes extensional relations, though he still does not develop a general theory of extension. I think that Kahn is mistaken in that he seems to confound Plato's being aware of the phenomenon of 'class inclusion' with his giving it any weight, from the philosophical point of view. Plato does do the first, but without the slightest evidence that he be inclined to do the second.

The standard cases in which Plato is sharply aware of a name's deictic force (and use) are naturally found whenever, in the early dialogues, Socrates urges his interlocutor not to provide one or more examples of particulars having a certain property, but to say what exactly the property itself is, considered (for the sake of discussion) separately from its instances. In all such cases he seems to ask for the logical concept which covers all instantiations of the property under discussion as opposed to the concept's extension or denotation. So at *Euthyphro*, 6D9–E6 'that precisely in virtue of which all holy things are holy' should be defined and, thus, a model (*paradeigma*) could be furnished which can help us to correctly apply the name 'holy'. Kahn is of the opinion (175) that "it would surely not be a very great distortion to interpret him as saying that the Form signified by 'holy' (Kahn has: "pious") determines a class of actions that are "of this sort" (*ho men an toiouton êi*), such that the sentence "A is pious" is true if and only if "A" designates an action or a type of action falling within that class". To my mind, however, this would

indeed represent "a very great distortion" of what Plato means to say. I will not insist that Kahn introduces here the Platonic Form PIETY, where only a Socratic immanent characteristic is meant, both suitable and sufficient for Socratic identification and definition (see above, 2.2). The distortion rather consists in interpreting Plato as saying (or at least implying) that to assert (which he actually does) that some particular holy action has the specific (immanent) form, 'holyness', is the same as saying that the concept of 'holy' determines a class of actions that are of this sort. Such an equation would confound the assignment of a metaphysical (immanent) cause with mere class inclusion. For Socrates–Plato (in the early dialogues), to point out a thing's characteristic eidos *is* to explain that thing's being; to refer to its being included (i.e. being found) in a certain class of things would provide no explanation at all in their view. Plato, it should always be borne in mind, is bent on teaching what is the real nature of things in the transient world, and definitely not on providing mankind with a practical rule of thumb for assuring the correct application of names, so that "if you apply the name 'holy' to some thing included in the class of holy things, you will be right". A discussion of the other examples of class inclusion (adduced, for the greater part, by Kahn; 174–6) will provide some more support to my view.

Our *Euthyphro* passage may be compared to *Meno*, 72C. There Socrates asks Meno to tell him which identical character (*eidos*) the different virtues all have in common which makes them virtues and clarifies his question by adding: "that is, what might to be kept in mind by anyone who is to answer the man who asked him to *disclose that* (*ekeino dêlôsai*) which is virtue?" (C6–9). It is obvious that the question to be considered here is the ontological question of what precisely virtue is, rather than some logical one concerning the correct application of the name 'virtue'. This is admitted by Kahn, who refers to *Meno*, 74D where Socrates deals explicitly with the correct application of a single name ('geometrical figure') to a number of different cases, such that he seems to primarily have 'class inclusion' in mind. As in the *Euthyphro* passage Socrates declines exemplification as a substitute for definition and tries to prevent Meno from following the wrong procedure by referring to our use of a common name ('figure') for all those particulars, 'the straight ‹line›, 'the curved ‹line›', and so on:

Meno, 74D5–E2: We always arrive at a plurality ‹of particulars›, but that is not the kind of answer I want. But since you name (*prosagoreueis*) these many particulars by some common name (*heni tini onomati*) and say that each of them is a figure, even though each of them is the contrary of the other, — tell me what this is which embraces the curved line as well as the straight one and which apparently (*ho dê*) you call 'figure', while saying that the curved line is a figure as much as the straight one.

It is easy to see, indeed, that the 'common thing' (designated by the common name) is here introduced from the viewpoint of class inclusion. However, the approach still is basically intensional, as may be seen from what follows, when Socrates suggests an inference which entirely bears on the common name's descriptive force: "And does your saying *that* imply your asserting that the curved line is no more curved than straight and the straight line is as much curved as straight?" (E4–6). After Meno has energetically rejected this conclusion, Socrates sticks to

the initial idea of the common name and heading but, most significantly, does so in an intensional setting: "Yet do you assert, at least, that the curved line is no more a figure than the straight one, and the other way around?" (E8–9). After Meno's agreement Socrates attempts, again, to obtain the answer he was after at the outset. It should be noticed that the logical question (of the application of the common name) has entirely been eclipsed by the ontological issue:

74D11–75A7: Then what is this thing the name of which is 'figure'? Try to tell me. If when asked this question either about figure or colour you said: "but I don't understand what you are after, man, nor do I know what you mean", our man surely would be surprised and say: "Don't you see that I am looking for what, given all these cases (*epi pasin toutois*), is the same thing (*tauton*)?". Would you even so be unable to reply, if the question was: "what is, in the case of the curved line and the straight one as well, as in all other instances that you call 'figures', the same thing common to all (*tauton epi pasin*)?" Try to answer that.

The same may be said of the striking parallel found in *Sophist*, 250B9–10 where Rest and Change are taken as being 'embraced by Being', which is clearly associated by our applying the name 'being' to them (*proseipas*; B11) and, further, in *Sophist*, 253D7 where a number of distinct Forms are said to be 'completely embraced by a single Form'. Surely the two passages speak of a higher genus embracing a plurality of lower genera and species. However, this typically logical way of speaking not only reflects an ontological situation where several immanent forms are mixed up together, but is also found in a context of a prevailingly ontological character, such that it only acts as far as our thinking (by means of 'forms' in their mental status) about the immanent forms and the instances partaking in the Transcendent Forms is concerned. (See above, Chs VII–IX.) Just as it is the ontological (or rather, metaphysical) situation which is primarily under discussion there, rather than just our conception of it, so the logical aspect of class inclusion is not at the forefront of Plato's interest. Again, being logically included in a genus does not explain anything in Plato's view. What counts is ontological participation.

In another passage of the same dialogue a similar interwovenness of the seeming extensional approach with the intensional one is found in rather a short formula: "Suppose one of this company were pressed to concentrate his mind, and say to what this name 'that–which–is–not' (*to mê on*) can be applied. *What* and *what sort of thing* (*eis ti kai epi poion*) do you think would be concerned in his own thinking as well as his disclosure to the questioner?" (237B10–C4). An ambivalence of the sort occurs in what follows where the Eleatic Visitor states that at any rate the term 'what is not' must not be applied to anything of the things that *are* and, since it cannot be applied to what is, neither can it properly be applied to that "something".

Kahn refers [1973:174] to two passages in the *Protagoras* where the sign relation of names is discussed in connection with a problem that, he thinks, "can easily be reformulated in terms of denotational or extensional relations between Forms". In *Protag.*, 329C and 349B the famous question is dealt with of whether 'justice', 'temperance', 'holiness', 'courage' and 'wisdom' are five different names for just

one and the same thing, virtue. Or "is virtue a single whole such that justice, temperance, and so on are parts (*moria*) of it?" (329C1–D1); in the words of the latter passage (349B3–5): "is there for each of the five names a (corresponding) proper being-ness and content[10] (*hypokeitai tis idios ousia kai pragma*) each having its own 'power' (*dynamin*)?". On the first alternative there is a case of synonymy: five names for one thing. That is clear enough. But is Kahn right in asserting (174) that on the second alternative we have as it were five distinct Forms lying within the extension of a single Form, Virtue, or rather of the corresponding name 'virtue'? Kahn continues (*ibid.*) then:

> In this context, then, we can clearly distinguish the name "virtue", the single Form which it signifies (in Fregean terms, its *Sinn*), and five other Forms which, on one of the views considered here, constitute the denotation or extension (*Bedeutung*) of that name and Form. The statement that justice is (a) virtue is true just because Justice lies within the extension of (is a *morion* of) Virtue. *What is interesting is that in this case we can draw the name–sense–denotation distinction without any reference to sensible particulars* (italics mine).

Kahn's final remark is somewhat surprising. Socrates' suggestion has definitely nothing to do with class-inclusion as a relation between Transcendent Forms. As was the case in the *Euthyphro* passage just mentioned (6D9–E6) the only extension under consideration concerns particulars which have (or partake in) some *eidos* in common with other particulars. In fact the 'part of' view is clarified by Socrates' remark (349C2–5) that the five (noble properties) are all parts of virtue, "not like the parts of a lump of gold, all homogeneous with one another and with the whole of which they are parts, but *like the parts of a face*, resembling neither the whole nor each other and each having its proper *dynamis*".

Could Plato have used a better means of making it clear to us that there is no trace of modern class inclusion, or any predicative relation, since, if so, one could say 'the eye is face', 'the nose is face', and so on. It must also be obvious that Protagoras' evasive reply (at 349D2–9) clearly shows that he takes Socrates to mean ontic 'coincidence' (if you like, 'occurring together') rather than logical 'class inclusion', since he tries to make it clear to Socrates that courage is not a part of 'virtue' (on the Socratic interpretation), with the argument that "you can find

[10] My rendering of *pragma*, which here does surely not mean 'thing in the outside world' taken as such. *Pragma* as opposed to 'being-ness' conveys a similar opposition as do 'being-*stone*' and '*being* stone' said of a particular stone. So *pragma* seems to single out some thing's 'being *such-and-such*' whereas 'being-ness' (*ousia*) primarily focuses on its *being* (to Plato: its partaking in Being). In other words: *pragma* is a thing's immanent eidos *as singled out by thought*. The notional side (that immanent eidos in its mental status) is also found in Aristotle, *De interpr.* 12, 21b28, where *ta hypokeimena pragmata* should not be translated as 'the actual things' (Ackrill) but as the 'notional contents' conveyed by the terms used in a statement such as 'A man is white' (namely, 'man' and 'white'). For the correct interpretation, see Nuchelmans, 36. It should be remarked that in *Soph.*, 262E13 *pragma* also stands for the *notion*, 'Theaetetus' (in its representative function, of course) which may be combined with some action (the *notion* of some action, that is). In *Crat.*, 386A2 and E1 *pragma* stands for 'particular thing', as at 390E (and e.g. also *Phaedo*, 103B3) whereas its use in *Sophist*, 244D3 is ambiguous on this score. Rosen [1983:86–9] seems to associate *pragma* with cognition but his exposition is rather confusing, it would seem.

many people who are quite unjust, unholy, intemperate, and ignorant, yet outstandingly courageous".

The foregoing discussion may clarify, once more[11], that Plato is speaking about actual occurrences in the transient world, not interrelations (supposedly) existing between Transcendent Forms. Besides, it should be recalled that (1), in the *Protagoras*, Plato does not make use of the *eidos–idea* terminology, and (2) the *Protagoras* definitely does not yet show any awareness of Transcendent Forms (as Kahn (168) implicitly agrees).

Kahn seems not to be right either in thinking (174) that the term *morion* or *meros* is systematically used in the later dialogues to mean one Form that is included in (the extension of) another. He refers to *Statesman*, 262A–263B. There the Eleatic Visitor warns Socrates (the Younger) when making divisions against breaking off one small portion (of the domain of beings under discussion) and then contrasting it with a plurality of large ones and against going to work without considering the specific form (*eidous chôris*); the portion ought to contain a specific form (262A9–B2). Whoever wants to divide things correctly should proceed according to the specific kinds (*kat' eidê*) and effect a true dichotomy, for example by dividing the human race into male and female (262E3–5). Next he wants to have a closer look at the vital difference between 'part' or 'portion' (*meros*) and *genos* or *eidos* (263A2–4). The Eleatic Visitor thinks it rather difficult to establish that difference precisely and paraphrases it as follows: "whenever there is a form (*eidos*) of something (*tou*), it must be also part (*meros*) of the thing (*pragmatos*) of which it is said to be a form; but ‹the converse is not true as› surely a part is not necessarily a form" (263B8–10).

A part must, for that reason, correspond to a form. But how should we understand such a correspondence? Most obviously the *meros* = *eidos* requirement amounts to the claim that the particulars which make up together some portion all have a certain *eidos* in common that, precisely, make them belong together. That this *eidos* itself 'falls under' another *eidos* (whatever this might mean to Plato!) is quite out of the question.

In *Timaeus*, 83B8 the phrase *koinon onoma* ('common name') is used which, at first glance at least, would suggest an extensional approach. As a matter of fact, it stands there for the name 'bile' meaning all humors to which some physician or other perspicacious man has assigned that common name. However, Plato immediately adds the reason for such a name: that acute man imposed the name because he had the power of seeing in many dissimilar particulars one generic nature (*genos*) which *inheres in them* (*en autois .... enon*) and which deserves to give its name to all[12] those humors. It is, again, a specific nature that justifies the common name and there is no idea of class inclusion at the focus of Plato's interest.

[11] See our discussion of the 'Communion of Forms', above 9.1–9.4.

[12] *axion epônymias pasin*, where *epônymia* is a *nomen actionis*, it would seem, and stands for 'the naming', 'the assignment'. Similar use in *Cratylus*, 395B5 and *Sophist*, 229D6. Cf. Thucydides I, 9: "he obtained the privilege of giving his name to the country".

As to the *Phaedo* passage (102A–103B) it is rightly seen by Kahn that there the semantic theory is "fitted out with its full *ontological framework*" (my italics). Quite surprisingly he goes on to formulate this in terms of denotation or extension, by adding (175): "for each one Form, there is a "many" which participates in this Form and is therefore (correctly) named after it". However, Plato does not speak of "a many" ("a class of things") which were supposed to participate, but, does talk most clearly indeed, of the several particular things (*plural*), as is seen from Phaedo's report (at 102A10–B2: "it was agreed that each of the Forms *be* something, and that the other things, while partaking in them, take the name (*epônymian*) of the Forms themselves". It is the ontic situation which is at the center of Plato's interest, not the assignment of names as such. That is why the remarkable difficulty is raised about Simmias *being* tall and short at the same time, and indeed is solved by an ontological theory (102B–103A). Moreover, Plato makes it sufficiently clear that he is dealing with *particulars* named after the Transcendent Form in which they have a share (at 102A11–B2) as well as the instantiations of that Form which are *immanent in* those particulars, or the corresponding Transcendent Forms, respectively, which may justify any actual use of such a name. On account of an objection which has just been raised (at 103A5–10) Socrates makes great play of opposing the two aspects:

Phaedo, 103B1–8: You do not realise the difference between what is being said now and what was said then. It was said then [102A11–B2] that one opposite (particular) thing (*pragma*) comes to be from another opposite *thing*; what we are saying now is that the opposite character itself (*auto to enantion*) could never come to be its own opposite, whether it be the opposite (characteristic) in us or the opposite in Nature. Then, my friend, we were talking about (particular) things that have opposites, naming them [i.e. those particular things] after their [the opposites'] names; whereas now we are talking about the opposites themselves from whose presence in them the things thus named (*ta onomazomena*) take their names.

Another example is found in *Rep.* X, 596A, where Plato, speaking about imitation (*mimêsis*), makes Socrates propose to use the customary procedure, which is given a semantic formulation:

Rep. X, 596A6–8: We are in the habit, I take it, of positing a single form (*eidos ti hen titesthai*) in the case of the various multiplicities (*peri hekasta ta polla*) to which we apply the same name (*tauton onoma epipheromen*).

As Gallop has rightly observed (96–7), all such passages show a further dimension of the Theory of Forms than the scientific and paradeigmatic ones which form the focus of Plato's interest in *Phaedo*, *Symposion* and *Republic*. The Theory indeed offers also a general account of 'naming' (*(ep)onomazein*, *prosagoreuein etc.*). Forms are, thus, the designata of common substantive and adjective nouns assigned to particulars. Gallop is right to consider the Transcendent Form, *F* ('Whiteness' or 'the White') the prime bearer of the name, "*F*" ("white"). One should add, however, that this does not come down to saying that the immanent form does not have the same role. In fact, each instance of *F* (e.g. a white face) is named after an immanent characteristic ('instantiation'), *f*, which it possesses in partaking in the transcendent Form, *F*. So Plato may quite indiscriminately say that the particular thing in the transient world is named 'the white ‹thing›'[13] after its immanent characteristic (i.e. the whiteness or the white ‹property› in it) or Whiteness. As has been remarked before the proper meaning of the common name is neither the transcendent Form nor its instantiation but 'the significate', which is in fact, the Form (or form) taken in its mental status (see above, 13.32).

In this latter capacity it functions as what later on came to be called a 'universal'. Well, when Plato posits one single form (*eidos ti hen*) "for each plurality of things to which we apply the same name" (*Rep.* X, 596A7–8) the formula is so broad that we may raise serious doubts whether he would seriously have posited transcendent Forms for every item it covers (see Gallop, 96). As we have already seen, Plato did not assume transcendent Forms of artefacts (see above, 13.31). It should be borne in mind, in this connection, that in *Statesman*, 258A12 sharing a (proper) name (*hê klêsis homônymos ousa, kai hê prosrhêsis, lit.* 'the nomination and appellation being homonym' [= 'using the same onoma']) is said to entail some kinship.

So it may be safely assumed that the logical role of the Theory (concerning 'universals') is not only distinct from its metaphysical (including epistemological) function but rather is something of quite another level in having a merely procedural character and fully depends, not on the nature of things but on the peculiarities of human thinking.

One must also explain in this fashion Plato's repeated warning that unless we determine an *eidos* for each thing we will have nowhere to direct our thought and will deprive all discussion of its basis. It is human thought and discourse that demands the mental *eidê*, and, of course, their only real basis, the Transcendent Forms, as far as 'natural things' (as opposed to artefacts) are concerned. Besides the *Cratylus* passage 439D–440B (discussed above, 13.2; 13.32) which may be paralleled to *Sophist*, 249B8–D5 there is the famous *Parmenides* passage where Parmenides, having enumerated "many inevitable difficulties" involved in the Theory of Forms, still hotly defends it remarking that whoever

(*Parmenides*, 135B6–C3) refuses to admit the existence of Forms of the things that are (*eidê tôn ontôn*) or to discern something as the form of each individual (*ti.... eidos henos hekastou*), will have nothing on which to fix his thought (*dianoian*), because he does not allow that the character (*idean*) of each of the things that are is always the same; and in so doing he will completely enervate (lit. 'destroy the power of') all discourse (*dialegesthai*)[14].

It may be said now that there is an *implicit* semantic theory to be found in all these contexts (outside the *Cratylus*). However, the sign relation of names is spelled out throughout in terms of participation or resemblance, as is rightly observed by Kahn, who has to agree (175) that Plato does not speak of sense and denotation but of Forms and participation. Therefore it seems to be somewhat rash to con-

[13] It should be recalled time and again that the Greek only has 'the white' (the neuter '*to leukon*') where English has to use such "tiresome makeweights" (Guthrie V, 404, n. 1) as 'things', 'entities', 'factors' and so on. See also *Index*, s.v. *substantivation*.

[14] Kahn rightly refers [1973:169, n. 22] to *Timaeus*, 51D3–5 where essentially the same assumption figures as a tacit premise in the argument for positing Forms.

clude, with Kahn, that the result of Plato's discussions "may be described as an ontological theory of true naming or true predication" (175). Apart from the rather unfortunate term 'predication' (instead of 'appellation' or 'attribution'), such a reformulation in terms of a semantic theory (which, it should be well noticed, is, as such, perfectly correct, and clarifying Plato's doctrine as well) *could* obscure Plato's real interest, to merely provide a metaphysical theory.

Finally an important passage from the *Parmenides*. When dealing with the second hypothesis regarding the Parmenidean ONE Plato discusses the thesis "A One Entity is like and unlike Itself and the Others" (147C–148D) also from the semantic point of view (147D1–E6). It is quite clear that he treats the name as merely representative of a 'significate' (corresponding to a thing's true nature). The name's deictic function is left out of consideration. He explicitly says that however many times you utter the same word, you must always mean the same thing. It should be noted that the word *prosagoreuein* ('to appellate') is used as well as the phrase *onoma phthengesthai* ('to utter a name'):

Ibid., 147D1–E6: What I mean is this: when you use names, each of them does stand for some thing, does not it? — Yes — You may use it once or many times? — Yes — Well, if just once, do you appellate that whose name it is and is that not the case whenever you use the word many times, *or* do you necessarily mean (*legein*) the same thing (*tauton*) irrespective of your using the same name either once or many times? — Of course. — Therefore also the name 'the different' (*to heteron onoma*) does stand for some thing? — Surely. — So when you utter it, whether once or many times, you are using it for nothing else and with no other meaning (*ouk ep' allôi oude allo ti onomazeis*) than just that thing of which it is the name? — Certainly. — Hence when we name the Other 'the things different from the One' and the One 'the thing different from the Others', we use the word 'different' twice, but nonetheless we always use it for just that Nature (*physei*)[15] whose name it is.

What emerges from all this evidence, which could be easily multiplied, is that, to Plato the only thing that counts is a thing's partaking in some Form (or in the earlier dialogues, its having some immanent characteristic). That it has such a nature in common with other particulars and may be regarded, for that reason, as making up a class together with those other particulars, is of no importance at all. Class inclusion plays no role in Plato's metaphysics nor in his epistemology. It is just a concomitant phenomenon.

For that reason, we shall as interpreters of Plato follow the safe course and give no weight to the modern distinction of sense (connotation) and reference (denotation), let alone to the modern view that it is permissible to regard Plato as having constituted his metaphysics along the lines of an extensional logic. Plato knows only one approach, the strictly intensional one. To express the same in the terms of Plato's definition of onoma (see above, 13.2; 14.1), both the claim of 'teaching' and that of 'discerning being-ness' are concerned with giving information about particular occurrences of natures (immanent forms, being instantiations of Transcendent Forms). For that reason, I cannot wholly agree with Kahn's judgement

[15] For this use of 'Nature' in the designation of Transcendent Forms, see e.g. *Rep.* X, 597B–598A and *Parmenides*, 132D5.

[1973²:166] that: "Plato does not deny that names are descriptions. (He does not assert this either ... He simply makes use of this as an assumption of the theory [of Cratylus] he is refuting.) What he does is to show that names, interpreted as descriptions, may be *false* of the things they signify". I think that this is a mistaken view of Plato. Plato does not distinguish between designation and description and he need not do so either. So he does not *show* something on either interpretation of name. What he does is to give (sometimes explicitly, but mostly only implicitly) his semantic views concerning *onomata*. Well, the most striking feature of that view is the irrelevance of the modern distinction 'denotation-description'. He is aware of both of them, but only as ingredients smoothly mixing together, and surely not as contraries even to the smallest extent. To say it in the terminology which will be introduced in a later section (16.3–16.4): in Plato's view, particular things are not just denoted (or deictically designated), they are *identified* as participata.

14.3. *Plato's View Of The Deictic Force Of Names*

One must not conclude from the foregoing discussion, of course, that Plato ignores the deictic[16] force (and use) of the *names used*. However, it is again easy to see that the deictic function is closely bound up with the descriptional one. According to Plato, whenever a name plays a deictic role it identifies a thing as such-and-such rather than just denotes or indicates it.

Let us start with what may seem the strongest case of deictical use, that of proper names. Plato nowhere makes an explicit distinction between proper names and common ones[17], which is easily explained by the fact that he was never interested in a proper linguistic discussion and his main philosophical topics did not require such explicit distinction. Yet, though he seems to treat (at *Crat.*, 429E) the proper name 'Hermogenes' as referring just to a person, the context is rather complicated by Cratylus' steady refusal to recognise any incorrectness of name. He even seems to reject a successful deictic use of a (proper) name:

Cratylus, 429E3–430A5: If somebody should meet with you in a foreign country, and grasp your hand and say: "Hail, Athenian stranger, son of Smicron, Hermogenes'"[18], — would he by these words ‹.....› name not you but Hermogenes here, or nobody? — To my mind, Socrates, he would be producing these words as just sounds. — Well, *that* answer will do, for whether the speaker would utter them as true or false, or partly true, partly false, *that's* all I want to know.

[16] It should be remarked at the outset that 'deictic' is here used quite loosely to refer to the ostensive function exerted by all kinds of names *used*, not only special words (such as demonstrative pronouns and adverbs or any 'indexical' as is now common practice in linguistics and the modern philosophy of language). As is easily seen the use of 'deictic' should be preferred to 'denotative' as far as Plato is concerned, since expressions such as '*to leukon*' may *deictically* refer to the unique transcendent Form ('the White'), in which case 'denotation' would surely offend modern ears.

[17] See Lorenz and Mittelstrass [1967], 5 and Kahn [1973²], 160, n. 12.

[18] For this formula addressed to Cratylus, see above, 13.2, n. 5.

Socrates apparently tries to get Cratylus to tell him whether, in that supposed situation, these words actually name him, Cratylus, whose hand is so amicably taken and who is, accordingly, the intended addressee, or Hermogenes, not present there, but the actual owner of that name, or perhaps nobody at all, since the combination 'Hermogenes, son of Smicrion' is an empty name, Hermogenes being the son of Hipponicus. As is quite obvious from that, the name used, including the patronymic part, is not a properly deictic tool and its deictic role seems to be almost completely dependent on the concomitant act of taking Cratylus' hand. The issue is still further complicated in that it is normal in Greek literature to regard the proper name as a description, as has been remarked by Luce [1969:225]. "Prometheus" means *fore-sighted* or *thinking ahead*, and when he has signally failed to foresee his own disasters, Aeschylus (*Prometheus*, 856) makes Kratos say "the Gods call you Prometheus by a false name (*pseudônymôs*)"[19].

At any rate our Cratylus passage does not provide us with a clear case of using a proper name. This much seems to be certain, given the repeated rejection by Cratylus of these words as "just a meaningless sound like the noise of hammering on a brass pot" (A4–5), Socrates sets out to find a meeting point by now clearly transferring the discussion to the descriptional domain and the mimetic function of names in general, not proper names in particular. The misuse of 'Hermogenes' for Cratylus even seems to be compared, then, with the misuse of 'man' and 'woman' in a similar social context (431A–B).

In *Cratylus*, 439D it is argued that it is impossible for a thing in continuous flux, first of all, to be designated and, secondly, to be described as such-and-such (439D8–10) "It is not possible, is it, to appellate Beauty Itself, if it is always passing away ‹by saying› first of all that it is *that overthere* (*ekeino*), and, secondly, that it is such-and-such (*toiouton*)?". However, this sentence is explained (in the next line) in mainly intensional terms: "Is not it unavoidable (*anagkê*) that, on the same moment we still are speaking, it becomes different and retires and no longer is in the previous state?"

As to the *Theaetetus* passage (182C–D), Kahn, too, agrees [1973:170] that the distinction between designation and description is blurred in it. Socrates starts there from the assumption that all things are in a state of change and flux and there are two kinds of change, viz. motion and alteration (182C3–7). "Well now, he infers from that (182D1–5), if things only moved, and did not undergo alteration, we could say, surely, that moving things (*ta pheromena*) flow 'qualified in such-and-such ways' (*hoia atta*) ‹.....›. However, since not even *this* stays constant, i.e. the flowing thing flowing *white* (*leukon*[20] *rhein*), but is also subject to change to the extent that (*hôste*) there is flux of that very thing, too, viz. its whiteness, and change to another colour ‹.....›, — well since that is so, can we ever appellate (*proseipein*) [viz. the flowing thing] with any colour name[21] such as to use a correct appellation (*orthôs prosagoreuein*)?".

[19] See also Lorenz and Mittelstrass [1967], 5–6, and Kahn [1973²], 160, n. 12.

[20] The *to* preceding *leukon* does not belong to *leukon* but substantivates the whole phrase and explicitates the foregoing *touto* ('*this*').

[21] *chrôma* as internal object; see above 9.32, n. 4 and below, 15.32; 15.5 and 16.21, n. 19.

Theodorus rightly concludes that this is quite impossible and it must strike us that he phrases his answer in intensional terms only. "Indeed, he says (D6–7), how could this be possible to do so with any such thing (*ti tôn toioutôn*, paralleling *ti chrôma* at D4), given that it is always slipping away while one is speaking, quite understandably so seeing that (*hate dê*) it is in flux?". It should be noted that the phrase 'any such thing' refers, not to any other white (*etc.*) subject but to any other colour (or 'quality'), as may be gathered not only from the parallel to *ti chrôma* (at D4) but also from Plato's use of the term *hypexienai* which (like its synonyms *hypekchôrein* and *pheugein*) specifically stands for 'not holding its ground through admitting the opposite quality', and is, accordingly, said of immanent characters of things (just like *hypomenein* is 'stand its ground'). See *Phaedo*, 102D–106E *passim* and our *Cratylus* passage (439D9–11) and Verdenius [1958], 232.

In *Sophist*, 237C–D (see above, 13.12) the syncategorematic use of *ti* ('some') is discussed and, again, from an intensional point of view. Indeed, even this word is supposed to have some semantic value, viz. that of 'be-ing' and this is to be understood as 'being some thing' (see above, 4.21).

For the rest, it can only be repeated that there is no single specifically deictic use of common names in Plato. On the contrary, they primarily exert their descriptive function. One may recall here the numerous uses of common names discussed in the previous section. Besides, there is a remarkable passage in the *Timaeus* where, as Kahn has rightly observed [1973:171], Plato seems to suggest a deeper analysis of deictic reference, in terms of the Receptable, which is introduced as a third element of the Universe. (See Guthrie V, 262–70.) The passage is important enough to discuss it more fully:

Timaeus, 48E2–50A4: This new start of our discussion of the Universe (*tou pantos*) requires a fuller division than the former, for then we made two classes (*eidê*), now a third kind (*genos*) must be revealed. The two sufficed for the former discussion: one which we assumed as a paradeigmatic Form, intelligible and always the same; and the second ‹was› the imitation ‹of that Form›, subject to generation and visible. A third one did we not distinguish at the time, thinking that the two would be enough. But now the argument (*logos*) seems to require that we should set forth in our theory (*logois*) a difficult and obscure kind (*eidos*). What dynamic nature (*dynamin*) then, are we to assume for this? Perhaps some such nature: it is the receptacle (*hypodochên*) and, so to speak, the nurse (*tithênên*) of all becoming. Yes, this is quite true but I must express myself in clearer language, not easy a task for many reasons and especially because one must first raise questions[22] concerning fire and the concomitant bodily constituents and determine what each of them is. For to say, as to each of them, which one[23] should be called (*legein*) 'water' rather than 'fire', and which one should be called any of them rather than the sum of all of them and one by one, and that such that a trustworthy and reliable description (*logôi*) is used, well *that*'s difficult.

[22] Guthrie seems to be quite right in opposing (V, 266) the 'bodily constituents', fire, water, air and earth to *stoicheia* in the sense of elements or syllables. Their own complexity is alluded to at 51A7 where is spoken of their compounds and any of the components *from which they are derived themselves*.

[23] *hopoion*, lit. 'the one of what kind'; so the *nature* of the element is under discussion rather than just its localisation. Or rather, as usual, a thing is identified according to its specific nature.

[49D1] Thus, then, as the diverse constituents never present themselves in the same shapes (lit.: *as* the same things), how should not anyone be bashful in asserting positively that any of them, whatever it may be, is one thing rather than another? Such an assertion is not possible, indeed, and much the safest procedure is to assumptively speak (*tithemenous legein*) of them, as follows: Anything which we see to be continually changing, as, for example, fire, we must not designate (*prosagoreuein*) as 'this' ‹thing› (*touto*), but 'the ‹thing that is› each time of such a nature' (*to toiouton*), nor ‹designate› water as '*this* ‹thing›' but 'the ‹thing that is› always of such a nature', nor must we ever use a designation of any other thing such as if it had any stability: of all those things we ordinarily indicate by adding the 'attribute' (*rhêma*) 'this' or 'that' we suppose ourselves to disclose something (*dêloun ti*) ‹by that›. They are, indeed, too volatile to be detained in any such expression (*phasis*) as 'this', or 'that' or 'relative to this', or any other expression which indicate them as being permanent. Well, we ought not to apply ‹the word› 'this' to any of them, but rather, as to each and all of them, to call them the such-and-such ‹thing› that continually circulates in the same shape, accordingly[24] (*houtô kalein*). For example, one should call fire 'the ‹thing being› continually such-and-such'[25] and so of everything that is subject to becoming. But that *in* which we always see them come-to-be and *from* which pass-away, — *that* alone is to be indicated (*prosagoreuein*) by adding the designation (*onomati*) 'that' or 'this'; but what is of a certain nature (the hot or the white or whatever of the opposites, and also all that which is compound of them), — nothing of them must be called 'that' (*ekeino*).

In the next lines (50A4–B6) another attempt is made to explain the exact significance of this semantic procedure. Suppose a man makes of a piece of gold all kinds of mathematical figures and is always remodelling each figure into all the rest; somebody points to one of them and asks what it is. Then the safest and truest answer will be to say: 'gold' and never to designate them as being a triangle and so on, as these particular figures, at the very moment of their being designated as such-and-such, are in process of change. We may be content, indeed, if the questioner is willing to acquiesce[26] to our using the phrase 'the such-and-such' to designate something.

[24] That is, designate, for example, water as 'the–such–and–such–thing–always–circulating–as–water'; see the next lines.

[25] In point of fact, Plato seems to prefer designations such as 'the continually–water–like–‹thing›' for water, or 'the continually–fire–like–‹thing›' for fire, and so on.

[26] My translation of *met' asphaleias* (lit. 'with security'). For *asphaleia* said of the safe and convincing nature of an argument, see Xenophon, *Memorabilia* IV, 6, 15: "whenever he himself argued out a question, he used to advance by steps that gained general assent, holding this to be the sure way of arguing (*asphaleian logou*)" and Socrates is, accordingly, called 'a safe speaker' (*asphalê rhêtora*), in an allusion to Homer, *Odys.* 8, 171: "he speaks without faltering (*asphales agoreuei*)" and Hesiod, *Theogony*, 86: "and he, speaking safely (*asphaleôs agoreuôn*) .....". To my mind, all these expressions reflect the mind's acquiescence which Aristotle designates (at *De interpr.* 3, 16b21) by *êremein* ("the hearer acquiesces", i.e. 'comes to understand' or 'does not ask further questions'). This interpretation finds some additional support in Boethius, *In Arist. Periherm.* II, 74, 4–5 (ed. Meiser) where the hearer (*!*) is said to come to understanding and acquiesce, such that he does not ask any further questions at all ("constituit intellectum et quiescit, ut ad intellegentiam ultra nihil quaerat omnino"). The ancient commentator Aspasius defends this interpretation on the level of name-giving (and from the viewpoint of the hearer); see *ibid.*, 74, 9–33. In mediaeval Latin the verb *acquiescere* is frequently used in this sense. (For a similar use of 'acquiescement' by Malebranche, see Nuchelmans [1983], 58). — See (for the whole passage) Lee [1971].

However, the same argument does also concern[27] the universal Nature, the Receptacle, which receives all bodies. This must always be named (*prosrhêteon*) 'the same', since it never looses its absolutely[28] identical dynamic nature (*dynameôs*): it always receives all things, yet it never assumes a form (*morphên*) like that of any of the things which enter into it. For it is "a plastic substance capable of receiving impressions" (Guthrie V, 263) and appears different by reason of those impressions (50B7–C4).

When it comes to finding the correct designation of the universal Nature, we must not call it 'earth' or 'air' or 'fire' or 'water', or by the names of any of their compounds or of any of the components from which they are derived themselves. But if we describe (*legontes*) her as 'some invisible and formless kind of thing (*anhoraton eidos ti kai amorphon*), all-receptive, sharing (in some mysterious way) in the Intelligible and most incomprehensible' — well, we will not speak falsely, then (51A4–B2). Finally, it is stated (51B2–6) that in as far as we can hope to comprehend the Receptacle's nature, one might express oneself most truly (*orthotata*) this way: the portion of it which from time to time appears as inflamed, may be called 'fire', the portion which is moistened, 'water', and it may be called 'earth' or 'air' in as far as it has assumed their images (*mimêmata*).

What may be gathered from those texts? No doubt, Plato seems to make use of what could be termed 'a merely deictic reference' accomplished by such words (Plato calls them 'rhêmata used in addition') as 'this' or 'that', in order to single out and clarify the peculiar nature of the Receptacle. However, we should bear in mind that the Receptacle nowhere appears on itself, formless as it is (see 51A8), but always partakes in some transcendent Form (see 51B1 and 51B6–52A1) and is 'stirred and variously shaped' by the (immanent) forms entering into it (50C2–3). For that reason, the Receptacle as it appears (one should notice the frequent use of verbs signifying our *seeing* or the things' coming into *appearance*: 49C1; 7; D1; 5; E8; 50C3; 7; E4; 51A5; B5), it is invested, so to speak, by one or more elemental *dynameis* or one or more of their compounds (see 49D–50E) but still is that which is to receive all forms but having itself no form (see 50B10–C1; D7–8; E4–6). One need not be surprised that the Receptacle will be referred to later on (at 52A8–B6) as a 'space' (*chôra*) which provides a seat (*hedra*) for everything that is subject to becoming. It is apprehended, when all sense is absent, by a kind of 'spurious reason', when we, imagining as in a dream, state of all that is, that it must be in a certain place, anyhow, and occupy space. So it (1) must have itself no perceptible qualities, and (2) be 'space', to be posited as a 'third' ‹factor› beside Being and Becoming (see also the summing-up at 52D2–4).

For this reason, it seems to be quite to the point to take the rhemata admitted

[27] Rather than the usual translation: 'the same holds good for', since in the above theory the universal Nature forms precisely the counterpart of the ever-changing elements so that, quite consistently, the inverse holds good for it.

[28] *to parapan* (at 50B9) seems to determine (*apo koinou*) the word *heautês* as well as the negation *ouk*.

by Plato to designate the Receptacle to be syncategorematic rather than categorematic; they do not, indeed, convey something more than such indexicals as 'here' or 'now', and their additional character is emphasised by Plato in his use of the verb *proschrasthai* ('to use *in addition*')[29].

One could not be beter convinced than by these *Timaeus* passages that Plato's semantics only knows of the descriptional use of names, apart from some additive ones (properly labelled *rhêmata*, rather than *onomata*[30]) which may be compared with modern indexicals or, at least, what have been called since Priscian syncategorematic words.

Therefore it may be stated that Plato's *onoma* surely has *some* deictic function and does also designate particulars, but its main purpose is to *qualify* things occurring in the outside world. To my mind, the most suitable way of describing its semantic (and epistemological) role in Plato is to call it the *identification*[31] *of* all kind of occurrences (to Plato, participations of Forms) in the transient world. We can understand, then, Socrates' hints that the correct name is the one that discloses the being-ness (or the 'what-it-is') of a thing (*Cratylus*, 393D3), or that discloses 'of what nature' (*hoion*) each of the things there are is (422D2–3; cf. 423E7–9)[32]. So Kahn comes very close to the truth in arguing [1973:163–4] that "the correctness of any particular name is to identify, specify, or signify some particular Form". One might only better say that it ought to identify some particular instantiation of a transcendent Form (or else deictically refer to the Transcendent Form Itself).

[29] That this is the sense of the prefix '*pros-*' has been argued for above, 13.11, n. 9. Of course in *prosagoreuein* (and *prosrhêteon*) the prefix is equivalent to the English *ad* in 'appellate' (‹*ad*›pellate).

[30] For a syntactic reason; see below, 15.1.

[31] So Plato's *onomata*, which may be compared with 'identification tags', could labelled as 'semantic tags', where 'tag' has a sense which comes rather close to the meaning which *The Random House Dictionary of the English Language* (New York, 1967:1447) supplies (entry 11): 'a descriptive word or phrase applied to a person, group, organization, etc. as a label or *means of identification* (my italics), e.g. "after the accident, they gave him the tag of murderer"'. I reject such labels as Kahn's 'sortal predicate' [1973:161], as 'predicate' even if used in a modern, broader sense, still wrongly connotes some *sentential* context of the '*S is P*' structure. Nor would I join Lorenz and Mittelstrass [1967] who take *onomata* to be "words which nowadays would usually be called predicates" (4) and propose to explain names used as 'elementary sentences' (6 ff.). The act of naming should not be described, I think, starting from the later statement structure. It should be recalled that as early as in the 19th century scholars such as J. Deuschle, F. Susemihl, F. Michelis and K. Uphues took Plato's *onoma* as acting as an 'abbreviated judgment' (*abgekürzter Urteil*). See Uphues [1882], 11–2.

[32] Nehring is not entirely wrong, it would seem, in describing (20–1) Plato's situation from a psychological point of view (except when he charges him of "a shortcoming"): "It is no doubt a shortcoming in Plato's analysis of the sign functions of language that the indicative and demonstrative function of signs is not considered, though it may be asked whether it is really overlooked or only ignored, as it is covered by the overall sign function of words, and plays but a minor role in language. Demonstrative words, as all demonstrative gestures, are possible only if and when the thing to be communicated is either physically or mentally present. If this is not the case, the speaker has only one possibility of making clear what kind of thing he has in mind, that is, he must describe the thing, and if a new word is required for this purpose, the description must be embodied in this word, as is normally done whenever a new invention or discovery requires a new term (e.g. *thermometer*, *refrigerator*, *ice-box*, *loudspeaker*, etc.)".

14.4. *Rhêma And Logos As Onomata Occurring In Specific Positions*

It seems to be useful to refer, first of all, to Plato's explicit statement that *onoma* is the smallest semantic unit (*Cratylus*, 385C2–9; 387C6–7). Thus it is also the absolutely indispensable ingredient for all kind of discourse, the other two ingredients (*rhêma* and *logos*) being but specific (combinations of) onomata.

Onoma is surely not just our substantive noun, as is clear from the following *Cratylus* passage:

> *Cratylus*, 426C1–7: To begin with, the letter *rho* appears to me the instrument for ‹expressing› all motion (*kinêseôs*). But I have not explained why it has that name ‹'*kinêsis*'›. Well, it apparently means going (*iesis*). ‹.....›. The initial letters ‹of *kinêsis*› derive from *kiein* ('to move') — a foreign name (*onoma*) —, that equals 'to go' (*ienai*). Well, if one wants to find the ancient name for motion corresponding to our word (*phônên*), it might be correctly named (*kaloito*) '*iesis*'.

Obviously the grammatical form does not matter: what counts is the significate 'motion' or 'the moving', so that even the verbal form *kiein* is called *onoma*. We would say that the only idea conveyed by the label *onoma* is nominalisation. So it is quite natural that *onoma* never stands for finite verbs (when occurring in a sentence, not autonymously) but does apply to infinitives and participles. At 414B1–2 the *onoma*, 'to flourish' (*thallein*) is said to have been formed by the lawgiver "putting together that *onoma* (!) out of *thein* ('to run') and *hallesthai* ('to leap'). At 418E–419A the participle *deon* ('binding' → 'right', 'obligation') is called an *onoma* and so is at 421A–B the participle *on* ('being'). Of course, they are all nominalisations as is clear from the equation of *on* and *ousia* at 421B8. Kahn has rightly observed [1973²:160, n. 11] that "Plato has very little interest in the grammatical form of the word under discussion; thus, at 421C4 Hermogenes asks about *ion*, *rheon*, and *doun*, but at 424A8 Socrates refers back to 'those *onomata* about which you asked, *rhoê*, *ienai*, and *schesis*' (!)"[33]. Adjective nouns are labelled *onoma* at *Cratylus*, 398B6–8 (*daêmôn*, 'knowing', 'wise'); 417C7 (*ôphelimon*, 'advantageous'); 420D7 (*hekousion*, 'voluntary'); *Protag.*, 358A7–9 (*hêdu*, 'pleasant' and *aniaron*, 'painful'; *terpnon*, 'agreeable'; *charton*, 'enjoyable'). In the *Timaeus* passage discussed above (14.3) *onoma* refers to demonstrative pronouns (50A1–2) and at *Crat.*, 435B7–8 numbers are even regarded as *onomata*. It should be noted that the latter use surely concerns numbers as '*the* one', '*the* two', '*the* three' *etc.* as in all the cases mentioned Plato always uses the neuter gender, which also indicates nominalisations.

As 'the smallest part' of a significative expression *onoma* is mostly just one word.

[33] Notice that *ion*, *rheon* and *doun* are three participles, while *rhoê* and *schesis* are two substantive nouns and *ienai* an infinitive. Indeed, the only thing that matters is the significate of the words, which is to be understood as 'something that is .....'.

However, again it is the significate that counts: if a more-than-one-word expression stands for just *one* notion, it is called *onoma*. Thus, for instance, at *Sophist*, 237C2 and 250D8 the two-word expression *mê ôn* ('not-being') is called *onoma*. It should be noted in this connection that in *Cratylus*, 421D9–422A3 as well as 396A1–6 *onoma* might seem to be used to mean a more-than-one-word expression. In the former passage it is indeed said that an *onoma* may have some rhemata as its parts. However, it is important to know that Plato discusses here the ancient primitive or elemental names the origin of which, he says, is often quite difficult to trace back and, accordingly, takes the rhemata to be the *etymological* parts of the onoma which form, in point of fact, but a one-word expression. The other passage concerns the two different *roots* of the one onoma '*Zeus*', each of which (viz. '*Zê*-' and '*Di*-') has its own meaning and so make that onoma 'a sort of logos' (*hoion logos*; 396A1). Again, the roots may be seen as descriptively representing two different attributes (*rhemata*) as is actually done by Socrates in that context (see above, 13.12).

The logos is a more-than-one-word expression, as is clearly asserted by Plato in *Sophist*, 262C5–6, where it is unambiguously said that the most elementary combination of a name and an attribute makes up "an account (*logos*) of the most elementary and shortest kind". The *logos* is defined elsewhere too, as the combination (*synthesis*, *symplokê*) of an *onoma* and a *rhêma*. So at *Cratylus*, 431C1 and *Sophist*, 263D2–3[34].

The relationship *onoma–logos* may be elucidated by two passages from Aristotle. In *Rhetorica* III, 3 he discusses bad taste in speech, the first sort of which is the misuse of compound names (the Greek has 'twofold names'; *diplois onomasin*, 1405b35). It is opposed to the ordinary use of such names, which is permissible when the thing is 'name-less' (*anônymon*) and the account (*logos*), the complex *name*[35], that is, can be easily formed, like 'wasting-time' (*to chronotribein*; 1406a35–37). Here the *logos* is a one-word expression but is still recognised as consisting of two *onomata*, to wit the substantive name '*chronos*' ('time') and the infinitive 'waste'. The counterpart of all this is found in the *Posterior Analytics* where Aristotle speaks of 'a name-like account' (II 10, 93b30–31: *logos onomatôdês*), where *onomatôdês* must stand for 'being of the nature of a name', not, 'nominal', as is rightly observed by Ross (*ad loc.*), who thinks of such expressions as *eutheia grammê* ('straight line') or *sterea gônia* ('plane or solid angle')[36]. Both passages are interesting in that they clarify the proper function of a name (or its 'name-like' substitute): it is used to call up the idea of a person or a thing, to use Plutarch's words[37], or 'to name' it (*onomazein*), as Plato calls its task in many passages in the *Cratylus* and more precisely in *Theaetetus*, 202B1–2 where *onoma* is opposed to *logos* and *Sophist*, 262D4–5 where 'merely *onomazein*' is opposed to '*legein*'. However, the opposition of *legein* to *onomazein*, which seems to concern the assertive force of the speech act[38] is of quite a different nature from that between *logos* and *onoma* taken as lexical items. The latter does not prevent them from having the same function of 'calling up' the 'idea' ('i.e. the Form' or form, in its mental status) of a thing in the outside world. Indeed, such an idea may be expressed by a *logos* as well as an *onoma*. A nice illustration of this occurs in *Cratylus*, 421A–B, where both the logos, *on hou tynchanei zêtêma* ('being for which there is a search') and the onoma, *onomaston* are said to serve our inquiry into things:

> *Cratylus*, 421A1–B1: My question concerns ‹.....› and just that thing which is the theme of our discussion, *onoma*, why it has this name. — You know the word *maiesthai* (to seek)? — Yes, meaning the same as *zêtein* (to inquire). — Well, it seems to be a name welded together (*synkekrotêmenôi*) out of a *logos* saying that the name is that being for which there is a search. You may gather that more clearly in the term *onomaston* ('to be named', 'notable'), which says in so many words that that (viz. the onomaston) is a 'being for which there is seeking' (*on hou masma estin*).

The same idea returns some lines further, at 421D9–E2, where somebody is supposed to search for the *rhêmata* by means of which a name (*onoma*) is formed and, again, the elements out of which the *rhêmata* are formed, and so on continuously. The discussion there is about the so-called elemental names (*stoicheia*; see 422A3 ff.) with the intention of making it clear that by *rhêmata* are understood attributive expressions which have been compressed into a single name, such as the rhemata *agaston* ('admirable') and *thoon* ('swift') which have supposedly made up the onoma *agathos* (good).

This passage is quite likely to raise the question, what about *rhêma*? Well, our last passage concludes as follows (422B1–4): "But if we finally get something which no longer consists of some other *onomata*, then we will be right in saying that we have at last reached an elemental name (*stoicheiôi*) which need not to be resolved into other *onomata*". Given that here *onoma* seems to stand for the elements which were above called *rhêmata*, it is quite understandable that some scholars are of the opinion that the words *onoma* and *rhêma* in the *Cratylus* are interchangeable[39]. Others oppose one to the other as subject (*onoma*) and predicate (*rhêma*)[40], or substantive and verb[41]. Since Steinthal and Benfey *onoma* has also been taken as mean-

[34] *Crat.*, 425A2–4 is commonly adduced as a parallel, which it is not, I think. There it is said that 'that beautiful whole', called *logos* and comparable to a painting, consists of names and attributes. The comparison makes us think of a story, rather than a 'statement'. I would think, the same broad sense of *logos* = 'speech', 'language' is found in Aristotle, *Rhetor.* III 2, 1404b26: 'speech is composed of *onomata* and *rhêmata*'.

[35] I translate *onoma* by 'name' rather than just 'word'. Notice that the 'thing' can apparently be an action like wasting time and that it is said to be 'name-less'.

[36] I think that Aristotle instances (at 31–2) such a 'name-like account' and I would propose to emend the MSS reading *ti esti trigônon* (where Ross seems to be right in suspecting the phrase *ti esti* and, accordingly, deletes it) into *sterea gônia* ('a plane angle'; cf. Plato, *Timaeus*, 55A1), which *is* a name-like account since it acts as a name.

[37] See below, 16.43.

[38] See for the important difference between *logos* and *legein* (taken as the *act* of assertion) below, 15.32; 15.4; 16.43; 16.44.

[39] So Rijlaarsdam, 66.

[40] So e.g. J. Deuschle and Hermann Schmidt; see Uphues [1882:22–31] and among the modern scholars Oehler [1962:59, n. 1; cf. 72] and Seligman, 98–9.

[41] So e.g. Uphues [1882:15–31]; Rehn, 12, among many others.

ing 'name' ('*Benennung*') and *rhêma* as meaning 'attribute' ('*Aussage*')[42]. I think that this translation is supported by our survey[43] of the different uses of this word in Plato. In fact, *onoma* calls up something and puts it before the mind and *rhêma*, being itself a one-word, or more-than-one-word expression, completes the descriptive value of the *onoma*. Thus in *ho leukos anthrôpos* ('the white man') the onoma 'man' calls up something from the outside world and the rhema 'white' supplements the descriptional function of the onoma and the two taken together form a more complete semantic identification of the thing under discussion. So the rhema *is* an onoma or a series of onomata. It is its function as an attribute when added to the onoma that labels it as a rhema.

So the same word may be called onoma or rhema according to whether it is considered in either its entity-referring, including its descriptional function (onoma), or its co-descriptional function (rhema). This is nicely clarified by the *Timaeus* passage which we have discussed above (14.3). There it is remarked that anything which we see to be continually changing, as, for example, fire, should not be designated as 'this thing' (*touto*), for when things of this type which we commonly designate *by adding* the attribute (rhema), 'this' or 'that', we hope to reveal something by so doing (49D5–E2). Some lines further (50A1) the same pronouns are designated by *onoma*: "But that *in* which we see them (fire, and so on) come to be and pass away, *that* alone is to be indicated by adding the designation (*onomati*) 'that' or 'this'" (49E7–50A2). In the earlier passage Plato forbids us to call some thing '*this* fire' since this expression would suggest the stability of the fire under discussion and designated by the onoma ('fire'). In the second passage he permits us to call the same thing *this* ‹'fire-like' or 'inflamed' thing›, as this expression does not take 'fire' to be an onoma (suggestive of stability) but only refers (with the ('entity-referring') onoma, 'this') to the everlasting Receptacle, which at one moment is fire-like, at another air-like, at another earth-like, and at another water-like. Indeed, when added as a rhema to some onoma the expressing 'this' reinforces the (false) suggestion of stability conveyed by the onoma itself, whereas when used itself as the onoma it quite clearly refers to nothing but the permanent Receptacle.

Summing up all this it may be stated that:

1. our distinction between substantive noun and adjective noun is of no use if we want to describe Plato's semantics; strictly speaking Plato's semantics does not yet show any awareness of 'verbs' either[44]
2. *qua* lexical entities (or lexemes) Plato's semantics only knows of onomata; his concept of onoma indeed covers all kinds of word, including verbs (in the infinitive or participle forms)[45] and all kinds of determiner. In this connection it is most significant that, unlike onoma and logos, rhema is nowhere defined by Plato[46]. However, when it comes to words actually used in whatever speech act including 'inward speech' the contradistinction of onoma and rhema becomes relevant. Thus:
3. whenever a word is entity-referring, i.e. actually functions as a linguistic means to call up some entity in the transient world, which is such-and-such and may accomplish or undergo some action, then it is labelled by Plato as an onoma
4. whenever such a word serves to express some attribute of the entity aforesaid (or to determine it, such as 'this', 'that', or 'some' *etc.*), then it is called rhema by Plato
5. an onoma is a one-word expression, a rhema *may* consist of two or more lexemes
6. any *onoma* is descriptionally used; any rhema, except if it is a determiner, is used co-descriptionally
7. strictly speaking the entities referred to by onoma(ta) or onoma(ta) and rhema(ta) (except for those rhemata acting as a determiner) are *dynameis*[47] rather than (Aristotelian) entities with the substance-accident character
8. the combination of onomata and rhemata makes up a logos. The nature of *logos* is quite clear as far as its proper elements are concerned. Plato is indeed explicit enough in saying that it consists of onomata and rhemata:

Cratylus, 385C1–9: is a true *logos* true only as a whole, its parts being not true? — No, the parts are true as well. — Well, are the large parts true but not the small ones, or all of them? — All of them, I should say. — Is there, then, anything which you say is a smaller part of logos than an *onoma*? — No, that's the smallest.

Ibid., 387C6–7: Naming (*to onomazein*) is a part of speaking (*tou legein*), is it not?; for in naming and 'naming out'[48] I would think people utter *logoi* (*legousi tous logous*).

Ibid., 425A2–4: .... out of (*ek*) *onomata* and *rhêmata* again we shall construct something large and fair and complete ..., the *logon*[49].

Ibid., 431B5–C1: If it is possible to impose *rhêmata* and *onomata* in this incorrect way, then this necessarily also holds good for *logoi*. For *logoi* are, I would think, the combination (*synthesis*) of them.

Theaeteus, 202B3–5: Just as those things are woven together, so their onomata woven together come to be a *logos*, for in their view a logos substantially is a tissue of onomata (*onomatôn symplokên*)[50].

Sophist, 262C1–D6: .... from such a string of *onomata* and *rhemata* a *logos* does not yet arise. ‹. ....; no information will be given, indeed› until one mixes together the *rhemata* with the *onomata*. Then it clicks and at once the most elementary combination (*symplokê*) becomes a *logos*. ‹. .....› and indeed it is to this complex (*plegmati*) ‹of *onomata* and *rhemata*› that we have given the name *logos*.

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[42] See Uphues [1882:15–31]. Among the modern scholars, Gaiser, 99.
[43] See above, 13.12.
[44] This will be explained below, 15.3; 15.5; 16.44 and 16.5.
[45] Of course, finite verbs are not included; strictly speaking they are not lexical items either.
[46] Thus, *always* translating 'onoma' by 'word' is not a mistake but falls short in taking it only on the lexeme level, while in Plato it mostly stands for a word used as entity-referring (as opposed to rhema). Goldschmidt already referred (52) to *Crat.*, 385C10 where Socrates speaks of onoma as part of the logos.
[47] See below, 16.12.
[48] For this reading and its translation, see below, 15.1.
[49] *Logos* is here 'discourse', 'exposition' *etc.*, rather than just one single 'statement'; see above, 13.13.
[50] For the context, see above 13.13.

As can easily be seen, the constituents of *logos* are onomata and rhemata. The *Theaetetus* passage presents no difficulty in speaking of *onomata* only, since, as has been said before, if it is considered a lexeme 'onoma' also covers all kinds of rhema.

However, what is the nature proper of *logos*? There is still much discussion and confusion about that. The question can be best solved, I think, in the framework of a general discussion about Plato's views of language and knowledge.

Chapter fifteen

LANGUAGE AND KNOWING

15.0. The present chapter aims to clarify Plato's view on the role of language both in discovering what really is and in communicating true knowledge to other people. As Socrates says in *Phaedo*, 100A3–7, his method is to study the truth of things *en logois*, that is, to adopt in each case under enquiry the *logos* which he judges strongest and to posit as true and real whatever agrees with this and reject whatever disagrees with it.

The main purpose of this chapter will be to elucidate Plato's specific views on what is really done when people use names and make assertions, either true or false. Special attention will be paid to his conception of 'statement' ('declarative sentence').

15.1. *The Truth Value Of Names And Their Function In The Logos*

When discussing with Hermogenes the natural correctness or truth[1] of names Socrates makes Hermogenes admit that a logos may be true or false and hence infers that its components *including names* must be true or false (*Crat.*, 385C2–7; see above, 14.4). This inference has often been condemned as bad, even fallacious[2]. For example by Robinson, who writes [1969:123] "This argument is bad; for names have no truth value, and the reason given for saying that they do is a fallacy of division". But he is surely not a lone voice.

It should be remarked at the outset that, for Plato, names do have truth value,

[1] For the equation of *orthotês* (correctness) and *alêtheia* ('truth') on this score, see Prauss, 44, n. 8, who refers to *Crat.*, 385C12–16; 425D4–426A4; 430D4–5 and 438D7. See also Sprague, 49 and Guthrie V, 6, n. 1, who refers to *Crat.*, 428E1–2: "in our view, the correctness of a name is that which reveals the nature of a thing".

[2] For the first time, it seems, by Steinthal (86), who (in 1863) called the inference 'inconsiderate ('*leichtfertig*') and false' (but the second edition of 1890 has only 'false' (89); see Rijlaarsdam, 68–9). For his many followers (among them Robinson and Sprague, 49, n. 26), see Prauss, 45. Rehn thinks (14) Plato was fully conscious of the 'fallacy'.

which has been recognised by his defenders in this cause[3]. However, they all assume[4], in some way or another, that Plato's onoma is, in fact a 'disguised statement'. As far as I can see Goldschmidt was the first to pay some attention to the real nature of *logos* and consider it rather according to its naming function[5]. However, we owe the definitive solution to the 'problem' to the sagacious investigations by Prauss. He has most convincingly shown that in the *Cratylus* logos is to be equated, not with sentence or statement, but with 'formula' or rather 'compound name'.

An important role in this regard is that of the technical term *dionomazein*[6]. It occurs only twice in Plato and should be rendered 'to name out' ('durchworten', Prauss, 51). In *Statesman*, 263D5 this verb is used by Plato in an amusing passage where rough and rash classifying is criticised (as it had actually been practised earlier by Socrates the Younger who broke off one small portion of a class and then contrasted it with all the important sections left behind). Such an inaccurate procedure is said to be within the grasp of say a cute crane. This animal, too, "might 'name out' things in the same way you did [Socrates is meant]: having isolated the crane tribe and contrasted it with *all* other living creatures in order thus to glorify itself, it could lump together the remained animals (men included) under some such generic name as 'brute beasts'". As a matter of fact Socrates had assured the Eleatic Visitor (see 263C4 ff.) that there are two kinds of living things, the human race on the one hand, and on the other a single group consisting of the whole rest of the animal kingdom. The Eleatic Visitor realised this as soon as Socrates applied the one name 'brute beast' to them all.

Prauss is quite right in rejecting the translation 'to distribute names' for *dionomazein*, the technical term for that being *onomata dianemein* (e.g. *Cratylus*, 430B7–10; 431B3). The verb *dionomazein*, however, expresses the distribution of things by assigning them diverse names. Just as a word may be spelled out, letter by letter, so a collection of (diverse) things may be 'named out', thing by thing and so split up into the diverse entities making up together that collection. Thus *dionomazein* means 'to distinguish things by assigning them distinct names'.

Similarly the verb as used in *Cratylus*, 387C6–7 should be taken as referring to the act of 'naming out' things by using distinct names:

Cratylus, 387C6–7: Naming (*to onomazein*) is a part of speaking (*tou legein*), is it not? For in naming and 'naming out', I would think, (*onomazontes kai dionomazontes*[7] *gar pou*) people utter *logoi*.

[3] Plato was defended by Michelis, Uphues, Goldschmidt (51–2), Prauss (43 ff.), Lorenz and Mittelstrass (6), Rijlaarsdam (68–9), Kahn [1973²:160–1], and Gaiser (26).
[4] Except for Guthrie (V, 6) who only refers to the name's proper truth value.
[5] He says (somewhat cryptically, though): "Et ensuite, le discours [his rendering of *logos*] peut avoir pour but de dénommer" (52); cf. Rijlaarsdam, 68–9, who does not follow Goldschmidt properly.
[6] See Praus, 46–65; 121–33; 168–87; 201.
[7] Prauss is quite right in preferring the reading of the *codex Venetus* (*T*), *dionomazontes* to that of the *Bodleianus* (*B*) and *Vindobonensis* (*W*), *onomazontes*, but overlooks the *kai* preceding *dionomazontes* in the *codex Venetus*. For that reason, I propose to read *onomazontes kai dionomazontes* which reading, by haplology, might have resulted in the respective readings of *BW* and *T*.

There is, however, an important difference, I think, between the two passages. The former clearly discusses (as might be expected given the general framework of that dialogue) the correct Division (and Collection) of several particulars, as is clear from the descriptions given of the proper procedure. The common features of *a number of things* and their specific differences are sought for, and, conversely, when *in a multitude* of objects all sorts of disparities are detected, one goes on to include all those 'things' which are cognate within a genuine genus (285A–B). The *Cratylus* passage, on the other hand, concerns the 'naming out' of one particular thing, i.e. its analysis into a number of distinct 'features'[8] by means of the assignment of those features' names to that particular. Prauss is right in characterising (52) the logos, accordingly, as a 'plural naming' ('mehrfaches Benennen'). He is less correct, I am afraid, in calling (*ibid.*) the logos (as found in the *Cratylus*) an 'aggregate of words or phrases' ('Aggregat von Wörtern oder Wortsetzungen') and opposing it, in this respect, to the *logos* as found in the *Sophist* (262C9–D4; see above, 14.4) which is a harmonious mixture, indeed, rather than just an aggregate. Prauss opposes (54–60) *synthesis* ('serial composition', 'reihende Zusammenstellung') to *symplokê* ('knotting together', 'Verknüpfung'). But this is rightly criticised by Rehn (12–14), who refers to the *Cratylus* passage, 424C5–425B3 (discussed below, 16.3) where it is quite clear from the comparison of the *logos* with painting that Plato takes *logos* to be "that really large and beautiful whole, the *logos*". Here logos is admittedly not just a short sentence but a discourse, but, all the same, it would be quite unexpected if the discourse were to be composed of smaller elements which were only aggregates of words. Besides, its being composed of both onomata *and* rhemata clearly suggests that the combination cannot be considered to be a mere series of arbitrary elements. In this regard it should be emphasised that the act of combining the onomata and rhemata is designated by the verb *synhistêmi* which is always used by Plato (and other authors as well) to mean combining *harmonious* parts (see above, 12.3, n. 7).

For that matter, Prauss did observe (55) the diversity of onoma and rhema and quite correctly he does not regard them as substantive noun and verb. In order to find the senses proper of these terms he discusses (55–8) the above-mentioned passage, *Cratylus* 424D–425A, where the composition of logos is paralleled with that of a word composed of letters and syllables, in that Plato compares both of them with painting. Words are composed of letters and syllables (as Plato frequently remarks[9]), and similarly a logos consists of onomata and rhemata, and either of these elements and their application remind Plato of the art of painting. Once one letter is used to designate something, there will be an admixture of several letters just as, in painting, the painter who wants to depict anything, some-

[8] Its *dynameis*, as will become clear below, 16.12.
[9] E.g. *Crat.*, 390E4; 394C7; 423E8; 424A9; D1–2; 427C7; cf. *Theaetetus* (201C–208B), *Sophist*, 252E–253A, *Statesman*, 277D–278E, *Timaeus*, 48B–C and *Philebus*, 18B–D where Plato uses the letters and syllables comparison; see Gallop [1963] and Gaiser, 107–8. Prauss is presumably right in saying (55–6) that, for Plato, a syllable always consists of more than one letter; cf. *Crat.*, 393D1–3; 399A9–B3; 424D6–7 and 425E5–6.

times only uses purple, or any other colour, and sometimes mixes up several colours, as he does when he has to paint flesh colour or anything of that kind. So, too shall we apply letters and syllables, either singly or in combination, and form syllables, and from syllables make onomata and rhemata and so, at last, discourse (*Cratylus*, 424D5–425A4; see also above, 13.13).

Once more, the comparison suggests a harmonious mixture of all the ingredients, letters, syllables and the several words. Prauss seems to be right in paralleling (57) the elemental colours with the onomata, which were called the smallest parts of the logos (*Crat.*, 385C7). It seems to be obvious, then, to think the rhemata being understood by 'great and small parts' and to equate them (as they are, so to speak, the 'syllables' of the logos) with the mixed colours used by the painter. Prauss seems to be incorrect, however, in taking rhema [with Benfey (241) and Oehler (58)] to be *per se* a more-than-one-word expression. Our survey of its uses (above, 13.13) may prove that[10]. It may strike the reader that Prauss has (58–9) some difficulty in interpreting *Cratylus*, 421E1–422A2, where Plato clearly takes rhemata to be parts of an onoma[11]. For that matter, any difficulty of this kind may be solved in regarding *rhema* as an attribute, or attributive phrase, added to an onoma as an entity-referring expression, as has been argued earlier (14.4).

Prauss thinks that he can find some more support for his view of rhema as a combination of onomata in the discussion of the true and false logos in the *Cratylus*. In the opening section of that dialogue (385C1–8) Plato had deduced the truth (or falsity) of the onomata and the rhemata from that of the logos of which they form parts. According to Prauss (59) the deduction includes two steps, first from the logos to its greater parts (*megala moria*) i.e. the rhemata, and from these, then, to smaller ones (*smikra*) including the smallest part, onoma. At 431B2–C1 Prauss hopes to find the reverse procedure, in two steps, again, which aims to deduce the truth of the logos from that of its rhemata and onomata, respectively. (By the way, the two passages show once more that *rhêma* is not to be understood as a more-than-one-word expression.)

However, Prauss' interpretation of the two passages is somewhat rash. Let me start with the second passage. Unlike the first one, Plato does not speak here of truth *as well as* falsity but only the falsity of the parts of the logos (and the logos itself, accordingly) is under discussion. Nor is there any trace of a procedure involving two different steps. After he had remarked that there is a correct assignment of onomata (which may be called 'true speaking') and a wrong one (to be labelled as 'false speaking') Plato goes on to discuss the latter possibility. If it is possible, he says, to assign onomata incorrectly, then this may also be possible with

[10] Besides, such comparisons must not be pressed, as is rightly remarked by Bluck *ad Sophist*, 252E ff. (see above, *ad loc.*).

[11] For the text, see above, 14.4. See for this passage 396A1–6 and also above, 13.12. Prauss is happily inconsistent when he rightly concludes his discussion of rhema by weakening his own interpretation and leaving the subordination of onoma to rhema an open question: "Gleichviel ob seine Onomata sich alle oder nur teilweise oder auch gar nicht [sic! De R.] zu Rhemata gruppieren ...." (59).

rhemata. (Of course, we might add, for rhemata are no more than special onomata). And if an incorrect assignment of onomata and rhemata is possible, the same must be possible for the logos which is made up of them (431B2–C1). So there is, first of all, only a discussion about the *falsity* of a logos, not its truth, and, secondly, there is not a single trace of a two-step procedure in Plato's deduction. He only says that there are two chances for a logos to be false, namely by containing a false onoma or a false rhema (in some cases both a false onoma and a false rhema, of course)[12]. So an important difference between the two passages is that the latter discusses the *possibility* of there being a false logos, the former, on the contrary, the *nature* of both true and false logos, where this involves the same truth value as that of all its constituents.

Similarly, there is no two-step procedure at 385C1–8 either, in that the truth value of the smallest parts is recognised *through* discovering that of the greater parts. The text only offers a didactic procedure which is supposed to invite Hermogenes to concede that even the smallest parts partake in the privilege of being a constituent of the logos, namely of having the same truth value as the latter. Well, there is no longer any reason, then, to assume, following Prauss that Plato understands by rhemata the greater parts (as he admittedly does take the onoma to be the smallest part). It should be borne in mind, besides, that this passage does not speak at all about rhema, the first occurrence of rhema together with onoma (in the well-known juxtaposition *onomata kai rhêmata*) not being found until 425A2–4.

Therefore Prauss seems to be wrong in seeing the rhema as a combination of onomata which serves only to establish together with some onoma a logos which is itself supposedly nothing more than a 'serial composition' and not yet the harmonious mixture it turns out to be in *Theaetetus* and *Sophist*. As has been argued in the previous section, one should rather look for the nature of rhema in its special (syntactic) function, namely of being added as an attribute (in the broadest sense including the function of a plain 'determiner') to an entity-referring onoma. Each of them may be either truly or wrongly assigned to such an entity. For the logos to be true both the onoma and the rhema must be true. Its falsity requires that at least one of the parts be falsely assigned to the entity meant by the user of the logos.

On account of the truth or correctness of the diverse names (onomata or rhemata) it should be remembered that, in adjudicating the two rival theses ('naturalism', 'conventionalism') Socrates in the end goes his own way. Plato indeed rephrases the problem of the correct name and solves it by introducing the thing's 'stable nature' as mirrored by a name's 'significate'[13]. Inasmuch, and only inas-

[12] For that reason Kahn is not right in saying [1973²:160–1] that "Plato may be criticized for having left out "at least one" in the conclusion for false logos". However, Plato's explicit talk (at 385C1–8) of the truth of *all* parts including the smallest ones should be contrasted with the obvious fact that at 431B3–6 he, while speaking of *false* logos only, does only say that as either of its parts may be false (not: its parts may be false both together), the same holds good for the logos.

[13] See above, 2.17; 2.18; 2.2 and 13.31–13.32.

much, as a name designates a thing's True Nature (as partaken in by a particular), it is a correct name. To be sure, what should be represented is the thing's nature as such or (more often, of course) some of its essential, or at least actual feature or, to use Plato's words (*Crat.*, 423E1–424A1; see above, 14.1): a thing's being-ness (*ousia*).

15.2. *The Nature Of logos In Plato's Semantics*

In searching for the nature of Plato's logos one may gain some insight from the fact that, because it derives[14] from the root '*leg-*' (which basically means 'to collect in an orderly way'), *logos* always has the connotation of 'order' or 'ordering' (to be) accomplished in a situation which, at first sight, is somewhat confusing. So Prauss has referred quite happily, time and again[15], to the close relationship between *logos* and *dionomazein*, even though he takes both the noun and the verb to refer to a rather atomic way of dividing and collecting. As we argued earlier (above, 15.1), both the act of 'naming out' (*dionomazein*) as well as that of collecting the items thus 'named out' aim at recognising certain *harmonious* structures in the things observed[16].

When discussing (above, 14.4; 15.1) the specific character of onoma (and rhema), it has become clear that, for Plato (as well as for Aristotle on many occasions[17]) a logos acts as a 'compound name'. For that reason, it may serve, just like an onoma, to call for the notion of a thing which is brought up for discussion, as becomes particularly clear in passages such as *Cratylus*, 421A–E (see above, 14.4). For that matter, one need not be surprised that the logos has basically the same function as its constitutive parts, namely to call up a thing for discussion by describing it some way or another, just as in its larger sense of 'discourse', 'exposition', it could be compared by Plato (*Crat.*, 424D–425A) to painting, where the artisan who wants to depict something uses all kinds of colours "according to how his figures appear to require them" (424E3–4).

The same holds good for its truth value, which is a function of those of its constituents, as has been discussed above (15.1). Consequently, the logos, too, must designate a thing's 'being-ness' (*ousia*), or if you like, the diverse features or 'modes of being' which a thing appears to have, or, in Plato's own words, its discernable dynameis (see below, 16.12–16.13).

The most striking conclusion that Prauss has drawn from his investigation (43–65) is unmistakably correct, to wit, that a logos characterises or describes something

[14] See above, 13.13.
[15] See above, 15.1.
[16] As Prauss' definition of 'logos' as just an 'aggregate' is incorrect, so is his remark (52; 60, 132–3 *etc.*) that the logos is a naming out ('der Logos ist mehrfaches ‹*onomazein*›, ist *di-onomazein*) in that he seems to identify the diverse (though entirely complementary) steps of the procedure. As a matter of fact, the mind *first* discerns or 'names out', *next* (harmoniously) collects the analysata into a logos.
[17] See above, 7.22 and 14.4.

in the way of a compound name, not in that of a statement[18]. If one were to regard it as a 'statement', Plato's arguments at *Cratylus*, 385C as well as 431B–C would be fallacious, indeed (and this is how many people since Steinthal have seen them). The true nature of logos may also become clear when its truth and falsity are discussed once more, not in terms of its truth value as such, but in the framework rather of its representative character, viz. its ability to entity-reference or the designation of states of affairs in the outside world.

It seems to be useful to start from the general problem of the representativity of language as it worried Greek philosophers from the days of say the Sophist Gorgias (*ca.* 490–385 B.C.), who, in defence of his thesis of the incommunicability of what is apprehended[19], adduces as an argument that there can be no semantic relation between speech and things in the outside world[20]. Three more specific theses which were hotly debated in Antiquity are found in the same logico-epistemological area: (1) 'it is impossible to believe or assert something negative'; (2) 'it is impossible to believe or assert something false', and (3) 'it is impossible to contradict'[21]. It is the second proposition in particular which will be discussed now, since Plato appears to have been highly interested in this "much-discussed thesis", as Socrates calls it in *Cratylus*, 429D2–3. In the next sections we shall consider the several discussions of the falsity thesis as they appear in different dialogues. Plato's view of the nature of logos cannot be better clarified.

15.21. *Falsehood In The Cratylus And The Euthydemus*

At *Cratylus*, 385B7–8 true and false logos are defined: 'the logos that speaks[22] the things-that-are (*ta onta*) as they are (*hôs estin*) is true, is not it, and the one that speaks them as they are not, false?' The *hôs* clause is commonly[23] taken to be an adverbial one and is, accordingly, translated as '*as* they are' and '*as* they are not'.

[18] See Nuchelmans (13) who, however, does not criticise Prauss' view of the logos as "an aggregate consisting of single words (*onomata*) as smallest parts and of *rhêmata* as combinations of onomata" (*ibid.*). For the rest, it should be remembered that Prauss had only the earlier dialogues in view and failed to see that the characterisation holds good for the later ones, too. See also below, 15.31.
[19] See his second and third theses: 'if anything exists, it cannot be apprehended', and 'if it can be apprehended, it is not communicable to anyone else'. See Guthrie III, 192–200 and Nuchelmans, 7–8.
[20] See Nuchelmans, 8.
[21] See Nuchelmans, 9–11. The *Euthydemus* contains also a discussion of the third thesis; see below, 15.21. The term *antilegein* stands for 'speaking against another logos' rather than 'contradicting' in the later technical sense, it seems.
[22] lit. 'says the-things-that-are that they are'. Such a prolepsis of the subject of the *that*-clause is quite common in Greek. Greek idiom allows the addition of (the notion of) a concrete object as direct object to *legein*: 'to speak a thing'.
[23] Rijlaarsdam (207–10) takes *hôs* in all occurrences (*Cratylus*, *Euthydemus*, *Sophist* etc.) to be a conjunction ("that"). However, her arguments concerning the *Euthydemus* passage are not convincing. She failed to see an important difference between *Euthydemus* and *Sophist*; see below, 15.25.

But the next sentence has: '*this* then is possible, to speak through a logos the things-that-are and the things-that-are-not as well?' For that reason it might seem that the *that* clause is not completely ruled out. I leave the question open until our discussion of the relevant *Euthydemus* passages.

Near the end of the same dialogue (429C) the name of Hermogenes is criticised because its bearer is supposed to have nothing of the nature of Hermes in him. Socrates asks Cratylus if a man who were to call him 'Hermogenes' would not be even speaking falsely but rather saying nothing at all[24]. He clarifies what is his purpose in asking Cratylus whether he perhaps maintains that falsehood is merely impossible. The latter takes up the gauntlet:

Crat., 429D4–E11: Why, Socrates, how could anyone who speaks that which he speaks not speak that which is (*mê to on legoi*)? Is not false speaking just that, viz. not speaking the-things-that-are (*to mê ta onta legein*)? — [Socrates answers] Your argument is too subtle for me at my age, my friend. However tell me this: do you think it is impossible to speak false things (*legein pseudê*) but possible to make false designations (*phanai de*)? — Neither of these. — Not even to utter false things and use them as an address (*proseipein*)? For instance, if someone should meet you in a foreign country, and grasp your hand and say: "Hail, Athenian stranger, son of Smicrion, Hermogenes", would he, by these words, be making an account (*lexein*), or speaking them as a designation (*phaiê*), or just uttering them, or using them as an appellation, not of you but of Hermogenes here present; or of nobody? — I think, Socrates, the man would be producing these words as just sounds.

Socrates evidently sets great importance upon delicately differentiating between *legein* as presumably standing for producing a logos and *phanai* as rather meaning to 'name' or 'designate'[25], while the aorist *eipein* is used in the blank sense of 'just uttering' and *proseipein* for nothing more than 'to address', 'to accost'. There seems to be no connotation of a 'statement' in any of these uses. Rather all these uses involve many sorts of naming. It will strike the reader, then, that at 430A1–3 Socrates wants to apply the qualifications 'true' or 'false' to the diverse products of the speech act, and apparently takes truth (falsity) to mean a successful (unsuccessful) naming, either by description or designation, whereas some lines earlier (at 429D7–8) he had deposed of Cratylus' rough association of falsehood with not-being as too 'subtle'(!) an approach to the question for a man of his age.

Socrates obviously tries to get rid of all kinds of Eleatic thought about falsity but his attempt does not reach beyond the distinction between *legein* and *phanai* (and less importantly, it would seem, between the former two and *eipein* and *proseipein*). He certainly does not go as far as to solve the problem of falsehood. The only thing which he is attempting at present is to save the possibility of speaking falsely. Cratylus' reply shows that he is unsuccessful in his efforts. However, we may still be interested in the procedural side of his attempt in that, first, he opposes 'speak (*legein*) false things' (= 'make a false description') to 'falsely indicate' (*phanai*), and, secondly, he apparently does not take *logos* to mean 'statement' of the '*S is P*' structure.

[24] This being Cratylus' usual position; see above, 13.2–13.3.
[25] For a similar use of *phanai*, see *Rep.* V, 479B7 and 10, and *Crat.*, 440A6 ("it is not even correct to use the name 'knowledge'").

A parallel passage (407E–408D) may confirm the view of logos as standing for 'description', not 'statement'. There Hermogenes recalls Cratylus' ironical remark (at 383B6–8) about the unfitness of his name, 'Hermogenes', and asks Socrates to explain the name (*onoma*) of the god, Hermes. The name is linked to several aspects of language (*logos*), such as 'interpreter', 'messenger', 'cheater'[26], 'liar', 'bargainer', and is, accordingly, derived from *eirein* ('*speaking*') and *mêsato* ('he contrived') in such a way as to make Hermes a 'contriver of speech'. Then Hermogenes, with rather ironic disappointment, remarks that his name is not really appropriate since he is "not a good hand at speeches" (408B6–7). Next Socrates, turning to the name of Pan, son of Hermes, goes on to observe that this name ("'pan' = the All', or 'all things') covers the whole domain of speech and refers to the twofold nature of logos, true and false, and associates true logos with "the smooth and sacred form which dwells above among the gods" and false logos with "the rough and goat-like region of men below" (408C5–7; D1–2). It should be noted, now, that the close connection between the two passages about Hermes and Pan suggests that Plato is indiscriminately using *logos* to mean 'appellation' and 'speech' in general, but his association of true logos with the divine domain and false logos with the goatish life makes clear that he is primarily thinking of the attributive, or at least descriptional function of logos, as it expresses of somebody ('Hermogenes') or something "things that are not true (the case)". To restate it in a manner similar to Plato's approach to the matter in the *Timaeus* (see above, 14.3), false speech is not speech about nothing but always refers to something being the case in the outside world, even though this be nothing more than some indefinite nature or Receptacle.

A dialogue which seems to date from about the same period[27], *Euthydemus*, contains an important discussion of the falsehood thesis. After Dionysodorus had maliciously inferred from Socrates' wish that Clinias *become* wise, that he apparently wished him to become "one that he is not and no longer one that he is", and therefore, "wanted him to be dead", Ctesippus "flew into a rage for his darling when he heard this" and was inclined to reply "'On your head be it', if it had not been rather a rude thing to say" (283C8–E3). He asks Dionysodorus in a quite undignified way to state on what belief (*ti mathôn*) he could falsely charge him and the others of such a thing (*toiouton pragma*), namely "as that I should wish him (Clinias) to be done away with" (E5–6). Then Dionysodorus' brother seizes the opportunity to bring up his favourite thesis about falsehood and asks: "my dear Ctesippus, do you really think it is possible to speak falsely?" (E7–8). After Ctesippus' candid affirmation of this the show can start[28]:

[26] *klopikon*; rather than 'thievish' as it is usually rendered, albeit true that at *Rep.* III, 413B1–2 people are said to be deprived of true opinion "by theft" (*klapentes*) and by the spell of sorcery. Cf. Snell [1948:93] for both interpretations.
[27] See Guthrie IV, 266 and Méridier, 140–2.
[28] The serious philosophical nature of the passage is well elucidated in Sprague, 13–6.

Euthydemus, 283E9–284B8: Well ‹is false speech possible› by speaking ôr by not speaking the thing that the logos may be about? — By speaking it. — In that case, he speaks no other thing of the-things-that-are than just the one which he speaks? — Quite so. — So also this one thing which he speaks is part of the-things-that-are, independently of the rest? — Of course. — Now then, he who speaks that, speaks 'what-is'? — Yes. — But whoever speaks what-is and the-things-that-are speaks the truth. So Dionysodorus, since he speaks the-things-that-are, speaks the truth and tells no lie about you. — Yes, but he who speaks those things, dear Euthydemus, does not speak the-things-that-are. — But surely things-that-are-not are not? — Of course. — So surely the things-that-are-not can only be nowhere? — Nowhere, indeed. — Well, is it possible then that *anyone* could do something about these things, so as to make them *be*, ‹that is to say› 'the things that are nowhere'? — I don't think so.

In the next lines (284B8–C2) the art of rhetoric is introduced in order to make it clear that speech always involves *making* something, quite apart[29] from *doing* something, so that *legein* may be defined as '*both* to do *and* to make'. Now the sophist is in a stronger position to deny the possibility of falsehood since 'to speak things-that-are-not' would seem to amount to 'speaking nothing' and, accordingly to 'doing and making nothing':

Ibid., C2–9: Nobody, then, speaks the things-that-are-not, for ‹in speaking› he would at once *make* something; and you have admitted that nobody is able to make what-is-not. And so, on your own interpretation (*logon*), no one speaks falsely and given that Dionysodorus does speak, he speaks what is the case (*tàlêthê*) and things-that-are. — Yes, by Zeus, my dear Euthydemus, but only in a certain way he speaks the things-that-are, surely not *as* they are.

Dionysodorus then breaks in and quite ironically asks (C10–D1) Ctesippus if there are indeed people who speak of things in the way that they are (*ta pragmata hôs echei*).

To arrive at a proper understanding of this discussion one should first recall that the Greek *legein* is used indiscriminately to mean 'speak' and 'state', so that the phrase 'to speak the-things-that-are' sounds quite natural to Greek ears. In point of fact, the controversy between the sophists and Ctesippus centres around their different view of the pragma of the logos initially involved, which turns out to be (see at 283E4–5): 'wanting-one's-darling-to-be-dead-and-gone'. The sophists' argument obviously takes this attribute to be inseparably bound up with the subject, Ctesippus, so that the pragma disputed becomes:

1. 'Ctesippus-wanting-Clinias-to-be-dead'

and Ctesippus the unhappy really takes the pragma to be

1′. 'Me-wanting-Clinias-to-be-dead'

instead of clearly considering separately the attributive phrase,

'wanting-Clinias-to-be-dead'.

[29] Of course there is no fallacious confusion between 'make' and 'do' here. Their explicit opposition, as put forward in *Charmides*, 163B1–9 is still maintained here, where one only finds arguments for their association as far as the speech act is concerned. (See Hawtrey, 101). For that matter, Plato's later emphasis (at *Sophist*, 262E ff.; see above, 12.43) upon the speech act's *content* follows in the same train of thought.

Thus the brothers are entitled to regard

2. 'not-(Ctesippus-wanting-Clinias-to-be-dead)'

as the correct negation of (1) and (1′), whereas when wanting to rid himself of the mendacious charge Ctesippus should have tried to maintain something like

'not-(wanting-Clinias-to-be-dead)'

which would be the correct negation of the charge.

From the modern point of view one surely can object here to a fallacy of equivocation in that the phrase *ta onta* ('the-things-that-are') is being taken in two senses to mean both 'existing' and 'being true', in the same way as its negation is taken conversely to mean both 'not-existing' and 'being false'[30]. However, the modern point of view is surely not Plato's, I am afraid. To him, the problem solely concerns the precise nature of the pragma involved in true as well as false speech.

To begin with, surely neither of the two views supposes *pragma* to stand for some 'object' as such. Each indeed takes it to mean a certain state of affairs, to wit the object (*including* its conditions) *as conceived of*[31]. The sophist brothers are most explicit in regarding the subject *including* its attribute as just one whole or 'one being' which either is, or is not, the case (or rather, either is, or is nothing at all), whereas Ctesippus (who is probably acting as Plato's mouthpiece for the time being) is quite reluctant to accept such an Eleatic approach[32] to the matter, and makes every effort to avoid the bad consequences of the Eleatic pattern of '*either* all *or* nothing'. However, the only thing which Ctesippus seems able to do is to weakly qualify the notion of 'the-things-that-are' with his 'in a certain way' (*tropon tina*), instead of sticking to his guns and prizing open the opponents' monolithic notion of pragma and analysing it in a straight-forward manner into (a) a subject (being the case) and (b) a (supposed) attribute (not being the case, or, in terms of the *Sophist*: '*being*, but not-being-the-case'). It is true that a first, decisive step against the monolithic Eleatic view has been taken by that qualification, since because of the *hôs echei* phrase the supposed attribute is opposed, at least, to the whole pragma consisting of subject *plus* attribute.

Keyt [1973:289] is certainly right in taking the *hôs echei* phrase in the *Euthydemus* passage (284C8–9) to be an adverbial clause, since in the next lines (D3–E4) 'to speak ill of the bad' is offered as an instance of speaking things '*as* they are'. He has also noted well and understood[33] (*ibid.*) that in fact the *Euthydemus* and *Cratylus* passages are not parallel to the later *Sophist* discussion of false logos. In the *Sophist* passage Plato is successful in establishing a clear-cut opposition between the logos (being the supposed attribute) and the subject to which it is assigned. In *Euthydemus* and *Cratylus* as well the phrase *ta onta*, in the views of both the brothers and Ctesippus, still refers to the subject *including* its attributes.

This would seem all the more remarkable as Ctesippus' (Plato's) view of

[30] So Sprague, 15.

[31] The commentators have failed to see this, e.g. Hawtrey, 99.

[32] The Eleatic pattern of the two brothers' semantics is well observed by Sprague, 13.

[33] Owen [1971:265, n. 77] has observed the difference but failed to see its bearing on the respective views of *logos* found in *Cratylus-Euthydemus* and the *Sophist*.

pragma seems to be different from that of the brothers. On this account one might describe the difference between the situation as found here and as found in the *Sophist* as follows. If we assume with Nuchelmans (34) that the Aristotelian pragma is that which is designated by an accusative and infinitive phrase, it may be said that in the *Sophist* Plato associates the logos ('that which is said') with the infinitive phrase only, whereas in *Euthydemus* and *Cratylus* he made a little progress towards disposing of the Eleatic pattern and the monolithic structure of 'that which is said', by making Ctesippus contrast the subject's (supposed) phenomenal conditions with the subject as such.

All this is confirmed by the initial issue (283C2–E6) which had challenged the whole dispute, when Dionysodorus was assured by Socrates and his friends that they really desired Clinias to become wise and to be other than what he had been until then, viz. ignorant. The sophist master had inferred from this that they apparently wished him to be no longer the one he was at that moment (*hos d'esti nun*) and indeed to be dead and gone[34]. Gifford may certainly be right in remarking (28) that as *hos* is sometimes used in the sense of *hoios*, the sophist is preparing to play upon the double meaning. However, we are not dealing here with just a verbal game, just as at 283E–284C the real problem concerns the nature of the pragma involved in any logos. Is it an atomic, monolithic unity of subject *plus* its phenomenal conditions, or this subject ('bearer') taken as being just this? The subject matter is not entirely sophistical. When Sophocles (*Aiax*, 1259) has *ou mathôn hos ei physin*, Agamemnon intends to make Teucer recall his birth as a free-born (*eleutheron*) man and *hos* clearly refers to such a man including his virtues and qualities, no less than Plato himself does when making Socrates answer to Phaedrus (after the latter has assured that he will make Lysias compose a new speech) that he is sure of that, "so long as you, Phaedrus, continue to be the man you are" (*Phaedrus*, 243E2: *heôsper an êis hos ei*). The whole of someone's personality is involved, not just his properties; he does not *have* his character, he *is* a character[35]. Therefore Sprague's explanation (13) of the "mechanics" of this argument is a little too facile. She thinks that Dionysodorus only "drops the word 'ignorant' and, thus, produces a clear instance of a fallacy *secundum quid* in moving from not being some particular thing to not being absolutely"[36].

[34] For the strong sense of *exolônenai* at 283D8 (with the unusual prefix), see Hawtrey, *ad loc.*

[35] Hawtrey, who adds Euripides, *Alcestis*, 640, rightly points to the fact that *hos* refers to the essential nature of the person concerned, rather than to one of his properties and could as easily be glossed *hostis* as *hoios*. He refers to Stanford on Sophocles, *Aiax* 1259, and Kühner-Gerth II, 400, 2. Of course, modern idioms allow the same usage. For that matter, the process by which capital crimes become statute-barred by the lapse of time has also something to do with this phenomenon.

[36] Her conclusion that the fellow also plays with the double sense of 'is' (copulative and existential) is quite an anachronistic evaluation which, though thematically not incorrect, is rather unprofitable, too for the historian of philosophy. Besides, her explanation is not

The last part of this section (285A2–287C) sees Socrates' intervention which leads to a renewed discussion of the subject matter. He proposes not to quarrel about just a word (*onomati*), no doubt referring (as is rightly observed by Gifford, 31) to the highly emotive, 'to be dead and gone' (*exolônenai*). This is clear from the context: he himself is willing to volunteer for such a destruction: the brothers may do anything they like to him, even boiling, as long as they turn him out well.

Ctesippus is no less willing and tries to return to being on speaking terms with Dionysodorus. He is not angry with him, (he says), but is only speaking against what the other had said with regard to him (*pros me*; rather than Rouse's 'to me'). Dionysodorus keeps on quarrelling and ironically asks Ctesippus if there is such a thing as 'contradicting' (*antilegein*) and so introduces (285D7–8) the third popular thesis ('it is impossible to contradict')[37]. His argument runs along the lines of the Eleatic pattern[38]:

> *Euthyd.*, 285E9–286B7: Has each of the things-that-are its description (*logoi*)? — Of course. — Well, ‹describing› each thing (*hekaston*) as it is, or as it is not? — As it is. — Indeed, for if you remember, we just now showed that no one speaks ‹a thing› as it is not; for that matter, nobody speaks that which is not, as was shown [at 284C2] ‹...›. Would we be contradicting one another if we both uttered a description of the same pragma, or would we not in that case be 'speaking the same things' (*tauta*)? ‹...›. But if neither of us speaks the description of the pragma, would we then be contradicting one another? Surely, in this case neither of us would mention the pragma at all. ‹...›. On the other hand when I utter the pragma's description and you another one of another pragma, are we contradicting one another, then? Or am I speaking, then, the pragma, while you are not so doing at all? But how he who does not speak ‹it› could contradict the one who does speak ‹it›?

It seems to be important to clearly distinguish between *hekaston* and *pragma*, in the first place. The former word seems to stand for some concrete, particular 'thing' in the outside world or rather some bundle of particular dynameis, as will be seen later on (Ch. XVI). The latter for a mental entity[39], namely the particular *as it is conceived of* by those who are speaking. That *pragma* does not stand for the thing as such is clear from the context, since the phrase 'the pragma being not the same' would be trivial if it were to refer to, say, two different stones or trees, and nobody in the world, not even the most pedantic sophist, would claim, then, that it is impossible to just refer deictically to the same stone or tree.

It must strike the reader, further, that Dionysodorus makes indiscriminately use of the phrases 'to speak the description of a pragma' (*ton tou pragmatos logon legein*; occurring three times) and 'to speak the *pragma*' (*legein to pragma*; once). In either case *pragma* must be taken as standing for a subject *plus* (the) phenomenal condi-

completely in line with her correct evaluation (*ibid.*) of the argument as "of considerable significance, since it is based on a metaphysics incompatible with Plato's, namely, that of Parmenides".

[37] See above, 15.2. For the close connection of thesis (2) and (3), see Nuchelmans, 9 and *Euthyd.*, 286C6–8.

[38] See Sprague, 17.

[39] The dissimilarity of *hekaston* and *pragma* is commonly not observed (Gifford, Rouse, Sprague, Hawtrey).

tion(s) ascribed to it by the user of the logos. As in the preceding cases (283E9–284C9 and 283C2–E6), the sophist makes use of the fact that the attributes ascribed to a particular thing by the respective opponents *are* different and, by their inseparable cohesion with the subject designated, unavoidably make the pragma as a whole different. By rebutting all efforts made by their adversaries to break down the monolithic pragma, they leave the latter no choice and no refuge.

Ctesippus has been silenced by Dionysodorus' argument but Socrates goes on to attack the brothers by claiming that, if there is no such thing as false speaking or false opinion, there cannot be ignorance either, so that the sophists can only say good-bye to their dear profession, namely, teaching virtue (cf. 273D ff.).

Sprague finds (19) Socrates' attack "rather puzzling, since although he appears to say (286C4; 288A3–4) that the argument employed is self-refuting, it is not altogether clear in just what way he regards the argument as involving its own refutation". She is quite right in remarking that "to say that an argument which denies the possibility of ignorance is incompatible with the claim to teach is not at all the same as to say that this argument is self-refuting in its own nature". I am afraid, however, that she misses the point by too closely associating the passages mentioned. At 288A3–4 Socrates in fact produces the incompatibility argument, but surely does not say or suggest that it is self-refuting in itself, quite apart from any teaching claim of those who maintain it. On the other hand, a claim is made at 284C4 for the absolute form of self-refutation of the third popular thesis itself ('it is impossible to contradict'). Indeed he who maintains this thesis is without any defence against any opponent holding the position that contradiction is possible and, especially to a Greek, an indefensible thesis is not a thesis at all.

As to the proper attack on the sophists' Eleatic semantics and their view of pragma in particular, it is easily seen that in his last intervention Socrates fails to make any progress other than what he had already made through his mouthpiece, Ctesippus, at 283E1–284C9. That is to say, *ta onta* refers to the subject *including* its attributes and the *pragma* (being the notion of such a subject) is an adamantine unity, and this only allows one to oppose the attribute to the whole consisting of subject *plus* attribute, but definitely does not admit the opposition of the attribute as such to the subject alone. A solution to the problem of falsehood along these lines still remained impossible.

15.22. *True And False Opinion In The Republic*

An important passage on true and false opinion is found in *Republic* V, as a part of the section that discusses the question of why philosophers must rule (*Rep.* V,473C–VI,487A; see above, 8.3).

Socrates starts (477B7–8) from the distinctness of knowledge and belief as faculties and from this infers (in the usual way also found in Gorgias when he argues for his thesis of the impossibility of communication, see above, 15.1, n. 8) that knowledge and belief must have different objects (B9–10). Knowledge, then, is said to have as its natural object 'what is' (*tôi onti*), which is formulated more explicitly as *gnônai hôs estin to on* (B12–3). A similar formula is found at 478A7–8: "knowledge has as its natural[40] object 'what is', that is[41] *to on gnônai hôs echei*". The only difference between the two formulas is the use of *echei* in the latter. Cornford translates them as 'to know the truth about reality', and 'knowing the real as it is', respectively.

Some objections may be raised to his rendering. First, in translating each with 'knowledge' ('knowing') he equates *epistêmê* and *gnôsis* (*gnônai*). The findings of structural semantics argue strongly against this[42]. Besides, he too easily introduces the notions of 'truth' and 'reality'. I think that the best translation is 'recognising or perceiving by observation[43] 'what is' *as* it is (or: *as* it 'behaves')"[44].

Thus I would like to translate 478B3–4 as: "if 'what-is' is 'object of perceiving' or the 'perceptible' (*gnôston*), the object of opinion (*doxaston*)[45] must be something different from 'what is'".

In the next lines Socrates declines to regard 'what-is-not' (*to mê on*) as the object of opinion and infers from the fact that 'what-is-not' is the object of ignorance, and *doxa* is something inbetween knowledge and ignorance (cf. 477A–B), that the object of opinion must be something inbetween 'what-is' and 'what-is-not' (478B–D). *Gnosis* is associated with 'perceiving' and of the perceptible is considered something which is delineable as being 'one thing' (*hen ti*), which still seems to be somewhat obscure but not as dark as the object of ignorance:

> *Rep.* V, 478B3–C1: So if what-is is the object of perceiving, the object of opinion must be something different from what-is. — Can it be what-is-not? Or is that an impossible object even for opinion? Consider: he who has opinion directs it to something, does not he?; or can he opine nothing? — He is opining some one thing (*hen ge ti*); whereas what-is-not is not some one thing but could best be named 'nothing'.

Next, opinion is said to lie outside and beyond knowledge and ignorance and "be something more obscure than knowledge but brighter than ignorance and so be situated inbetween the two" (C10–D4). The relative obscurity of the object of opinion is associated with its being a mixture of what-is and what-is-not, whereas the absolute brightness of the former is suggested by the adverbial epitheton *eilikrinôs* ('without mixture', 'simple')[46]:

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[40] Of course *pephyken* is to be supplied from 478A5; cf. 477B12.

[41] As at 477B12 the infinitive must be epexegetically used.

[42] See Lyons [1963] whose investigations (175 ff.) tend to establish the inconvertibility of *gignôskein* and *epistasthai* (see esp. 177 and 206), to the extent that *gignôskein* seems to be generic to *epistasthai*. For *gignôskein*, see also Snell [1924:28–32]. See also below, 15.24, n. 66.

[43] Cf. Liddell and Scott *s.v.* and Lyons [1963], 206, who seems right in raising some doubts on L-S's view of *eidenai* as 'knowledge by reflection' (as opposed to 'by observation').

[44] For this rendering, see above, 14.1, n. 4.

[45] The Greek *gnôston* and *doxaston* are, at the same time, 'that which is perceived' and 'the perceptible' ('that which is opined' and 'the opinable', respectively). Therefore I prefer the ambiguous 'object of knowledge' ('opinion') to either of the two renderings.

[46] The connotation of 'one-ness' and 'being on itself', 'being discernable or delineable' is clearly found in Xenophon, *Cyropaedia* VIII, 5, 14, where it is said that "as every division (of soldiers) was so well distinguished (*dia to eilikrinê hekasta einai ta phyla*), it was much more

Ibid., 478D5–E4: Well, we said before that if something could be found such that it both *is* and at the same time *is-not*, such a thing (*to toiouton*) would lie between what simply *is* and what absolutely *is-not*; and that neither knowledge nor ignorance would bear on it but what is found, again, situated inbetween ignorance and knowledge. — And now we have found between the two that which we call 'opinion'. — It seems, then, that what remains to be discovered is that which shares in the two of them together, namely, in both being and not-being[47] and cannot properly be named (*prosagoreuomenon*) 'what-simply-*is*' nor 'what simply *is-not*'[48]. If that can be found, we may justly name it the object of opinion (*doxaston*).

The claim of 'what-*is*' and 'what *is-not*' being mixed in the object of opinion is further elaborated:

Ibid., 479B6–10: The large things and the small and the heavy and the light things, have they not just as much right to be named with these names as the opposite names? — Yes; any such thing will always have a claim to both ‹opposite designations›. — Then, can you say that anyone of these many things *is* that whatever it is said to *be*, anymore than that it *is not* that?

Finally, the many conventional notions of the mass of mankind about what is beautiful, or just, and so on, drift in a sort of twilight between 'what-is' and 'what-is-not' taken simply; and, accordingly, this entity is characterised as "fluctuating in that half-way region" (479D3–9).

The same idea is expressed in *Rep.* VI, 508D4–9, where it is said that when the soul's gaze is fixed upon True Being, the soul at once understands and perceives and seems to have insight, but when it looks towards that mixture of bright and dark, namely that which is subject to becoming and perishing, it has (only) opinion and dim sight, shifting to and fro.

It may be gathered from these passages that the object of *doxa* is still regarded as 'some one thing' (*hen ti*), but, unlike the *Cratylus-Euthydemus* view of the content of (true and false) logos, this 'some one thing', has no longer an atomic structure but is to some extent qualified as a mixture of what-is and what-is-not, which is neither entirely bright nor entirely obscure but "drifting in a sort of twilight". Thus the Eleatic view is subjected to a more fundamental attack than was the case in *Cratylus* or *Euthydemus*[49], since Plato introduces the notion the admixture

easy to see where good order prevailed". It should be noticed that the word *eilikrinês* does not properly connote Sublimity, or Purity, since it is also used to designate the unmixed 'not-being', as appears from 478E3. Cf. also Xenophon, *Apol. Socratis* II, 2, 3 where is talk of an *eilikrinês adikia*.

[47] The Greek has *amphoterôn metechon, tou einai te kai mê einai*, where Chambry (Budé edition) rightly renders *te kai* 'à la fois'.

[48] *oudeteron* (at E3) being an internal object (neither of these names') of the verb *prosagoreuein* as at 479B7 ('these' as 'the opposite names'). For this use, see above, 9.32, n. 4 and 14.3, n. 21.

[49] As is rightly observed by Sprague, 14, n. 10. Notice that at *Rep.* III, 413A8 speaking the truth (or rather 'possessing truth') is defined as "thinking the things-that-are" (*to ta onta doxazein*). The parallel is of little interest, I think, as (1) *doxazein* seems to be rather loosely used, and (2) on account of speaking the *truth*, the atomic view of the pragma involved does not much matter.

of Being and not-Being, which cannot but seem a horrible idea to any adherent of the Eleatic doctrine.

15.23. *False Opinion And False Thinking In The Theaetetus*

At 187C3 ff. Socrates interrupts the search for the nature of knowledge with a long digression on the nature and possibility of false opinion. After the discussion of *Rep.* V, 477B–479B it is hardly surprising that Socrates proposes to proceed with a similar splitting up of the Parmenidean Being as it is set out there; namely, "to proceed, not by the way of knowing and not knowing, but by way of being and not being" (*kata to einai kai mê*; 188C10–D1). He explains:

Theaetetus, 188D3–E1: May it not simply be that one who opines[50] the things-that-are-not about anything whatsoever (*ho ta mê onta peri hotououn doxazôn*) cannot but be opining what is false, whatever his state of mind may be in other respects? ‹. .....› But ‹. .....› can anyone opine what-is-not (*to mê on doxasei*), either about something of the things-that-are (*peri tôn ontôn tou*) or just by itself (*auto kath' hauto*)? I suppose we must answer to that: 'Yes, when he is thinking (*oiomenos*)[51] but actually thinks what is not true (*mê alêthê oiêtai*).

The addition of the formula 'either about something of the things-that-are or just by itself' is of great importance, as it clearly qualifies the rigidity of the Eleatic thesis lying behind the description given here. The opposition is not, as Guthrie assumes (V, 107), between "thinking 'it is not' within the Parmenidean scheme of one Unique Being (that 'wholly undiscoverable path', *fr.* 2. 5 f.) and thinking of one of the many commonly accepted things that it 'is not' in the same sense (i.e. does not exist)". It rather refers to the contradistinction of some not-being concerning a subject in the outside world and the phenomenon of not-being taken as such, or not-being in general. We should also reject Bondeson's suggestion [1969:117–8] that this passage anticipates the later distinction (supposedly) found in the *Sophist* between two senses of 'what-is-not', the existential and the merely differentiating — 'does not exist' and 'is not *x*' (viz. what is wrongly thought to be). First, nothing of the kind is found in that dialogue, and, what is more destructive of his suggestions, the opposition of 'relative — on its own' refers not to anything definite, but just to that vague, and in Plato's eyes still problematic thing, which is meant by the phrase 'what-is-not'.

Nor is it an anticipation of the important distinction that is later drawn in the *Sophist* (262E–263D) between an entity and some (either correctly or wrongly assigned) attributes. The *Sophist* view could only be maintained after the Eleatic view had been fully dismissed. As is clear from *Theaetetus*, 183D–184A Socrates still declines to make a direct attack upon Parmenides, "that reverend and awful figure" (183E6–7). The only thing which seems to be accomplished here is the

[50] I must agree, 'opines the things-that-are-not' is rather odd English, but translations such as McDowell's 'has in his judgement' could mislead the Greekless reader. For that matter, a certain ease in swallowing barbarisms is the privilege of the non-native user of a language.

[51] *oiesthai* is here used as a neutral term for any cognitive act.

qualification of the notion of not-being itself in order to obtain a clearer insight into the phenomenon of 'false speaking'.

For the time being the phrase 'thinking-what-is-not-true' is explained as contradictory, as is seen from the fact that Socrates compares it with 'seeing something and yet seeing nothing' (E6):

Ibid., 188E8–189A5: "Well, if he really sees some one[52] thing (*hen ge ti*), then he sees one of the things-that-are. Or do you think that the one is always to be found among the things-that-are-not?" — Then if he sees some one thing, he sees something that is. And if he hears something, he hears some one thing and hears something that is. And if he touches some one thing, he also touches something that is since it is one.

Socrates now suggests that the verb *doxazein* ('to opine') should be treated in the same way as 'see', 'hear' and 'touch'. If so, it turns out that anyone who opines, 'opines a thing which is' and 'opining what-is-not' unavoidably comes down to 'not opining at all'. In short, there can be no act of opining which does not have an object that is among the things-that-are:

Ibid., 189A7–B5: And he who opines, opines some one thing, does not he? — And if one opines some one thing, he opines some thing that is? — So if someone opines what is not, he opines nothing (*ouden*)? And he who opines nothing (*mêden*), accordingly does not opine at all. — So it is impossible to opine what-is-not, either about one[53] of the things-that-are or just by itself. — So false opinion is something other than opining the things-that-are-not.

So this attempt to establish the real nature of false opinion also turns out to be abortive. Another move is made by supposing that false opinion occurs "when somebody exchanges one of the things-that-are for another in his mind and says it is that other; in this way he will always think what-*is*, but one thing instead of another, and since he misses what he was aiming at, he can rightly be said to opine false things" (189B12–C4).

Theaetetus immediately accepts this and supplies himself the examples: "whenever somebody opines ugly instead of beautiful or beautiful instead of ugly, then he opines truly false things" (189C5–7). If one remembers that the Greek has for 'ugly' and 'beautiful' the neuter forms *aischron* and *kalon* which stand interchangeably for 'an ugly (beautiful) thing' and 'ugliness' ('beautifulness') one may suppose that Theaetetus has in mind cases where somebody misjudges a thing's properties: he might mistake a beautiful stone for an ugly one. Such a view comes very close to the definitive answer given in the *Sophist*, it would seem. On this interpretation, the present view is fundamentally different from the first one where false opinion was defined as mistaking one thing for another (187E–188C). I think, Ackrill is right in taking apart the two views [1966:388–90].

Anyhow, Socrates rather surprisingly takes himself the keyterms in their

[52] Cornford [1935:114, n. 1] does not seem to be right in taking *hen ge ti* ('at least some one') to be opposed to *ouden* ('not even one'), as the word *hen* surely connotes unity or singleness, as is rightly observed by McDowell (199), wo refers to *Sophist*, 238A5–B5. For the single *dynameis* as the referents of the expression, see below, 16.12.

[53] Reading *tôn ontôn ‹tou›* as at 188D9.

abstract senses, rather than as referring to any immanent qualities, and so exploits Theaetetus' nice oxymoron ('truly false') in asking him if he really thinks that:

Ibid., 189C1–D5: it is possible that a quick thing behaves[54] slowly, or a light one heavily or any opposite ‹quality› behaves, not in its[55] own manner but in that of its opposite, ‹in one word› in a manner opposite to itself (*heautôi enantiôs*). Now, you are satisfied with the view that false opining is other-opining?

So Socrates is assuming the confusion to lie between the ugly *qua tale* and the beautiful *qua tale* (where it should be noted that these phrases need not necessarily refer to Platonic Forms, as it, in the case of 'ugly' certainly does not). I cannot go the whole way with Guthrie (V, 109) who thinks that, on Socrates' interpretation, if one is to make a false judgement as this is now defined one must consciously entertain the nonsensical statement 'An odd number is even' or 'oddness is evenness'. He thinks, accordingly, that "the *Theaetetus*, though its lateness is scarcely in doubt, resembles the early dialogues in being deliberately aporetic and in consequence Socratic .... His object .... is not to teach but, by his art of mental midwifery, to elicit and test his interlocutor's own ideas ..... To attain this end he is not above misrepresenting a young man's meaning". I really wonder whether Guthrie does not entirely miss the point. In point of fact, Socrates' reply comes down to expurgating Theaetetus' examples in testing their validity; how could someone confound something's (*present*) beauty with an (*absent*) ugliness, since 'the beautiful' in it makes it act (behave) beautifully, and not in an ugly manner? The man must, indeed, then mistake ugliness ('ugly behaviour') for beauty, and quite surprising this mistake is! Thus the man in Theaetetus' examples does not make a nonsensical statement, as he makes no 'statement' at all. His error is to mistakenly 'name' something he sees. Modern scholars are, time and again, too rash in interpreting Plato in terms of 'statement', where his argument does not go (and surely does not need to go) beyond the more primitive level of 'naming' things[56]. In fact Guthrie has himself well observed that Socrates does not shirk from the real question in the end and pursues the problem of 'other-opining' more seriously in the similes of the wax tablet and aviary (as early as at 191A ff.), where Theaetetus carefully distinguishes (195E–196A) between the extensional ('seeing 11 objects and counting 12 objects') and the intensional items ('11 = 12'). So there seems to be little reason to ascribe Socrates a 'little mystification' (Guthrie, V, 109).

The further discussion of the *allodoxein* seems to confirm our interpretation. After Socrates has recapitulated Theaetetus' suggestion that it is possible "to posit something in one's thought (*têi dianoiai tithesthai*) as something else, not the thing

[54] I think this is the correct rendering of *gignesthai* with an adverb here. Parallels are to be found in Plutarchus, *Moralia* 119D; 127B; 189B (the expression *chalepôs gignesthai*); 446B, 668B; 704E (from Daniel Wyttenbach, *Lexicon Plutarcheum* I; Leipzig 1843). Cornford's 'be slowly quick' and 'behave like its opposite' are of the same type.

[55] Refers to 'opposite'.

[56] Compare this with what has been said about the role of *dionomazein* in Plato's semantics, above, 15.1 (and below, 15.24, n. 63). McDowell's exposition is I confess rather obscure (203–4), which is partly due to his use of the term 'judgement', I am afraid.

it is", it is inferred that, if so, someone's thought (*dianoia*) must be "thinking both the things at once or in succession" (189D7–E3). Next, thinking is defined as "a discourse (*logon*) that the mind itself goes through with itself about whatever it is considering" and Socrates explains that when the mind is thinking, it is simply carrying on a discussion, asking itself questions and answering them, and saying 'Yes, it is' and 'No, it is not' (*kai phaskousa kai ou phaskousa*). But when the mind comes to delimitate (*horisasa*) and states one and the same single thing (*to auto êdê phêi*) without wavering any longer between the two (*mê distazêi*)[57], we call that its 'opinion' (*doxan*). Thus opining and opinion are equated with *legein* and *logos eirêmenos*, respectively (189E6–190A6).

So it might be inferred that whenever somebody "opines one thing ‹to be› the other", he is, consequently (*kai*), saying to himself that one thing is the other. Again, Socrates attacks this view by first referring the 'two things' to two different (or opposite) 'properties' ('beautiful', 'ugly'), but then goes on to extend such false thinking even to mistaking one *essential* nature for another, by persuading himself that the conclusion is unavoidable that an ox is a horse (190A8–C3)[58]. Thus Socrates induces Theaetetus to concede that *if* one opines both things, it is impossible that one should 'opine the one the other' and even if one opines only one of the two and the other not at all, one will never opine that one of them *is* the other (190D4–8). Theaetetus readily agrees, "since one would otherwise be obliged to have a grasp of something which one did not even opine".

It is easily seen, now, that throughout their discussion Socrates and Theaetetus have in mind the apprehension (grasping) and naming of things and definitely not statements. On the contrary, Socrates makes every possible effort in order to make it clear that 'to take A for B' cannot be supposed to mean 'to think that A *is* B'. What he tries to say rules out most clearly the involvement of any propositional attitude in the occurrence of false opinion. The same unmistakable impression is given by the object proper to the two metaphorical approaches made in the next sections, those of the 'wax tablet' and 'the aviary' (191A–200C), where false thinking (and false opinion) are explained as, for example, mistaking a stranger for Socrates (191B3–5) or as 'mis-catching' a ringdove in mistake for a common pigeon (199B6). In both cases something perceived is incorrectly named and brought up in discourse. In this connection, I would like to quote an important remark by Guthrie (V, 112–3) on many modern discussions of Plato's arguments on account of knowledge:

It is often pointed out that one difficulty in accounting for false belief or judgement is Plato's assimilation of belief and knowledge to seeing and touching. This is basic to both his and Aristotle's epistemology, for different reasons. Both thought of knowledge as acquired

[57] No doubt, the notions of 'not wavering any longer' (Plato, *Theaetetus*, 190A4) and 'arresting one's thought' (Aristotle, *De interpr.* 3, 16b20) which both concern the speaker or 'thinker', as well as that of 'acquiescing' ('stopping', viz. asking further questions or doubting *etc.*; see above, 14.3, n. 26) which is associated with the hearer, should be regarded as all belonging to the same semantic field.

[58] It is to be noted that, at 190C8–D1, Socrates seems to confine himself to 'properties'.

by a process resembling sensation in its directness, Plato because it consisted in a sudden mental vision of a Form ensuing on the philosopher's reasoning about the object of experience .... and Aristotle because, after his abandonment of the transcendent Forms, the philosopher's grasp of immanent form or essence depended ultimately on the ability to make the first inductive (and rationally unjustifiable) leap from individual sensations to the lowest universal .... I mention all this now ..... to emphasize that very much more is involved in Plato's arguments here than a mere vulgar error of confusing 'knowledge that' with 'knowledge by acquaintance'.

There is, indeed, in Plato's view of false opinion or thinking no single trace of a modern propositional attitude nor, especially, is any kind of predication involved. What is considered is the act of naming and, by that, designating something by some descriptive (sometimes inappropriate) name. So the 'pieces of knowledge' (for which the birds in the aviary evidently stand) should be taken to mean the diverse descriptive contents[59] contained in different names. And, on account of Plato's distinction between 'possessing' (*kektêsthai*) and 'having' (*echein*) a piece of knowledge, it may be stated (see also McDowell, 220) that a bird's presence in one's aviary stands for one's possession of a piece of knowledge whereas having it is represented by having the bird in hand. So by 'possession' is to be understood one's acquaintance with names (including their meanings), and their use in an act of thinking or speaking is to be equated with actually *assigning* them, either correctly or incorrectly. According to what is said at 197E6, *knowing* a thing amounts to possessing a piece of knowledge concerning some particular thing which has come to be known or discovered. This is clear from the passage:

Ibid., 197D4–E6: Well, just as, previously, we constructed a sort of moulded lump of wax in our minds, so now let us imagine in every mind, a sort of aviary for birds of every sort, some in flocks apart from the rest, some in small groups, and some solitary, flying about just anywhere among them all. — We must say that when one is a child this cage is empty; and in place of the birds we must think of pieces of knowledge. Whatever piece of knowledge somebody comes to possess and shuts up in his enclosure, we must say he has learnt (*memathêkenai*), or found himself (*heurêkenai*), the *pragma* of which that piece of knowledge was; and that *that* is what knowing is.

Some comment on this important passage. As has been suggested above, the diverse birds[60] might be taken to stand for different (descriptive) names by which

[59] McDowell (220–1) has an interesting note on 197D7–8 where Socrates alludes to some distinctions among the process of knowledge in a person's mind. "It is impossible to be sure exactly what is meant. The single birds which fly among all the rest may perhaps be identified with something like the all-pervasive Greatest Kinds introduced at *Sophist*, 254B7–D2; cf. also the category of things which may be thought about anything, mentioned at 185C4–186A1. The flocks of birds apart from the others are possibly to be associated with the collections mentioned at 157B8–C2; or, alternatively, a typical flock might be the knowledge of all the numbers, possessed by a person who is versed in arithmetic. The groups of a few birds may represent knowledge of species grouped under genera. But no weight should be attached to any such conjectures. Plato makes no use, in what follows, of the distinctions alluded to here".

[60] See the previous note on the diversity of the birds.

one tries to identify particular things[61]. So the pieces of knowledge somebody comes to possess after childhood are to be taken as concerning particular 'things' in the outside world somebody has come to know. This cognitive act causes the anamnesis process in that the knowledge of the Forms acquired before one's birth is actualised *on account of* some particular partaking in the Form(s) involved.

What about the pragma, then? The piece of knowledge is said to be of, or to concern, if you want, the pragma. I think that the word *pragma* does not stand for a 'thing' in the outside world as such but rather for that thing *as conceived of* so that it presumably refers to that 'thing' *including* the 'property' (or 'properties') assigned to it, either correctly or incorrectly.

At 198D Socrates attempts to provide some more insight into the subject–matter by refining the distinction between possessing and having knowledge. His words seem to confirm the above interpretation:

> *Ibid.*, 198D1–8: Well, using our comparison with possessing and catching pigeons, we will say that there are two sorts of catching: one before possession, which aims at getting possession; the other when one has possession, which aims at getting hold of what one has possessed for some time and having it in one's hands. Similarly, regarding those ‹particulars› of which one, after learning them, had some time ago possessed pieces of knowledge, it is still possible to come to know even those same particulars again, by once more getting hold of, and keeping, the knowledge of each, which knowledge one had possessed for some time but not had readily available to one's mind.

Of course, 'catching pigeons' stands for the attempt to have, or get hold of, some pieces of knowledge concerning certain particulars. One sort of catching bears on, say our *first*[62] getting hold of the man Socrates, which piece of knowledge is stored in our memory. The other type concerns the process of recalling this piece of knowledge as a result of meeting with the man once more (after a long time) or some stranger who looks like Socrates. In the latter case the stranger is mistaken for Socrates.

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[61] McDowell rightly speaks (217) of "bits of identifying knowledge". For these particular 'things' being either (bundles of) *dynameis*, or, so to speak, 'a part of the Receptacle', see below, 16.12 and 16.4.

[62] Guthrie remarks (V, 113) that the aviary theory as well as that of the wax tablet, offers an empiricist *tabula rasa* view of knowledge, leaving no room for anamnesis of Forms, since Socrates explicitly says (197E2–3) that in childhood we start with our aviaries empty. He thinks that for maieutic purposes Plato does not feel bound to express his true opinions. I am afraid, he is wrong. The *Theaetetus* passage has no single bearing on the anamnesis theory which concerns our acquisition of the Forms (in their mental status, of course) prior to our earthly life, but intends to make clear how, in every case in which somebody actually gets to know different particulars partaking in some Form(s), the process is going on. Thus our passage is not contrary to the anamnesis doctrine but rather presupposes it. It should always be remembered that the pragma which somebody comes to know, concerns (or rather, is our notion of) a particular-having-some-form(s)-present-in-it, not our pre-existing notions of the transcendent Form(s) involved. Likewise, McDowell is entirely wrong in reading (219; 223) into 195B–196C and 199C–D an implicit criticism of the theory of Recollection, let alone that the theory of Forms is criticised at 195B–196C, as he suggests (219). For Plato's retention of the anamnesis theory in the late dialogues, see Gulley, 108–20.

Next the question is put in the context of the enterprise of trying to find out what some number is and that of reading (198E1–199A3; see McDowell, 221–2). As counting is here meant as in the context of a set of concrete objects, rather than the working out of some abstract calculation (as referred to at 198C1–2), similarly 'reading' stands for a process of identifying each letter, or spelling out words, letter by letter.

On these lines, a solution to the problem of false opinion seems to arise. Although it is impossible, Socrates argues (199A–B), that one does not possess what one possesses, or that somebody does not know what he knows (*eidenai*), all the same it *is* possible to get hold of a false opinion about it (*peri autou*). That is because *possessing* that piece of knowledge does not involve *actually having* it, since it is still possible that one possesses this piece and yet *has* another piece of knowledge instead. Well that happens, when, in trying to catch (= to actually 'have') some piece of knowledge or other, among those that are flying around in the aviary, one misses and gets hold of a different piece instead of the right one. But when one gets hold of the piece of knowledge one is after, then one is free from falsehood (*apseudein*) and opines the things-that-are (*ta onta doxazein*). In this way (*houtô dê*) both true speech and false speech are possible.

However, the solution is only an apparent one since, Socrates warns (199C6–7), a still stranger consequence is coming in view, viz. that an interchange of, *nota bene*, pieces of *knowledge* actually possessed should result in *false* opinion (199C9–10). So ignorance of some particular thing should come about, not as a result of a lack of knowing (*agnômosynê*) but of one's own piece of knowledge concerning that very thing. Is not it very unreasonable, he asks Theaetetus, that one should 'opine the one the other' and *vice versa*? Just because of this *vice versa* one ends up by recognising (*gnônai*) nothing and being ignorant (*agnoêsai*) of everything, and that, one should notice, when *knowledge* has come to be present in one's mind. On this argument, the presence of ignorance may just as well lead to knowing or that of blindness to seeing. Rather desperate, Theaetetus proposes to introduce 'pieces of ignorance' (199E1–6): whenever somebody gets hold of a piece of knowledge he opines true things, but if he gets hold of a piece of ignorance he comes to opine false things. Socrates praises his inventiveness but proves that, in the false opiner's mind, such a 'piece of ignorance' must act as a piece of knowledge.

It is evident that the theory of the diverse pieces of knowledge (represented by the diverse birds in the aviary) must basically fail to solve the problem of pseudos in that, throughout the discussion, the Eleatic view of the monolithic pragma is maintained. Both the piece of knowledge as well as that odd thing called 'piece of ignorance' are considered to be *unanalysable* pragmata (e.g. 'this-thing-being-Socrates', 'this-thing-being-a-stranger') instead of something *being* such-and-such but *being-not*, at the same time, so-and-so.

Thus the upshot of the *Theaetetus* passages discussed so far is that Plato is still far from making a frontal assault upon the Eleatic view of the (atomic and monolithic) pragma involved in all kinds of thinking and asserting. One area in which he makes some progress (also as compared with the *Cratylus-Euthydemus* and *Republic* stages) is in considering, though rather hesitantly, a thing's (putative) attribute

apart from its (putative) subject ('Theaetetus'). It is remarkable indeed that, as early as *Theaetetus*, 188D3 ff., he recognises himself this ontological approach (cf. 188C10–D1) as the counterpart of the psychological (epistemological) approach taken earlier at 187E–188C as well as *Republic* V, 477B7–479B10.

However, the other attempts occurring in this section, 'false opinion as the misfitting of a perception to a memory' (where the mind is supposed to act as a wax tablet; 191A–196C), as well as that embodied in the aviary metaphor (197B–200C: 'false opinion as 'mis-catching') will turn out to be abortive ones, since they do not succeed in disposing of the Eleatic view of *one* being, even inasfar as particulars of the outside world are concerned.

One need not wonder that, when at 199B8–9 Socrates once more defines true opinion, he and Theaetetus are back, again, to calling it 'to opine the-things-that-are' (*ta onta*) where, as usual, the phrase *ta onta* refers to the (notion of the) things *including* their conditions taken together as an inseparable unity. The example used is also remarkable in this respect: a ring-dove is mistaken for a common pigeon, so that a domesticated dove is caught instead of just a dove, where the mistake concerns not the 'doveness' but only the dove's specific condition of 'being domesticated'. Socrates, we would think, could not easily come closer to the more fruitful distinction between a thing and its 'attribute' than he was here. However, the Eleatic view of the oneness of 'what-is' once more blocked him this route, it seems.

The final section of the dialogue is important in that it finally comes really close to the solution by taking *logos* into consideration. In introducing it as '*compound* name' consisting of two *different* parts, the preliminary conditions are met for obtaining insight into the nature of asserting, in true speech as well as false speech.

15.24. '*True Opinion With A logos*' *In The Theaetetus*

The concluding section of our dialogue (201C–210B) discusses the claim of true opinion accompanied by an account (*meta logou*) to be knowledge. It opens with Theaetetus most happily remembering ("I had forgotten, but now it comes back to me": 201C8–9) some theory that knowledge is true opinion accompanied by a *logos*[63].

The key passage, 201E1–202B5 has been discussed earlier (above, 7.22). Its philosophical effect is to firmly establish the claim that the compound natural thing in the outside world is not a mere aggregate of separate things but rather a unity over and above the elemental constituents (204A). This compound entity must be an intelligible whole, knowable down to its constituents, inclusively (205E). One can only come to truly know it by means of a *logos* (see above, 7.22).

Gulley is quite right in claiming (94) that, from now, Plato goes on to explore the hypothesis that knowledge is acquired as the result of an *analysis* of a particular

[63] The underlying presuppositions that only that can be known of which a *logos* is possible and that 'giving a logos' precisely is articulating or delineating a thing (in the sense of *dionomazein*) will be discussed in our section 16.4.

perceptible object. This analysis is accomplished by positing a *logos* of the object. Thus true opinion will be accompanied, or rather expressed, by a logos. This is to be explained to the effect that the simple (atomic) elements of natural things are (1) nameable, but incapable of having any compound name or account (*logos*), and (2) perceptible (*aisthêta*) but as such incapable of being an object of either true opinion (or knowledge)[64]. On the other hand, the complex natural entities cannot only be both perceived[65] and named but also described by that 'combination of names' constituting the *logos*, and this logos also expresses and explains our true opinion about those entities.

Guthrie thinks (116) that the weakness of the theory is also shown up empirically, by the experience of learning. The elements — letters, notes in music *etc.* — are the basis of our knowledge of their complexes. In general, elements are more clearly known than their compounds, so that it is absurd to say that a compound is knowable and an element unknowable (206B). Though all this may surely be correct, Guthrie makes a remarkable mistake by failing to recall Plato's definition of knowledge, viz. perception *plus* an insight into the structure (or composition) of an entity. So it is not absurd at all but just definitorially correct to say that a compound is (in principle) knowable and an element unknowable.

It is not entirely correct to say that the dream theory is just refuted by Socrates, period. As its introduction as a 'dream' may suggest, Plato wants to produce a rough sketch of his own view of the matters involved (see above, 7.21; 13.2, n. 34). This can also be gathered from Socrates' suggestion that the compound entity is not a mere aggregate (or juxtaposition) of separate things but rather an intelligible whole (203E–205E), so that the logos must be something more than just an enumeration of elementary parts juxtaposed (206E–208B).

The latter suggestion occurs in the discussion of the three possible meanings of *logos*. First, it is the noun cognate of the verb *legein* ('to say', 'to speak', see above, 13.13; 14.4) and includes any expression of thought in words ('names and attributes'; see above, 13.13; 14.4). Socrates remarks (206D7–E3) that, in this broad sense, everybody can give a *logos* just to express his thoughts, with no guarantee at all that he produces 'knowledge'.

The second sense is 'account' taken as an enumeration of a thing's elements (206E4–207D2). McDowell is likely to be right in associating this sense with the dream theory and understands Plato's words at 207B6 as an allusion to it. Indeed,

[64] See Gulley 96, who is quite right in taking (97–8) *logos* at 202B2–C5 to stand not for 'statement' but for 'account', but not in thinking (98) that in the first part of the passage (201D–202B2) *logos* should mean 'statement'. We will see that his argument is not conclusive at all, as far as 201D–202B2 is concerned.

[65] As is rightly observed by Gulley, 99: "All simples are perceptible, and there is nothing in Plato's argument to exclude the perceptibility of complexes. Moreover, it is entirely consistent with this argument that perception should be the criterion of whether or not the enumerative 'account' of the simple constituents which is a condition of knowledge, is a correct account and yields knowledge, and that perception should be the criterion of whether or not the belief that the complex is identifiable as this or that is true". See also below, 16.2.

"it shares with the dream theory the following feature: if the definition of knowledge under consideration is correct, then it follows that only what is complex can be known" (McDowell, 252). Hence the question arises why the second sense of *logos* should be worth discussing, McDowell asks, after what he regards as the refutation of the dream theory. I think that the answer is rather easy to give: Plato takes the opportunity, now, to improve this notion of *logos* by the suggestion that the weakness of this sort of account is that, as a mere enumeration, it must fail to give a real account of a thing. The successful logos will not enumerate, but 'weave together' the elemental parts, as is proposed in the *Sophist* (see above, 12.44).

The third possible sense of logos is 'account' taken as a distinguishing formula (208C–210A). The notion of knowledge as true opinion *plus* such an account proves to be untenable because adding such an account to true opinion would be meaningless as the account would belong to the true opinion itself, and so could not be or constitute knowledge. Socrates explains it as follows:

Ibid., 209A1–B3: Suppose I have a correct opinion (*doxan*) about you; then if I can get hold, in addition, of the account of you (*proslabô ton son logon*), then I apparently recognise you (*gignôskô dê se*)[66]; if not, I only have an opinion about you. — And 'account' means, as was said, 'what gives expression to your differentness (*diaphorotêtos*). — Well then, at the time that I had only an opinion, I had no grasp in my thought of any of the points in which you differ from others? — Then I had in my mind one of the common things, none of which you have to any greater extent than anyone else does. — But, for heaven's sake, if that was so, how could I possibly be 'opining you' anymore than anyone else?

So it has been made perfectly clear that one should not extrapolate the 'account' (*logos*) out of the pragma of true opinion. It is the pragma itself that must be expressed through the logos, which involves its being *analysed* into its proper elements signified by names. Again, its Eleatic monolithic structure has blocked so far the solution to the problem of true and false speech. The parallelism of the ontic structure of natural things with the structure of speech having already been established in the *Theaetetus* (201A–202D), it has been implicitly shown that the first thing to do will be to destroy the Eleatic view of 'One single Being'[67]. Once this has been replaced by a metaphysics of 'Being *and* not-Being' the proper nature of the compound name or *logos* can be perceived. This will be attempted at in Plato's *Sophist*.

15.25. *Falsehood In The Sophist*

In the opening section of the great Intermezzo in the *Sophist* (237A–264B) the EV asks Theaetetus what one should understand by the phrase 'to say, or think, that

[66] The verb *gignôskein* when used as generic term of *epistasthai* does not take a direct object either unless some skill is involved (e.g. *epistasthai polla erga*). See also Lyons [1963], 170–1; 179. So the former verb may be seen here as a substitute for the latter.
[67] See also Gulley, 105–6. Hicken [1957] fails to see this and takes (187 ff.) the final discussion of the *Theaetetus* to be "a rearguard engagement in a moment of defeat".

falsehoods really *are*', without being caught in self-contradiction by the mere use of such words (236E4–5; see above, 12.3). They decide to scrutinise, first, the phrases 'what-is-absolutely-not' and 'what-is-not', respectively (for these discussions, see above, 4.2). It is claimed that any speech act (or act of 'opining') must have its own content and thus refer to *some* 'thing' (which will be called later on its *pragma*; see above, 15.23). Assuming this, at least, is a must, and can only be ignored at the cost of self-contradiction. So the notion of 'what-absolutely-is-not' should be dismissed, especially since the Sophist could not be caught if his domain were to be nullified (see above, 12.3). If we still charge him of making 'verbal images' (239D3), we have to concede that they really *are* images, however they are deprived of being something *real*[68].

So they have to determine what exactly should be understood by 'likeness' (at 239D–240C) and 'falsehood' (at 240D–241B). The latter passage is of interest to us, now.

After he has remarked that, as the result of the Sophist's art, our mind 'opines false things' (*pseudê doxazein*), the EV defines false opinion as 'opining things contrary to the-things-that-are' (*tanantia tois ousi*). The last formula, then, is rephrased as 'to opine the-things-that-are-not' (*ta mê onta*; 240D3–9). Theaetetus accepts the definitions and the following refinements are put forward[69]:

Sophist, 240D9–241B3: You mean, then, by false opinion 'opining-the-things-that-are-not'? — Necessarily. — Does that mean opining that the-things-that-are-not *are* not, or that the-things-that-are-not absolutely (*ta mêdamôs onta*)[70] in some way (*pôs*) *are*? — It must at least mean opining that things-that-are-not (*ta mê onta*), in some way, *are*, if anybody is ever to be in error about something albeit to the smallest extent. — And also, of course, opining that things that certainly (*pantôs*) *are*, are not in any way at all? — Yes. — That, too, is falsehood? — Yes, that, as well. — And as to false speech (*logos pseudês*), I suppose, it is to be regarded along the same lines as stating that the-things-that-are are not and that the-things-that-are-not, are? — Yes, how else could it be *false* speech? — Hardly, in any other way. But the Sophist will deny that ‹.....› — ‹.....›. He will say that we are contradicting what was said just now, when we dare to say that false things (*pseudê*) *are* in opinions and speech (*en doxais te kai kata logous*)[71]. For we are obliged time and again to bestow 'what-is' upon 'what-is-not' (*tôi gar mê onti to on proshaptein*), after agreeing just now that this is altogether impossible.

Keyt seems to be right in glossing the passage thus (286): "Suppose, to use Plato's later example, that Theaetetus is sitting, and not flying. Then .... the negative statement states that a thing-that-is, namely, Theaetetus-sitting, *is not*, while the affirmative statement states that a thing-that-is-not, namely, Theaetetus flying, *is*". He happily rephrases our modern '*S–P*' propositional structure into the Platonic one: 'the pragma is the case' ('it is the case [Theaetetus, flying]', or 'it is not the case [Theaetetus, sitting]', respectively; see above, 12.42 and below, 15.3).

[68] For the context, see above, 4.22.
[69] See also Keyt [1973], 286–7.
[70] The phrase cannot stand here for 'what-is-absolutely-not', but means 'things-that-are-not, properly speaking'. See also Cornford [1935], 213, n. 1.
[71] 'In opinions and their wordings' one might say.

It is easily seen that the pragma is still regarded as a whole (designated here by *ta onta*, and *ta mê onta*, respectively). However, a definite progress is made in that the problem of falsehood is described, for the first time, in terms of *connecting* being and not-being. So Plato is aware that in order to save the possibility of false opinion and false speech he must show that to assert that 'what-is-not' in some way (*kata ti*) *is* does not involve self-contradiction. Thus the definitive step (however preliminary it be) has been made in that the EV no longer shrinks from grappling with the Eleatic maxim and, indeed, dares to 'bestow being upon non-being', no matter that he is fully aware (*Sophist*, 241D3) that this amounts to parricide[72]. The clash with Parmenides is unavoidable now. But the prize is inviting: once the pragma has been split up into a subject-like entity and an attribute-like entity, the problem of false speech can be solved (and the Sophist given his proper domain, accordingly).

As we have seen earlier (above, 6.1–6.3 and 11.1–11.5), Plato has made every effort to show that a correct view of the ontic status of particulars involves seeing that 'what-is-not' in some sense *is* as well as that 'what-is' in some sense *is not*. At 259D2 ff. he tries to make clear that the contrary view, namely that which isolates every single 'thing' from everything else, amounts to a radical destruction of all sorts of discourse. The reason why is given at once: thanks to the weaving together of forms with one another we have acquired the possession of discourse (259E4–6).

It is important to see that Plato here is speaking primarily about combining forms (of course, forms in their mental status, or noemata[73]) into mental compounds, or pragmata in accordance with the ontic status of particulars, and, consequently, about true speech, which combines forms, which, as so many dynameis, are combined in the particular item(s) under discussion, or separates those which are not combined there[74]. It cannot be denied, however, that, given the indispensable function of the noemata and their combination, viz. the pragma, which both are as such products of human thinking, the possibility of false speech is also involved, in such a way that the *dia tên allêlôn tôn eidôn symplokên* phrase does not only refer to combinations of those forms which are mutually compatible, but also to combinations of those which, ontologically, are not combined or even mutually

[72] Keyt seems to be hypercritical in opposing (286), in this connection, the problem of false affirmative statement to that of false negative statement, so that the former should attach non-being to being rather than the other way around. The two are completely equal in that, in either case, 'being' is bestowed upon 'not-being', viz. 'being-the-case' to the 'pragma not-being' ('Theaetetus flying') or the pragma being ('Theaetetus-sitting') to 'not-being the case', respectively.

[73] The role of the 'mental forms' in the pivotal procedure of *anapherein* will be discussed in our section 16.4.

[74] Of course one more properly reads: 'which compares forms in their *mental* status with the corresponding *immanent* forms which are combined in the particular(s) under discussion' *etc.*

exclusive, since Plato explicitly speaks of '*all* sorts of discourse', and apparently includes false speech[75]. Small wonder, then, that, for a *logos* to come to be the only requirement is that we must weave together forms (which are, of course, *noemata*, i.e. our notions of Forms).

Plato's final treatment of true and false speech is found in *Sophist*, 261C6–264B8. It has been extensively discussed above (12.4 and 12.41). The outcome of this important section of the dialogue is Plato's clear-cut distinction between an entity (*ousia*) referred to by an onoma and its praxeis designated by the rhema part of the logos. This ontological distinction finds its parallel in the logico-semantical distinction between the *hotou* and the *peri hou* formulas which concern the subject as such which the logos is about and that which is said by it about the subject, respectively. By drawing this distinction quite explicitly (and, of course, with false modesty as just 'another small point'; 262E4) Plato has finally succeeded in prising open the Eleatic view of the monolithic pragma and separating out some entity as it is picked up out of the outside world by some (entity-referring) onoma, on the one hand, and its conditions as they are designated and attributed to it by the rhema part of the logos. Just as the phrase *ta onta* does no longer only refer, in the Eleatic way, to some absolute 'what-is' with the exclusion of any kind of 'what-is-not', so the pragma designated by some logos is no longer a monolithic item of *either* 'being' *or* 'not-being' but some well-articulated unity consisting of an entity referred to by an onoma and some real (Plato rather speaks of 'being-like'; *ontôs*) attributes ascribed, whether correctly or incorrectly, to it.

15.3. *The Thematic Structure Of Plato's Kernel Sentence*

As we have seen above (12.44) Plato defines the kernel (declarative) sentence (he has 'the minimum statement'; *logos anagkaiotatos*, following Cornford's conjecture at 263C2; see above, 12.44) as the logos consisting of an onoma and a rhema. As Plato's onoma should surely be taken as entity-referring and his rhema as ascriptive, it might seem quite logical to regard the thematic structure of Plato's statement-making utterance as being of the noun-verb, or subject-predicate structure well-known in the classical Indo-European languages and commonly found with logicians in the Aristotelian tradition[76].

Before embarking upon the question of whether Plato's view of logos could admit an approach along these lines, it seems indispensable to reject, at the outset, any Aristotelian view of substance, as it is almost unavoidably suggested by the noun-verb, or subject-predicate structure. As will be argued in our next chapter Plato in no way recognises what was to become, from Aristotle on, the prevailing view in logic and grammar that the substantial entity (*hypokeimenon*) exists in its own right as the bearer of a number of properties, the existence of which is com-

[75] Nuchelmans in excluding promiscuous combinations (14) seems to be thinking of true speech only. Cf. below, 15.4, n. 90.

[76] See Lyons [1977] II, 429; 434 and 500–11.

pletely dependent upon that of their bearer. Ignoring this basic fact has caused quite a lot of misunderstanding with respect to Plato's logic and epistemology.

However after the *Theaetetus*, and especially the *Sophist*, Plato does show awareness of entities as singled out and called up for discussion (and thinking) by our use of onomata (names). Indeed the onoma can be taken as the expression that is employed by a speaker to identify the entity which he is talking about. Similarly, in Plato's view there is some tool (rhema) that is used to say what the speaker wishes to assert about this entity. We might describe the situation by using the modern distinction of 'topic' and 'comment'[77]. The onoma, then, identifies the topic, the rhema expresses the comment. For that reason, one might also use the terms introduced by the Prague School linguists, 'theme' and 'rheme'[78].

Starting with these two basic facts, that (1) Plato does not know of the ontological distinction conveyed by the devices 'individual-properties' or 'substance-accidents', and (2) he does know of a 'topic-comment' structure, this section aims to make clear that (a) neither in the earlier and middle dialogues nor in the later ones, Plato's semantics seem aware of the traditional 'subject-copula-predicate' ('*S is P*') structure, and that (b) for a clear understanding of the unmistakable development of his view of *logos*, one should be aware that his important distinction between an *onomazein* and a *legein* level (see above, 13.32; 14.4) does not in any way involve a neatly corresponding difference between onoma and logos.

15.31. *On Plato's View Of Propositional Structure*

It is commonly believed that from the *Theaetetus* and *Sophist* onwards *logos* stands for 'statement' ('Satz') of the well-known '*S is P*' structure, e.g. 'Theaetetus is sitting'[79]. Even Prauss (183–206) and Nuchelmans (13–21), who correctly reject the sense of 'statement' for *logos* as occurring in the *Cratylus*, are of the opinion that in the well-known discussions in the critical dialogues, *logos* stands for a statement of the '*S is P*' structure[80].

Gulley's treatment of the sections on logos in the *Theaetetus* is remarkable in this respect. When discussing (96 ff.) Socrates' dream (201D–202D; see above, 7.22) he remarks (98) that it can be seen that in the passage 201D–202C Plato is using *logos* in two different senses. In the first part of the passage where he is arguing that 'basic elements' are nameable only (201C9–202B2), *logos* stands, on his interpretation, for 'statement', since both true opinion and knowledge are said to be expressible in *logoi* or 'statements'. In the second part of the passage, on the contrary (202B2–C5) logos is, on his interpretation, still, a specified kind of account or description of a complex object — an enumeration of its simple components. According to Gulley, it is this logos which is relevant to the distinction between true opinion and knowledge, and Plato, by stressing at some length its relevance to this (202B8–C5), indicates that it is the conception of this sort of logos which he is primarily concerned to put forward in the passage 201C–202C as a contribution to the discussion of the new hypothesis that knowledge is definable as 'true opinion with an account (*logos*)'.

It is easy to see what has brought Gulley to assume that two different senses of *logos* are used in one passage, and indeed to do so without a single indication of such a difference on Plato's part. It is in fact his presupposition that the common sense of *logos* is 'statement' of the '*S is P*' structure. He most unfortunately equates (98–9) the correct identification of a complex object by means of a logos with an '*S is P*' statement. He writes (99):

> It is true that at the beginning of the passage Plato has said that the 'elements' are nameable only which would make the statement 'this is X' inapplicable to an element. Yet since in the latter part of the passage he is giving a different interpretation of *logos* or 'account', the objections which he earlier made to saying of an element that 'this is X' become irrelevant.

In a note (193, n. 25) he speaks of a "confusion in Plato's argument". However, any need for assuming two different senses of *logos* turns out to be illusory once we have become aware that throughout the passage a theory of naming (of either simple elements or complexes) is being discussed. What the theory really forbids is *naming* a basic element by means of an *account*. So, if we take '[f,g]' to stand for some logos, the theory does not allow us to designate a simple element, say A by means of it, in asserting, on account of A: 'this [f,g]'. Of course, it is not permissible either to form a proposition: 'A is [f,g]', but this is only a special case of the rule and is not as such under discussion here. Throughout the passage *logos* means 'more-than-one-word expression' and such an expression cannot be used to designate a basic element since the latter can only be designated by just one word, namely its proper name (see above, 7.22).

One might be surprised, then, that the dream theory should only concern the naming of 'things' (whether simple or complex ones), not our assertions about them. Such a surprise would be based on a fundamental misunderstanding about what is, for Plato as well as for contemporary thinkers, the nature proper of the propositional structure. This point is best elucidated in view of some modern discussions about the *Theaetetus* passage at hand.

McDowell rightly remarks (231) that, "although it is not explicitly ruled out that there might be an account composed of names of complex parts of a thing, the theory concentrates implicitly on the notion of what might be called the fully analysed account of a thing, viz. an account composed of names of the thing's non-complex parts, woven together just as the parts are woven together to compose the thing". He is of the opinion (232), further that

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[77] See Lyons [1977] II, 501.

[78] *Ibid.*, 506–7, *theme* being "the expression with which one identifies or announces, what one is talking about", whereas '*rheme*' stands for "the expression which contains the information which the speaker wishes to communicate". It should be borne in mind, however, that unlike in linguistics the terms should primarily be taken to mean their referents, that is, the entity and its attribute which are actually referred to by the speaker.

[79] One should be recalled that most scholars, even in the early and middle dialogues, take *logos* (sometimes) to stand for 'statement', 'sentence', and invariably think, then, of the '*S is P*' structure.

[80] For instance, in Prauss (198 ff.) and more clearly Nuchelmans who speaks (13) of a "statement-making utterance which is constructed out of a noun and a verb".

Socrates' dream is an attempt to capture some such point as the following. The sort of thing which can be *known*, and the sort of thing which can be *judged* .... are the same as the sort of thing which can be *said*; and the sort of thing in question has a complexity which is mirrored by the complexity which a form of words must, normally, have, if uttering it is to constitute saying something. This approximates to a formulation of the point that the verbs 'know' (in one of its uses), 'judge', and 'say' have the same grammar, in that each takes a propositional construction; together with the idea that to a propositional construction there corresponds a non-linguistic entity with a complexity which is mirrored by the complexity of the construction.

I do not feel the slightest hesitation in agreeing with McDowell. But he warns us, then, to be cautious about ascribing to the author of the dream theory a high degree of clarity on account of all this. One of his doubts, then, concerns the very nature of the 'propositional construction'. He observes (232–3) that clarity about the point would require "a clear understanding of the sort of complexity which a form of words have in order to express a proposition. Now, the dream theory, he continues, on the above view of it, shows awareness of the point that mentioning[81] an individual thing does not constitute saying anything; but its author seems to regard the difference between an account and a name as lying fundamentally in the fact that an account consists of several names". So far McDowell seems to be completely right. Next, he remarks (233) that we can therefore object as follows: "if mentioning an individual thing does not constitute saying anything, mentioning several things, successively, does not constitute saying anything either; that performance might, perhaps, amount to mentioning a single complex thing; but saying something is not the same as mentioning a single complex thing".

Again, I do not shrink from following McDowell, except in respect of his idea that there be some lack of clarity on this point in the dream theory. However, let us continue our examination of McDowell's exposition. He quite rightly refers to Plato's characterisation of logos at *Sophist*, 261C6–262E2 (see above, 12.44) where the thesis is found that the minimum 'statement' "is compounded out of one of each of two different kinds of constituent: *roughly, a noun and a verb* (italics mine), or, more accurately, a constituent whose function is to indicate what the statement is about and a constituent whose function is to indicate what is being said about it".

The crux lies in the words italicised. As far as Plato is concerned, the characterisation of the propositional structure by means of the 'noun-and-verb' formula is not rough, it is definitely wrong. To put it in another way, all kinds of problems disappear once we realise that the propositional structure meant in *Theaetetus* and *Sophist* is not the one commonly held in the Aristotelian tradition, viz. '*S is P*', where it is suggested that both S and P and the copulative verb are constituents of the logos. We rather should cast our minds back to the outcome of the foregoing discussions of the pragma character of the logos as such was said to be, not a 'statement' in the proper sense, but rather something like a proposition in the modern sense ("*abstract* object .... that serves as both the intentional objects of a mental act and the meaning of the sentence formulating this act")[82], but as such definitely without any assertoric force.

[81] i.e. 'naming'. McDowell refers to Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, § 49. For that matter, his pointing (233–4) to analogous expositions found in Wittgenstein's *Tractatus logico-philosophicus* is interesting.

McDowell puts an interesting question concerning Plato's exposition in the *Sophist* where Plato seems to most clearly associate the *logos* with the *legein* level. He seems to be right in arguing (233) that to distinguish saying from mentioning it is not essential that one should distinguish different kinds of constituent in the verbal expression. Indeed, we may wonder whether the harmonious composition of constituents required for there to be a logos is both a necessary and a sufficient condition for its acting on the *legein* level. An expression such as '[man, righteous]' or '[Socrates, bald]' might as well be used to simply denote things ('righteous man', 'bald Socrates'). This leads us to the question of what is the specific sense of the verb *perainein* used by Plato in order to explain what is the precise meaning of *legein* as opposed to simple *onomazein*. The question may be rephrased thus: does *Sophist*, 261C–264B introduce a novel view of *logos*?

15.32. *The logos As 'logos eirêmenos' ('Assertion') In The Sophist*

In the well-known passage, *Sophist*, 261D1–262C6 (see above, 12.42), Plato says that a logos does not come about until you mix together attributes with names (262C4). It must strike the reader that it really seems that once the onoma and rhema have been put in the specific combination required for the constitution of a logos, the assertion, the logos as used on the legein level, that is, promptly arises out of the constituents as something of an entirely different order.

This might seem somewhat surprising. Indeed the harmonious and smooth combination cannot be regarded as such as bringing an assertion into existence, as the rejection of the logos as merely a juxtaposition of the basic elements and the assumption of its being a harmonious complex occur as early as in the *Theaetetus* (see above, 7.22) where no talk is found of the legein level. In our previous discussion of *logos* at *Sophist*, 262C–D we have seen that Plato mentions the specific harmonious combination (of onoma and rhema) and its being informative as, so to speak, the twin characteristics of the logos (cf. 262C3–5 and D2–5; see above, 12.42). As a matter of fact he associates this with a special use of *perainein*:

Sophist, 262D2–5: he [i.e. the user of a logos] ... supplies information about things-that-are (or become, or were, or will be) and he does more than just name ‹something›: he really tells (*perainei*) something, in weaving together the attributes with the names. That's why we say he is 'stating', not merely 'naming'.

Cornford [1935:305] takes *perainein* in its basic sense of 'bring to an end', 'finish', 'accomplish' and *perainein ti* as the opposite of *ouden perainein* ('como to no issue', 'to get nowhere') and translates: 'it (i.e. the logos) gets you somewhere'. Prauss renders (186) it as '(it) completes something' ('fügt etwas zur Ganzheit'). Thus

[82] See Richard M. Gale in Edward's *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, vol. VI, 495. The logos will be properly characterised below, 15.4.

Cornford gives some more emphasis to the connotation 'effecting one's purpose' while Prauss prefers rather that of 'completion'. The latter refers to *Theaetetus*, 207B4–5 where Socrates says that an expert in letters would think it impossible to give an account (*logon legein*) of Theaetetus' name, since it is not possible to give an account of anything whatever in a knowledgeable way until one can add to one's true opinion about it a complete catalogue of the basic elements ('letters'). The requirement of being completed is expressed by the phrase *hekaston perainein*, as it is found some lines further (207C3–4), 'to complete the whole going through all its elements'. Obviously the main connotation of *perainein* as used here is that of 'completion'[83] whereas that of 'being effective' does not seem to be prominent here. However, the completeness of an enumeration does not necessarily lead to the *legein* level rather than the *onomazein* level, it would seem.

Nuchelmans has rightly observed that at *Sophist*, 262D2–4 the *tis* mentioned before should be taken to be the subject of *dêloi*, *onomazei* and *perainei* and the referent of *auton* at 262D5 and rightly refers to the parallels found in *Theaetetus*, 207B4–5 and C3–4, where also persons are the subject of *perainein*. He considers this to be a minor correction of Prauss' interpretation. To my mind, it is quite an important one and takes into consideration that the logos as such is not informative until it is actually asserted by somebody who wants to give some information about some particular case, or wants to state something "in the inward dialogue".

For that reason, unlike the *Theaetetus* passages, the use of *perainein* at *Sophist*, 262D4 has little to do with 'completion' as 'being exhaustive in one's enumeration'. Just because Plato speaks here of *somebody asserting something*, the verb rather has the sense it usually has in speech act contexts. Now, its imperative is commonly translated as 'proceed', 'go on' *etc.* However, apart from the fact that such impatient imperatives 'go on, messenger!' are somewhat surprising in cases where the fellow is doing nothing but speaking, the main sense of the verb should rather suggest such rendering as 'come to an end', 'make your point', 'don't prevaricate or hedge'[84].

So Aeschylus, *Persae* 699: *eipe kai peraine panta* should be translated 'speak up and tell everything'. Aristophanes' *Plutus* provides other examples. After the slave Cario has said to the wife of Chremylus that he brings her "all blessings in a lump" and she has asked "where?", he prevaricates a while by saying: "that you'll learn soon (*eisei tacha*) through my words" (*en tois legomenois*). Then the wife somewhat impatiently answers *peraine toinun ho ti legeis anysas pote*: "tell (*peraine*) me what you want to say and come to the point, please" (*anysas*[85] *pote*); of course the translation as 'go on' will not do so well here since the man has not yet started his story. At vs 563 the verb is used with *peri* as a real verb expressing a speech act ("I shall tell (*peranô*) you about my temperance").

It is to be noted, now, that the phrase *perainein logon* is also found in dialogical contexts to the effect that the verbal completion is at the same time constitutive of information. A nice example is found in Euripides, *Medea* 701. Medea has told Aegeus that her husband Jason has betrayed her and taken another wife. After Aegeus has asked her: "Did he fall in love elsewhere?" Medea assents but suggests that, when it comes to love, Jason rather is after power than some girl. "It's royalty and power he's fallen in love with". Then the Athenian king grows suspicious and wants to know who is the girl's father. He puts the question in the form of an incomplete sentence containing the interrogative pronoun *tis* ('who?'), so to speak, on the open spot which occurs, quite unusually, at the end of the sentence, literally: "but gives him ‹that› *who*?" and he asks Medea to complete the sentence in order to be really informative: *peraine moi logon*, "make the logos complete". Medea indeed answers by filling the open spot: "Creon, King of Corinth", thus accomplishing its completion and being informative at the same time.

As a matter of fact, Plato more than once uses the verb *perainein* to express a (successful) speech act. At *Protagoras*, 360D7–9 Socrates asks Protagoras to answer either *yes* or *no* to his questions and the latter replies: "come yourself to a statement" (*peranon*). The passage is the more interesting as it may remind us of *Theaetetus*, 189E–190A, where the mind's inner dialogue is described as its asking itself questions and answering them "in saying either *yes* or *no*"; and, then, this 'opining' is called *legein* and opinion itself *logos eirêmenos* ('an account *asserted*', in the inward dialogue, to be sure). We have to come back to this point. A similar use of *perainein* for 'coming to state something' or 'telling what you have to' is found in the *Gorgias* (454C2–5; 506C4; 522E7–8), *Hippias maior*, 304C8 and *Rep.* I, 346A4 ('to make a point'). Likewise at *Phaedo*, 100C1: "so you couldn't be too quick to make your point" (*ouk an phthanois perainôn*) as Gallop correctly translates it rather than "to finish your story" (Hackforth). At *Sophist*, 243B1 it is said that each school posits and 'expounds' (*perainousi*) its own thesis. At *Theaetetus*, 183C5 *toutôn peranthentôn* means "now that these statements have been made"; cf. 180A6 where the verb *perainein* is opposed to 'drawing out ‹uninformative› little oracular aphorisms'

[83] For a similar use, see Plato, *Menexenus*, 246B2 where *perainein panta* means 'to give a complete catalogue' ‹of some people's deeds›.

[84] Of course, the translation as 'proceed' may be allowed sometimes, if one takes the imperative *peraine* 'de conatu'.

[85] As it belongs to the same semantic field as *perainein* the verb *anyein* (or *anytein*) is used with a participle or (more often) as a participle in order to indicate the successful end of some action. So *anye prattôn* stands for 'make an achievement!', '*do* something!'. So e.g. Aristophanes, *Clouds*, 181: "well, *do* open the study door" (*anoige, anoige anysas to phrontistêrion*).

At *Acharnians*, 570–1 the choir cries: "let somebody *do* help us". At *Wasps*, 398–9 after Sosias has cried to Bdelycleon: "you infamous wretch!, won't you come down?", the man answers: "do climb up, yourself, (*anabaine anysas*) by the other window-sill". The resultative connotation of the verb is commonly mistaken for that of speed or haste (see Liddell and Scott *s.v.*). However, as in modern languages, the adverb 'quickly' does not say anything about any hasty way of doing things but rather not to waver any longer and really *do* something. See e.g. Aristophanes, *Clouds*, 505–6: "don't chatter and *do* follow me" where the speed desired is expressed by the adverb *thatton*. At *Wasps*, 1156–69 where an old man is persuaded to put on Laconian shoes, no element of haste or speed is expressed by the verb *anyein* (vss 1158; 1162; 1169), but rather it reinforces the imperative by which Philocleon tries to help Bdelycleon over his dislike for Laconian shoes.

having neither head nor tail. *Philebus*, 11C10 has the phrase *perainein tàlêthes* for 'to come to a true statement' and *Statesman*, 266D9 gives the phrase *perainein tàlêthestaton* for 'to make a most true statement'.

The outcome of all this seems to be that the main connotation of *perainein* at *Sophist*, 262D4 is to achieve or finish the act of statement-making, 'to make a point', 'to *tell* something', 'to supply some *real information*', all this in contradistinction with just 'speaking words' or assigning names or attributes to some particular thing.

Well, the importance of the logos as being *actually applied* to particular items of the outside world is emphasised by Plato in several ways. First, the mind's inner dialogue is described (in *Theaet.*, 189E–190A) as concerning "whatever particular items it may be considering" (189E7) and consisting in accepting or rejecting certain qualifications (190A1–2). It is in this sense that to opine is called *legein* and opinion is labelled a *logos eirêmenos*, i.e. an account that is actually *asserted* or *affirmed* (in the inward dialogue) of some particular thing, once the mind has come to assign one single description (*to auto phêi*), and no longer hesitates between one description and another (189A3–4). So it is the *logos eirêmenos* with which Plato is mainly concerned rather than the logos just taken as being a lexical item[86].

Secondly. In his most definite exposition in *Sophist*, 262C Plato speaks of the logos (or the onoma respectively) to the extent that is *actually asserted* of something that is, or is not (262C3: *oude .... ontos oude mê ontos*) and at D2–3 the *user* of a logos is said to supply some information (*delôi*) "about things-that-are, or become, or were, or will-be", where the addition clearly shows that the changeable particular items of the outside world are meant[87]. Again, what is meant here is a logos *as actually asserted* about some particular, not some lexical item, and, consequently, the pragma expressed by it represents some state of affairs in the outside world, as the actual object of somebody's statement-making utterance.

Thirdly. At *Theaetetus*, 201D–202D it is said that the simple elements can only be named by their single proper name, for even attaching 'being' to them or applying such deictic terms as 'this' would come down to applying terms to them which, "running about", are attachable to anything you like and are distinct from the things to which they are applied. Such terms are only applicable in a *logos* used on the *legein* level (202A–B; *rhêthênai logôi* as opposed to *onomazesthai monon*). This is a clear hint that these terms in particular are used to designate that the

[86] In Mohanty the interesting suggestion is found (163) that "reference in the sense in which it is a constitutive function of expressions is nothing but *intended* reference. Saying that expressions quâ expressions refer means only that they contain an intention which as it were is *directed towards* the extralinguistic world". His attempt (164–9) to give a brief sketch of the subjective phenomenology of reference in so far as it characterises the various modes of consciousness seems to be rather abortive, one fears.

[87] It is noticeable that in his *Seventh Letter* Plato provides (342A–B) a similar description of the cognitive procedure concerning *particular* items of the transient world. For this important passage; see above, 13.14.

ontic situation represented by the pragma actually occurs somewhere ('this', 'here', 'it is the case') in the outside world. The well-known *Timaeus* passage, 48E2–50A4 can only confirm this. There such 'syncategorematic' terms are associated with the notion of permanence, which should be excluded from our discourse about the 'instable and volatile' things of the transient world. Two points seem to be clearly suggested here. First, the object proper of our discourse is the transient world as such, which should accordingly be described according to its instability. Besides, those speech elements which may suggest any stability or permanence are not proper parts of the logos, and should not be either, since their connotation of stability does not fit well with the descriptive task the logos should perform on account of the ever-changing world. As will be explained shortly (our 15.4), they rather act as parts of the sentential functor in Plato's (depth structure) analysis of the 'statement-making utterance'.

Fourthly. As will be seen below (our sections 16.1–16.2) Plato always discusses knowledge as concerning particular items of the transient world, not the transcendent Forms themselves, however indispensable they are to the particulars' being and their being adequately known. This leads us naturally to a famous item in scholarly discussions of Plato's philosophy: did he confuse 'knowledge that' with 'knowledge by acquaintance', as is often said? The question will be considered below, 16.42, where Plato's theory of knowledge will be discussed.

The next section aims to survey Plato's view of the logos and the 'statement-making utterance'. It will be followed by a corollary (15.5) on the much-discussed problem of the (supposed) self-predication of the Forms.

15.4. *A Survey: logos And 'Statement-Making Utterance'*

Our findings concerning Plato's semantics of the declarative sentence (or 'statement-making utterance') may be summarised as follows:

1. *when considered as a lexical item*
1.1. a logos[88] is a compound name consisting of a simple name (*onoma*) and an attribute (*rhêma*)
1.2. a logos is brought about by a harmonious copulation (not a mere juxtaposition; see above, 7.22 and 12.42) of the onoma and rhema
1.3. a logos expresses a pragma, the latter being a harmonious complex of *noemata*[89]
1.4. the pragma expressed by a logos (supposedly[90]) mirrors a corresponding admixture of harmonious ontic constituents (*dynameis*) in the transient world and may be applied to some particular case
1.5. a logos, like an onoma, may be used on the *onomazein* level; unlike an onoma it may also be used on the *legein* level

[88] I take here *logos* to be Plato's minimum logos (see above, 12.45, n. 34).

[89] For *noêma* as a form in its mental status, and a mental representation of a particular *dynamis*, see below, 16.22.

[90] In the case of false speech the admixture is only *supposed* to occur in the outside world. Cf. above, 15.25, n. 75.

2. *when used on the onomazein level*

2.1. a logos acts as a compound name designating a particular item[91] in the outside world, e.g. in a 'statement-making utterance' such as '(*The, A*) *righteous man* ....'[92]

2.2. from the viewpoint of the surface structure sentence (e.g. 'this soldier is a *righteous man*') it might seem that a logos ('righteous man') should also occur as a sentential predicate ('*P*' in the formula '*S is P*'). However, Plato's semantic analysis of the statement-making utterance does not admit predicates properly speaking; see sub. no. 3.8. Of course, a logos *may* be used as a (compound) attribute

3. *when used on the legein level*

3.1. a logos really is what Plato calls (in his definition of *doxa*, at *Theaet.*, 190A5) *logos eirêmenos*, or 'a logos actually (asserted)' or 'said to obtain' in either inward (as at *Theaet.*, 190A) or outward speech

3.2. Plato's declarative sentence ('statement-making utterance') is not just a logos but a logos eirêmenos or 'assertion'

3.3. when considered in its depth structure Plato's 'statement-making utterance' should be taken as being composed of a formula expressing a pragma (see item 1.3) preceded by a sentential functor ('obtains' or 'is the case')

3.4. a logos can best be given the notation:

'⊢ [logos]'

which e.g. for the surface structure sentence 'A man is righteous' should be read:

'obtains: [man, righteous]'

where both *man* and *righteous* stand for the participata (*dynameis*) partaking in the transcendent Forms, MAN and RIGHTEOUSNESS, respectively, such that the sentence under discussion can also be read:

'obtains: [man-being, righteous-being]'[93]

3.5. as to the tenses[94] occurring in the surface structure sentences, they bear on the functor only. E.g. 'the man was (will be) righteous' is to be transformed:

'obtained (will obtain): [man, righteous]'

3.6. subject determiners used in surface structure sentences should be added to the sentential functor. E.g. 'this man is righteous' is to be transformed:

'obtains here: [man, righteous]'

3.7. the sentential functor is monadic: it governs the logos formula as a whole. Unlike a dyadic functor it does not exert any copulative function, the copulation of onoma and rhema being accomplished in the logos itself (see item 1.2.)

[91] I prefer the neutral term *item* to 'thing' or 'entity' as it is as far as possible remote from the connotations conveyed by the unPlatonic term 'substance'.

[92] For the transformation (of a sentence of the '*S is P*' form) as required by Platonic semantics, see under our item (3), and also below, 16.42.

[93] Rather than 'being-man' and 'being-righteous', respectively, since all participations should be considered modes of being (*modi essendi*) in that they each, so to speak, modify (qualify) Being.

[94] *Sophist*, 262D2–3 contains an explicit reference to the different tenses; see above, 12.42; 14.4; 15.32.

3.8. just like Plato's ontology does not know at all of any 'substance-accidents' ('individual-properties') structure, so his (depth structure) semantic analysis does not admit any sort of predicational structure[95]; consequently, any notion of a verb (in the strict sense)[96], is also missing[97]

4. *as to Plato's propositional structure it may be stated that*

4.1. the Platonic conception of the propositional structure as I understand it makes his logos differ from the Russellian entity corresponding to 'Coriscus is artistic' in that the latter could be referred to as 'Coriscus-*being*-artistic'[98], and from that of Matthen in as far as the latter sees his 'predicative complex' as the denotatum of e.g. 'Coriscus-artistic' or 'artistic-Coriscus'. On the Platonic conception indeed, the logos is to be taken to mean neither 'Coriscus-being-artistic' (Russell) nor 'Coriscus-artistic' (Matthen), but [Coriscus-man-*being*[99], artistic-*being*] and the logos eirêmenos should be equated with that logos preceded by the sentential functor.

4.2. the semantic force of the logos consists of its being identificative of a number of dynameis[100], rather than supplying a description of some properties belonging to some entity bearing them. The force of the sentential functor consists in conveying the localization (*hic et nunc*) of what is represented by the pragma. So the logos eirêmenos, that is the logos together with the sentential functor, so to speak, 'spots' ('locates and identifies') a dynamis or a 'bundle of dynameis'.

[95] I understand by 'predicational structure' a propositional structure of the well-known '*S is P*' form. It should be recalled that the semantic items acting as 'predicates' in the '*S is P*' constructions are the 'attributes' (*rhêmata*) of the Platonic transformation.

[96] Let alone a copulative verb. In my interpretation of Platonic propositional structure, there is no room at all for such (sagacious as well as interesting from the general viewpoint) analyses and considerations as those of Kostman, especially not for the philosophical difficulties in the theory of negative predication he has attributed to Plato (206–8).

[97] The notion of 'predicative complex' introduced by Matthen (125–31), however really useful it may prove for some aspects of Aristotle's ontology, cannot be employed to characterise Plato's logos (nor, accordingly his 'statement-making utterance'), since it is "an entity formed, as Aristotle suggests in *Metaphysics* Z 12, from a universal and a particular when that particular instantiates that universal" (Matthen, 125). Though the predicative complex is, not "a construct out of individuals and *properties* (M.'s italics), where properties are, like Frege's concepts, of a type distinct from the type of individuals", his predicative complex still "consists of *individuals* (my italics) and predicables" and is supposed to contain a copulative verb ('is') separating the individual ('Coriscus') and the predicable ('artistic'). A sentence is formed, then, by attributing (monadic) 'being' or 'non-being' to some predicative complex. Although Matthen seems to speak only of a separating 'is' as to the surface structure of the sentence, he still seems to put apart, some way or another, the predicable part of the complex as a Fregean universal object (see *ibid.*).

[98] See Matthen, 125.

[99] *This* concept of being is metaphysical and stands for the basic idea found in every dynamis ('*being*-man', '*being*-stone', '*being*-just' *etc.*). It should be well distinguished, therefore, from the being conveyed by the sentential functor as the intensional notion of being from the extensional one. See also below, 16.4 and 16.5, n. 54f. It should be further noted that for Plato, Time and Space act as mere determiners and have no 'meaning' ('significate').

[100] See below, 16.11–16.12.

Nota bene:

1. On the onomazein level, the (minimum) logos owes its existence to the harmonious composition of an onoma (acting as an entity-referring element) and a rhema (or attribute). On this level the novelty of Plato's view lies in the requirement that the logos should be a *harmonious* complex, not merely an 'Eleatic' aggregate.
2. On the legein level, the logos (eirêmenos) is the result of the actual assertion of the logos (either in inner or outward speech). Thus for the logos eirêmenos to be, it is not sufficient that it is a harmonious complex of onoma and rhema.
3. The logos of the onomazein level may be regarded as a possible complement of the functor 'obtains' and may, accordingly, be taken to be truth-conditional. Whenever it actually behaves as such, what one has, properly speaking, is an assertion ('statement'), or the fulfillment of the truth condition[101].

15.5. *A Corollary On The Putative Self-Predication Of Forms*

Guthrie mentions (V, 42, n. 2) an impressive list of scholars who since the 1920's have shared in the heated debate about the 'Third Man argument' and the closely connected problem of the (supposed) self-predication of Forms. He rather ironically remarks (42) that "every possible view has been both asserted and denied by scholars modifying not only the view of others but also their own".

Allen has well observed [1971:167] that self-predication of Forms is a peculiar and even absurd view. He aptly summarises the problem as follows: "the dialogues often use language which suggests that the Form is a universal which has itself as an attribute and is thus a member of his own class, and, by implication, that it is the one perfect member of that class. The language suggests that the Form *has* what it *is*: it is self-referential, self-predicable". He quite understandably thinks such a view to be peculiar: proper universals are not instantiations of themselves, perfect or otherwise. "No one can curl up for a nap in the Divine Bedsteadity; not even God can scratch Doghood behind the Ears" (167). The view seems absurd, too: the man who has been credited with having first explicitly distinguished between universals and particulars is supposed to have confused them (168).

Allen's line of argument is the following: in Plato's view, some (perhaps all) entities which may be designated by a phrase of the form 'the *F* itself', or any synonyms thereof may be called *F*. So the Beautiful Itself will be beautiful, the Just Itself just, and so on[102]. He has rightly observed that a predicate of the type '.... is F' cannot be applied in quite the same way (he wrongly has 'univocally') to *F* particulars (either instantiations or instances of *F*) and to *F* Itself (the transcendent Form, *F*), since the predicate is systematically variable (Allen has 'equivocal'), according to whether the subject of the sentence is a Form or a particular. Thus the difficulties inherent in self-predication could not possibly arise, he concludes.

To my mind Allen, among many others[103], is quite right in rejecting self-predication of Forms. The analysis of Plato's semantics, however, which he adduces in support of his position, is less unimpeachable, it seems, as it most strangely confuses naming and predicating, as well as semantics and syntax. Plato has no word for 'predication', Allen rightly starts to observe (169). Rather Plato says that particulars are 'called by the same name' as their Form, as is clear from quite a number of passages throughout the dialogues[104]. But it must strike the reader that Plato always speaks of *naming* ('calling by the same name'): things that partake in the transcendent Forms are *named after* them (*Phaedo*, 102B2; *Parm.*, 130E5); not only is the Form itself always entitled to its own name, but so is that which has, as long as it exists, the corresponding immanent character (*Phaedo*, 103E). It is also precisely this feature which is emphasised by Aristotle when he characterises the theory of Forms (*Metaph.* A, 987b3 ff.; see above, 2.13): "the particulars have the same name as the Forms". Each Form has its own name, the prime designate of which is the Form itself; whereas the particulars are 'derivative designates', owing to the fact that they have in them the immanent characters caused by the Forms.

Allen feels obliged to speak of a 'theory of predication without predicates' (170). One cannot help thinking that such a theory is just too peculiar, indeed[105]. I confess that he has qualified this statement by remarking that "grammatical predicates are *names* (italics mine) which exhibit a systematic ambiguity according as they designate Forms or particulars; Forms themselves are proper *nameables* (my italics); what appear to be self-predicative statements are identity statements" (*ibid.*). I hope to show in this section that Allen's rejection of self-predication of Forms is quite sound, but that his argument is basically vitiated by his adherence to the

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[101] This may be compared to Wittgenstein's distinction between 'state of affairs' and 'fact'. Cf. Patzig (190): "Sachverhalte sind Wahrheitsbedingungen von Sätzen, Tatsachen sind *erfüllte* Wahrheitsbedingungen".

[102] He refers to *Protag.*, 330C; 331B; *Phaedo*, 74B–D; 100C; *Hippias maior*, 289C; 291E; 292E; 294A–B; *Lysis*, 217A; *Symposion*, 210E–211B. See also Guthrie IV, 119–20; 223; 359–60 and V, 38; 42–4; 50; 138; 150.

[103] See e.g. Geach, Peck [1962], Moravcsik [1963], Cherniss [1965] and Vlastos [1965], [1969] and [1973] take all, some way or another, this position; see for the references, Clegg, 26, n. 2. Also Savan (130), Sellars (429), Prauss (78; 82, n. 15; 117–8) and Frede, 31–4.

[104] *Phaedo*, 78E2; 102B2; 103B7–E3; *Rep.* X, 596A7; *Parmenides*, 131E9–132B3; *Sophist*, 240A.

[105] His attempt to clarify his view by the "close analogue to this in English: our own use of predicates where standard of weights and measure are involved" is far from convincing; once the meaning of the predicate '... weights a pound' being defined, one can assert univocally of the standard pound, too: 'this thing weights a pound'. For some qualifications of the analogue, see Geach and Vlastos [1965 and 1969] and for some important criticism on the analogue, see Clegg, 34–5, ("taking a Form to be a standard does violence to Plato's thought on the status of the Forms" and "Forms have epistemological and metaphysical functions, standards do not"). He seems to be, however, a little unfair towards Allen as though the latter were unaware that the Forms are of a different ontological order; see Allen [1971:171, n. 9]. In fact, this difference is too vital for admitting such a blurring analogue, I think.

wrong view that Plato's semantics should admit predication proper including the well-known '*S is P*' formula. This can be best made clear by discussing, first, the view defended by a scholar of the opposite camp.

Clegg has joined the impressive company of 'self-predicationists' and 'anti-self-predicationists' with a contribution in which he rejects all positions held so far as well as the judgement which links them all, i.e. that the Third Man argument should show "that a Platonic Form cannot have, without disastrous paradox or serious qualification, the property it is the Form for" (27). He argues that it is most natural to see Plato's Forms as self-predicating and the 'Third Man' poses no unmet challenge to that feature of a Form.

First, he argues against Cherniss' thesis [1957:259–62] that 'being x' and 'having x' are quite distinct for Plato, meaning that the Form does not possess (is not characterised by) the character of the particulars which share in it. Therefore there is no such thing as self-predication of the Forms. To say, indeed, that a Form has itself the characteristic which it imparts to particulars, is what is meant by self-predication, on Cherniss' interpretation, and the 'is' of identity is distinct from the 'is' of predication, so that the Forms are only to be identified in cognition, and not described [1957:258]. Clegg does reject, not the distinction but the opposition, and is of the opinion that "far from a Form being x but not having x, it is far more plausible to say that for Plato, if anything truly has x it is x" (32). The 'is' of predication just is, for Plato, the 'is' of identity (32; 34).

Such a reply is erroneous in that it takes the Form to be some 'thing' having an attribute. But this unavoidably involves the Aristotelian view of a 'substance-attribute' structure, which should be held to be entirely unPlatonic[106]. Guthrie is quite right in asserting (IV, 119) that to say that 'the Pious' — that which by its very nature is pious and nothing else — is not pious could sound equally nonsensical as to say that Piety itself is pious the way praying and sacrifice are pious, sounds, to us at least, nonsensical. Indeed the former formula *is* clearly rejected by Plato (e.g. *Protagoras*, 303D–E). However, to *call* the pious '(the) pious' has nothing to do with self-predication of Forms or the Forms "being qualified by themselves" as Guthrie maintains (IV, 119; 223; 360; 551; V, 38; 42–4; 50; 138; 150). Rather Plato holds (as usually) that the Forms are entitled to their own names. Guthrie's phrase 'being qualified by themselves' is unfortunate in that 'qualification' could easily suggest some 'substance-accident (quality)' structure of the Form. If, on the other hand, nothing but some 'qualification' on our part is meant, talk of self-*predication* is still inappropriate, since the assignment of some *name* which is common to both the Form as well as its instantiations and instances would, then, be more to the point. Similarly, any distinction or opposition

[106] See below, 16.11; 16.44. For this reason Booth is entirely wrong in arguing (147–8) for the untenability of Plato's theory of Forms because of certain untenable consequences of what he calls 'the Substrate Assumption' ("no quality can exist on its own without a substrate"). This objection is as far from the mark as is the assumption unPlatonic and typical of Aristotelian metaphysics.

between an 'is' of predication and an 'is' of identification seems to be no less irrelevant, then.

Clegg rejects (35–6) all the many efforts made by scholars like Allen, Peck and Moravcsik to establish a duality of sense for a term by applying it to particulars and to Forms[107]. He thinks (36) that taking a word as having a dual sense would, in some way or another, generate the regress of the Third Man anew. Therefore he is of the opinion that, for Plato, only the Forms can be the true subjects of speech (36; cf. 27–30) and, thus the names involved have only one sense. Accordingly, "the Forms are fully self-predicating in the one and only sense of the names they bear", he argues (37; 41).

However, in doing so Clegg cannot help rather inaptly assuming that Plato holds the thesis of the impossibility of knowing the particulars of the transient world without ambiguity. This is surely not Plato's view of knowledge. For him, particulars *are* really knowable, albeit as partaking in transcendent Forms. In this life, it is the immanent characteristics (forms) present in particulars that are recognised in our cognitive acts, not the Forms themselves, which we only may recall by anamnesis (as noemata)[108].

The putative equivocity of a name according to whether it is applied to a Form or a particular (either its instantiation or instance) should be challenged, I think, along a different line of argument. In fact Allen's argument may support the view, not that a name is equivocally used, that is, in different *senses* but, to follow the Mediaeval logicians, with a different *supposition*, as is 'man' in (1) '(a) man runs', and (2) 'man is mortal'[109]. In (1) and (2) 'man' ('*homo*') is quite univocally used, but it actually stands for some particular man ('determinate supposition'), and any member of the class of men ('confused supposition'), respectively.

However, the recognition of the univocal use of the terms involved can only be made at the cost of clearing the way for the Third Man argument. Indeed, if a statement such as 'the Large is large' is to be understood: 'the Large is a member of the class of large things', one cannot help being faced with another paradox of self-predication, viz. the common classification of Forms with particulars, which would require some Form ('Third Man') common to the Forms and its particulars, and so on, in infinite regress.

It is to be noted, then, that Clegg thinks (37–8) that "Participation in a Form guarantees that what does the participating is without class-membership", since only the Forms themselves *have the properties* (sic!; italics mine) which make them genuine members of the classes involved. So if a particular is never a member of a class, it can never be "the class-mate of a Form". Guthrie is quite right in calling (V, 47, n. 3) this opinion "topsy-turvy", since "class-membership is just what par-

[107] So Peck distinguishes 'the large (intelligible)' and 'the large (visible)' as two different *senses*, as Moravcsik does between 'focal' and 'non focal meaning'.

[108] See Gulley, 108–68 passim; cf. above, 2.43; 2.45 and below, 16.22.

[109] '*homo currit*' and '*homo est mortalis*'. For the development of the theory of supposition, see De Rijk [1967:513–98] and [1982], and also Spade [1982]. — I confess that Peck and Moravcsik's solutions come rather close to the supposition doctrine.

ticipation in the same Form does guarantee; one might almost say, he goes on, that to explain class-membership, to answer the question by what right we group certain individuals together in a class and give them the same name, is a *raison d' être* of the theory of Forms". So the way out of the problem which Clegg thinks that he has found seems to end in a *cul-de-sac*. For that matter, he is also definitely wrong in thinking (37) that, for Plato, "a common conceptual grouping of Forms and particulars is always illegitimate". He apparently fails to recognise the impact of Plato's novel metaphysical doctrine in *Sophist*, 249C–D ff. (see above, 6.2–6.3; 12.2), where it is explicitly said that "what is and the All consists of what is changeless *and* what is in change, *both together*" (249D2–4). Could Plato better have clarified the common classification of Forms together with particulars?[110] Again Clegg's escape route will not do. One only could reach one's end in moving still farther from Plato's real intentions[111].

Clegg has had no better luck in rebuking Vlastos' new conception of the Forms (as expounded in [1973a] and [1973b]), by which the latter has attempted to query the whole basis of the assumption of self-predication[112]. The new conception has been dubbed by Vlastos as 'Pauline predication' (235, n. 33; 252 ff.; 270 ff.; referring to the notion of love as found in *I. Cor.* 13). He claims that statements such as 'Motion is moving' are really used by Plato as 'Pauline predications', that is as trivial "analytic" truths about, not Forms but instances of Forms[113]. The assumption of 'Pauline predication' in Plato has led Vlastos to hold ([1969:77–8]) that Plato ascribed to (at least some) Forms a power to participate in themselves, especially the Forms 'Being', on account of *Parmenides*, 162A–B. I fully agree with Clegg (39) that this is a muddled[114] view of Plato, but, again, I cannot possibly follow him in the way in which he argues against Vlastos (39–40). In fact he maintains his own view of Forms *having their own attributes* and wants to free Plato from any obligation to explain why Forms have the attributes they do: "the world is to be explained by appeal to them; they themselves need not be explained at all". That seems to be fair enough, but 'a Form *having* an *attribute*' still remains a clumsy notion which should destroy their perfect nature. One must not safeguard the notion of self-predication of Forms at the cost of a highly questionable (and indeed impossible) conception of the true nature of the Platonic Form.

[110] Clegg most significantly combines his wrong view of Plato's ontology with assuming (137) that Plato did never overcome Parmenides' influence in this respect. As if the Eleatic Visitor's 'parricide' were too dramatic a metaphor (*Sophist*, 241D3).

[111] So when one insists, following Plato's unmistakable statements (*Phaedo*, 78E; 102B–103E; *Rep.* V, 596A; *Parm.*, 131E; *Soph.*, 240A) that when we say some thing (a particular) is *F* and that another thing (a Form) is also *F*, we are saying that both are *F*, Clegg replies (38) that Plato's thesis must be that our statements in such cases are all untrue (*sic*!).

[112] See Guthrie IV, 223, n. 3.

[113] For my interpretation to the effect that the Plato's utterances on this score concern, not some form of predication (not even Vlastos' 'Pauline predication') but just 'naming', and not only instances of Forms but also their instantiations (= 'forms in their immanent status'), see above, 15.3, 15.4 and below, 15.6.

[114] As is clear from a subtle remark by Guthrie (IV, 223, n. 3), this brilliant Platonic scholar was assured by Vlastos that he did not correctly understand the latter's 'new conception'.

For that matter, Clegg is of the opinion (41–3) that Plato avoids the paradoxes of the Third Man at considerable cost, namely that of maintaining the Eleatic view of the impossibility of "coherent talk about the world"[115]. Besides he puts forward (42–3) an objection of his own against the doctrine of the Forms:

> His Forms are immune to destruction and change because of their timeless and spaceless state (*Phaedrus*, 247C). How such concepts as "large", "triangular", "red", "motion" and "time" could apply to them, is, then, unclear, for we lack an explanation of why the temporal and spatial components of these concepts are unimportant to their meaning.

I confess that on reading these lines one cannot help rubbing one's eyes in wonder. First. Clegg's words seem to imply that he regards Time as a Platonic Form such as LARGENESS *etc.* and wonders how a self-predication such as 'Time is temporal' (like 'the Large is large') should be explained. However, Time nor Space are Platonic Forms[116]. Nor do such concepts as 'large' or 'motion' contain any temporal or spatial components *in as far as they concern Transcendent Forms*. Take, for example, the concept of the transcendent Form, 'the LARGE' (or LARGENESS). It stands for the perfect and unchanging 'quality' (Plato has: *dynamis*; see below, 16.12) of BEING LARGE. There is no single connotation of 'spatiality' about it, as long as it is taken in its transcendent status. Spatiality and temporality do not come into the picture until LARGENESS is partaken in 'somewhere' and 'at some time' in the Receptacle ('Space') (*to en hôi*; see above, 14.3). Then the Receptacle and the transcendent Form (through the immanent form) are constitutive of the particular's (spatial and temporal) being in the transient world, in the subtle way described (or suggested rather) in the *Timaeus*. Time and Space are only to be associated with the Forms' instantiations and instances as found in the outside world[117]. Thus, unlike the transcendent Form, the immanent largeness ('instantiation') present in a particular instance as well as that instance itself (the large 'thing', e.g. a (large) tree) are spatial and temporal, and could be designated by the names 'spatial thing' or 'temporal thing', but not the transcendent Form, the LARGE (LARGENESS).

The outcome of our discussions so far is that the notion of 'self-predication'

[115] For Plato's real view of the task and possibilities of language for philosophical thought, see above, 1.4 and 2.5. For that matter, at the end of his paper Clegg confesses (43): "Thus the theory of language here described does not recommend itself as the truth. I do recommend it, however, as the best qualified candidate for what Plato's theory was".

[116] See Guthrie V, 264–6; 299–305.

[117] It is to be noted that "Space and Time are not correlative to Plato. Space, the Receptacle of Becoming, was always there, as the matrix on which the Demiurg set the stamp of order, but time is a part of the divine creation itself, a feature of *kosmos*. No one has put it better than Plutarch (*Platon. quaestiones* (= Moralia) 1007C): "So Plato said that time came into being with the world (*ouranos*), but motion even before the world's birth. There was then no time, for neither was their arrangement, measure or mark of division, only an indefinite motion, as it were the unformed, unwrought matter (*hylê*) of time" (Guthrie V, 301). See also Meinhardt, 89–94.

('self-qualification') is abstruse enough to make a honest attempt to get rid of it for good. The most rigourous way is to reject the notion of predication *tout court* as a genuine Platonic tool.

15.6. *No Predication Proper In Plato*

Let us start by stating that Plato's own words nowhere require to think that he has in mind some statement of the '*S is P*' type, such as 'the Large is large'; or 'Motion is moving'[118].

As is well-known, Greek idiom allows what has been called the semi-abstract use of article with adjective (*to hosion*; 'the pious') rather than the abstract noun (*hosiotês*; 'piety') and their indiscriminate use for designating the form (Form) has often been observed'[119]. However, equating the names 'pious' and 'piety' and calling the pious pious is by no means the same as uttering a sentence of the '*S is P*' form, 'the pious (piety) is pious', so that the property of 'being pious' is attributed to piety. What Plato really does is to define 'piety' (or 'justness') as precisely 'being pious' (or 'being just'), in the same way as we may say by way of definition that somebody's *justness* is his *being just*, so that it is not the case that some property ('being just') is assigned to justness, but somebody's property of justness is identified as his 'being just'. Take, for example, one of the keypassages adduced as containing a clear case of 'self-predication', *Protagoras*, 330D–E.

Protag. 330B7–C7: Now let us consider together what sort of thing (*poion ti*) each of them [viz. justness, holiness *etc.*] is. First of all, *is* there such a thing (*pragma*) as justness (*dikaiosynê*) or not? I think there is. — So do I, he said. — Well, if someone asked you and me, "Tell me, you two, this thing (*pragma*) that you used as a name (*ônomasate*) a moment ago – justness – is that something just (*dikaion*) or something injust (*adikon*)?" I myself should answer: 'something just' (*hoti*'[120] *dikaion*). Which way would you vote?; mine or another way? — The same way as you, he replied.

Plato's use of the term *pragma* already suggests that he has in mind some state of affairs ('being-just') rather than the denotation of some entity in the outside world considered as such[121]. Besides, the Greek has the neuter *dikaion* instead of the feminine *dikaia*, so that the correct translation is 'something just' rather than the adjectival 'just'[122]. All possible doubts are removed by what follows; there Socrates draws precisely the conclusion that 'justness' = 'being just':

[118] All commentators, however, seem to take this to be a matter of textual fact. See e.g. Guthrie IV, 119ff, and passim; Allen [1971:168–71]; Vlastos [1969:74–8]; Clegg, 32; 38; 42, n. 4.

[119] See Guthrie I, 79 and IV, 119, where it is observed that "at *Euthyphro* 13C–14E the noun, *hosiotês* is used four times, just enough to show that he is there regarding it as a synonym and at 14C5 'the holy and holiness' is plainly a hendiadys; then to the end of the dialogue, he reverts to the adjective, which is evidently his favourite".

[120] For *hoti* used to introduce an *oratio recta*, equivalent to our quotation marks, see Liddell and Scott, *s.v.*

[121] See above, 15.23.

[122] Cf. Virgil's famous adage, "varium et mutabile semper femina" (*Aeneis*, VI, 569; of course, Plato's use of the neuter has nothing pejorative about it). Croiset (Budé edition) rightly translates it as '*une chose* juste'.

Ibid., C7–E1: Then I would answer that justness is a similar thing to (*toiouton ... hoion*) being-just (*dikaion einai*); would you also? — He agreed. — If the man next asked us: 'you say that there is also such a thing (*pragma*) as holiness?', we should agree, I suppose? — Yes. — Meaning that precisely that thing (*pragma*) is of a similar nature as (*toiouton pephykenai hoion*) being-unholy, or being-holy? Personally I should be annoyed at this question and say: 'be still, man: hardly could any other thing (*ti allo*) be holy, if not holiness itself is to be something holy (*hosion*)!'

This is in full accordance with Socrates' replacement (*Euthyphro*, 11A6–8) of his earlier question 'what is the pious?' by a request for the *ousia* (lit. 'being-ness') of the pious, so that 'what is *the pious*' equals 'what is *being-pious*'[123].

Phaedo, 102D–E is another famous passage, where most commentators think that Plato is asserting that a "Form whether as manifested in particulars or in its independent existence, is itself qualified by the characteristic which it imparts" (Guthrie IV, 359–60). However, Plato is here clearly speaking of two opposite 'qualities' which mutually exclude one another rather than assigning 'large' to LARGENESS or the 'largeness in us'[124].

In *Parmenides*, 132A–B it is argued that, if the large itself (*auto to mega*) — where the phrase seems to be indiscriminately used to mean the Form, 'the LARGE' (or 'LARGENESS') and the immanent character present in the large particulars — may be designated by the name 'large' and large particulars as well, the common name makes them all belong, then, to the same class. But if so, it is asked, will not, again, some one thing (*hen ti*) make its appearance, by virtue of which all those members of that class appear large? And so will another form of largeness, pop up; and so on, in infinite regress. So the uniqueness of the Form is challenged.

One should notice that, again, there is no shed of textual evidence that Plato speaks of any 'statement' of the type: 'the LARGE itself is large'; he only discusses our way of identifying things as 'large things' during the cognitive process; notice the use of such verbs as *oiesthai* (132A1), *doxêi* and *dokei* (A2); *idonti* and *hêgêi* (A3); *idêis* and *phaneitai* (A6); *phainesthai* (A7); *anaphanêsetai* (A8). For that reason, it is somewhat rash to speak of self-*predication* in this case. What really is under discussion here is what we might call a metaphysical problem arising of our logico-semantic behaviour. Once the method had been established (see *Rep.* X, 596A ff.)

[123] Savan has correctly observed that, in point of fact, Plato is speaking of forms as 'dynameis'; he is right in rejecting here the notion of 'self-predication' (130).

[124] For this passage, see above, 8.5. — The well-known passage, *Rep.* X, 597C–D which discusses the uniqueness of a Form, is sometimes said to concern the self-predication of Forms. However, Guthrie, who for the rest admits of this clumsy notion, rightly rejects (IV, 552) it being discussed here since "of course, the whole idea of an eternal, invisible but intelligible bed sounds absurd" and holds that the bed is in this context only an illustration. (See also above, 13.31; 14.2). However, most unexpectedly he still is (IV, 551, n. 2) of the opinion (against Cherniss) that "the ultimate Form *has* a form" and refers to 597C8. But Plato only asserts that there never can be more than one Form of something, since even if God were to make *only two* forms of bed (instead of one), even then (i.e. however few *two* are), some (unique) bed would pop up again (as a third item, of course) whose form would be the form of the first two. Of course, these two would be (by definition), not themselves transcendent *forms*, but instantiations of the third.

of positing a single form (*eidos*) for 'every set of things to which we apply the same *name*', the difficulty could have arisen of whether the commonness of name should involve a common feature which would be named by the same (common) name, and so on. Thus in perceiving and recognising things we seem to discover still new common features (in Plato's language, still other instances of *hen ti* will pop up). And this, the old Parmenides warns Socrates, will bring it about that you will have to do (*soi...estai*) no longer with what you call (*dê*)[125] 'each *one* thing' (*hen hekaston*) but an indefinite number of them. Thus, Socrates' epistemology as well as his metaphysics will be embarrassingly affected. Small wonder that Socrates attempts, then, (132B–C) to dispose of all difficulties by adopting the Antisthenian 'solution' that the common feature involved by the use of common names is nothing but a *noema* and occurs, accordingly, nowhere but in our minds, with the result that the metaphysical problem, at least, will be avoided. However this may be, the passage 132A–B does not exhibit any trace of the famous problem of 'self-predication'.

Finally, *Sophist*, 240A sometimes also adduced in connection with 'self-predication'[126] is an unreliable piece of evidence indeed, as it most explicitly discusses the semantics of 'naming', not any fabrication of 'statements':

> *Sophist*, 240A4–6: That ‹thing› found in all those things which you called many and yet thought fit to nominate ‹all of them› with one single name (*heni proseipein onomati*) .... etc.

Hence it may be concluded that the textual evidence supports the view that Plato has in mind, not statements but nominations (appellations).

It is strange to see that both Allen and Clegg, when they are trying to precisely indicate what they think Plato meant, unconsciously choose formulas which hint at the act of naming rather than predicating. Allen speaks [1971:170] of 'predication without predicates' and statements that are in fact not attributive, but *identifying* statements. Well, as will be seen in the next section, Plato's own way of identification is to assign identifying *names* to something which appears, not to attribute properties (or: to assign property names) to something the existence of which has already been recognised. For Plato, the identification of some thing is accomplished not on the *legein* level, but on the *onomazein* level[127].

On the other hand Clegg insists (37; 41) that Plato's Forms "are self-predicating only in the sense of the *names* (my italics) they bear and the 'is' of predication just is, for him [Plato], the 'is' of identity" (32).

For all the reasons adduced it seems more plausible to dismiss the entire notion of predication and regard Plato throughout the dialogues as dealing with naming only[128].

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[125] For the ironical sense of *dê*, see above, 11.5, n. 25.
[126] Allen [1965], 169, n. 4.
[127] Cf. Cherniss [1936:6–8].
[128] Cf. Prauss, 82, n. 15, who, however, thinks that the notion of 'predication' *is* found in the later dialogues (183 ff.). — We owe to Marten [1967] an interesting study of the metaphysical impact of the phenomenon, 'self-predication' as applied to Platonic Forms. I am

Concluding this section it seems useful to test out the view of Plato's propositional structure that has been defended here. Assuming (wrongly indeed) that Plato really had in mind some statement like this: 'The LARGE is large', one could transform this surface structure sentence into the corresponding depth structure sentence

*'|—[F,f]'

where, of course the sentential functor should be taken as concerning, not the transient world, but the Domain of Forms. However, the putative logos formula in question, '[F,f]' is monstrous in that (1) such an expression as 'the large LARGE' is nugatorious[129] and definitely unPlatonic as well, and (2) such a logos would stand for a pragma which Plato's chorismos ontology does not admit since it would represent in fact an entity consisting of a perfect 'quality' (dynamis) linked up with its imperfect participation. Indeed one half of the pragma, viz. (*F*), should be at home in the Unchanging Domain of transcendent Forms, the other, (*f*), in our ever-changing world[130].

Therefore any propositional structure must be dismissed on this account. One could better realise that Plato unambiguously introduces what is wrongly labelled 'self-predication of Forms' as our *assignment of names* which are common to Forms and their instances and instantiations. Well, this has really nothing to do with construing predicative sentences, let alone with those clumsy 'self-predicative' constructs which modern commentators have foisted onto Plato.

A short remark on the famous class inclusion which also seems to worry many modern commentators. It should be borne in mind that Plato's admission of language as a reasonable tool for philosophical discourse certainly does not mean that he is unaware that the common name *primarily* belongs to the transcendent Form, and that the instantiations as well as the instances are only secondarily entitled to them. In fact, he most explicitly asserts this at *Phaedo*, 102B–103B (see above, 2.44; 8.5 and below, 16.11). For that reason the whole notion of 'class inclusion', and indeed 'class', is both anachronistic and unPlatonic as well, not in the least because, for Plato, it is rather the case that his metaphysical view admits some semantic behaviour, than that his semantics affects his metaphysics in any way[131].

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sure that his important discussions could have profitted greatly from drawing a clear-cut distinction between 'naming' and 'predicating'.
[129] In fact, Aristotle is concerned with a similar problem at *Topics* VI 3, 140b27 ff. where he discusses 'the seemingly logical pleonasm' in 'a footed two-footed animal is two-footed'. See De Rijk [1980], 21–2.
[130] On this interpretation, of course, Clegg would be right when he asserts (37) that for Plato, "a common conceptual grouping of Forms and particulars is always illegitimate".
[131] It is to be noted that, from the modern point of view, any classification has its bearing, not on how things *are*, but how we are considering (are trying to order) them. Besides, we should not forget that focusing on class inclusion is typical of extensional logic, while as an 'intensionalist', Plato is interested in the essence of each particular, rather than its membership of some class as a result of its having its essence in common with other particulars.

Therefore both self-predicationists and their opponents have done well to see that Plato's use of common names does not involve that he takes them to designate things on an identical ontological status (indeed, Plato was of the opposite conviction). For that matter, it should be remarked that Allen has tried to take this in account by introducing (167) the (incorrect) view of the equivocity of common names and Clegg did so by making (38) Plato think that our statements in such cases are all untrue.

The next chapter will supply some additional evidence against such unPlatonic constructs as 'Knowledge is knowing' when considered a 'self-predicative' sentence. Apart from ignoring the absence of any '*S is P*' structure from Plato's semantics its defenders also entirely misunderstand the precise nature of a Platonic Form in taking it to be some static, substantial entity, instead of what Plato calls himself a *dynamis*.

Chapter sixteen

SEMANTICS AND METAPHYSICS

16.1. *Plato's Ontology Of The Particular (Individual)*[1]

In Plato's early and middle dialogues the particular[2] occurring in the transient world is often characterised as being in constant flux (e.g. *Phaedo*, 78D–E), even to the extent that when changing each item is supposed to turn into another item rather than only becoming different. *Cratylus*, 439D10–440A1 is no less explicit on this score: an item of the transient world cannot properly be said to be under varying conditions but rather to 'become something else and pass away (*allo auto euthys gignesthai kai hypexienai*; 439D11–12; see above, 14.3). It becomes not only different but also something else (*allo kai alloion*; 440A1–2). From the epistemological point of view, such an item is what is perceived (the *horaton* or *aisthêton*) as appearing variously in various things[3].

[1] For the next sections my reading of Prauss' excellent work [1965:67 ff.] has been of more profit than the quotations could suggest. — Hall has convincingly shown that Plato is profoundly interested in the individual person's moral well-being, also of the 'common man of today'. "..... textual evidence beginning with the *Republic* supports the position that Plato had a profound concern for the ordinary man, and that the most important goal of the *polis* of his thought was to ensure that every individual might realize the morality appropriate to man" (2). This view is remarkably paralleled by the present author's position that Plato's novel metaphysics as it developed from the *Parmenides* onwards became, in fact, a radical re-evaluation of matter and individuality. — Scholars like Stenzel [1931:62 ff.] and Preiswerk (33–78) have unfortunately blocked to some extent a correct evaluation of particulars by taking the Communion of Forms to be a process in which Forms as inhabitants of the transcendent Domain should be involved. For Preiswerk, the result was that he could not view the reality of the transient world but as anything devoid of any order.

[2] I prefer the translation 'particular' to 'individual' as the former term seems to far better fit Plato's ontology. The notion of 'subsistency' connoted by 'individual' rather suits Aristotle's.

[3] *Phaedo*, 83B2–4; cf. *Sympos.*, 211A5–B1 and *Phaedrus*, 247D6–E2. See also Prauss (71, n. 11) who rightly follows Bluck [1955], 82.

16.11. *Particulars As Bundles Of Embodied Forms*

It should be asked, now, of what nature precisely a particular item is, as it appears in some or other cognitive act. Many scholars have pointed out that Plato shows no sign of an Aristotelian 'substance-property' structure[4]. Nakhnikian seems quite apt in coining (148) the term "determinate bundles of embodied Forms" as a characterisation of Plato's particulars.

When discussing *Timaeus*, 50B7–C4 we have seen (14.23) that the Receptacle may be called 'the same', since it never looses its identical dynamic nature (*dynameôs*). This 'plastic substance' may be seen as consisting of several portions: e.g. an 'inflamed portion' ('fire'), a 'moistened portion' ('water') and so on. In this sense, too, one may speak of particulars as 'bundles of dynameis', or rather 'of dynameis composed themselves of elemental dynamic natures'. In fact, the dynameis appear here as the active properties of the four elements.

It is to be noted that a similar absence of any notion of substantiality and subsistency is found as early as the oldest dialogues. So in explaining what precisely is meant by 'something being present in something else' (at *Lysis*, 217C ff.) Socrates distinguishes between real presence and a kind of adherence. Prauss has properly observed (84) that such a distinction has but little sense, from the ontological point of view, as long as the 'substance-property' view is maintained; indeed, someone has fair locks; no matter if his hair is naturally fair, or black of its own and dyed so (217C–D). In Socrates' view, as hair is an aggregate of constituents, its fairness means that each constituent is so, while if hair is dyed the former constituents are just what they were but each is augmented by the addition of colour. Similarly, at 217B–219A a body is described as something which is, in itself, neither sick nor healthy, the latter being, no less than the former, a constituent added to the whole collection making up a body.

The well-known passage, *Phaedo*, 102B–103B, follows the same train of thought. Two opposite 'qualities' are taken, so to speak, as being material constituents, neither of which 'belongs' to an entity. They rather act as one of a particular's many constituents and if compelled, give way to their opposite. In the case where Simmias is taller than Socrates, it is that particular constituent of his, namely his tallness, that exceeds that of Socrates, rather than that he is himself taller than Socrates (see also above, 15.5 and Prauss, 87–93).

16.12. *The Embodied Forms Taken As Dynameis*

Plato's expositions about the nature of poetry and being a poet (*Rep.* VII, 533Dff.) may also be taken into consideration. There poetry is described as inspiration and a poet as "a light and winged thing, and holy, and never able to compose until he has become inspired" (534B3–6). His gift is a divine dynamis (533D–535E).

[4] So Hamlyn [1955], 294; Peck [1962²], 162–3; Sellars, 429; 432–3 ("nowhere do we find even a hint of a substratum analysis"), and especially Prauss, 69–98. Hackforth rightly rejects (155) the 'substance' notion but still sticks to some Aristotelian hypokeimenon (albeit 'devoid of all attributes'); see also Prauss, 93.

The dynamis is, as it were, a material entity which befalls to somebody, rather than a property which depends for its being on its possessor.

Souilhé has pointed out [55] that the notion of dynamis became a word for qualities like hot, cold, bitter *etc.* especially among medical writers, where 'the salt', 'the bitter', *etc.* were seen as powers capable of curing or harming people, rather than substances. So the term designates an essence (*ousia*) and its proper manner of manifesting itself, at the same time. For example, in the Hippocratic Corpus it is said (*De natura hominis*, 5) about phlegm that it is not like blood, or blood like bile; each has its own dynamis and nature (*physin*). At *Charmides*, 156B3 *dynamis* stands for the working of a drug, and at *Philebus*, 31E10–32A1 it is said that the dynamis of what is moist is to replenish that which is dried up.

At *Protagoras*, 320D4–7 Prometheus and Epimetheus are said to be charged with the task of equipping all sorts of creatures and allotting suitable dynameis to each kind, where *dynameis* seems to come rather close to 'nature'. At 349B an interesting passage is found because of the clear association there of *onoma*, *pragma* and dynamis:

> *Protag.*, 349B1–5: 'Wisdom', 'temperance', 'courage', 'justice' and 'holiness' are five names (*onomata*): do they refer to one *pragma* or has each of those names some entity (*ousia kai pragma*) of its own underlying it, each of which has a dynamis of its own, yet no one of which is like any other?

Here the *dynamis* seems to be something like a specific nature which characterises each sort of being and makes us assign different names to each of them. Thus, for example, temperance (*sôphrosynê*) or justness (*dikaiosynê*) are dynameis which are indiscriminately designated by the corresponding verbal lexemes *sôphronein* ('being temperant') and *dikaion einai* ('being just'). They do not 'belong' to some subsistent entity 'possessing' them, but rather are to be taken for as many 'occurrences' of their own.

That a dynamis is a 'way of being' (*modus essendi*) rather than 'something possessed' may be gathered from more than one discussion in the dialogues[5]. Prauss is quite right in remarking that in these cases, the *einai* must not be taken in some

[5] As is rightly emphasised by several scholars. For example, Souilhé, 149–50; Cornford [1939], 47; Prauss, 76; 89–93; Guthrie V, 139–40 and Rosen [1983] whose remarks seem to be somewhat ambiguous, however, in that he (unnecessarily) distinguishes between *dynamis* and *form* (218–9) but still (correctly) equates (266) the former with *physis*. (For this equivalence, see e.g. *Phaedo*, 64E5; for that of *dynamis* and 'being' or '*ousia*', see e.g. *Charmides*, 168B3–E4.) Besides he seems to overlook sometimes (e.g. 220, n. 4) the difference between the general sense of *dynamis* and its special use as the faculty of seeing, hearing *etc.* — Kahn remarks [1973¹:456] that the phrase *panta ta onta* ('all the things there are') is occasionally used in a context which suggests "that *ta onta* are *primarily* (his italics) conceived of as elemental *powers* (my italics) and bodies, such as earth, water, air and fire, or hot and cold, dry and wet. But there is of course no reason to restrict the denotation of the participle to any specific set of entities. Whatever a given thinker recognises as the contents and constituents of the world-order, these are for him *ta onta*". — Finally, a thorough analysis of the notion of *dynamis* in Plato, especially the *Sophist*, is found in Pester, 125 ff. See also McDowell, 229–31; 250.

abstract-predicative or copulative sense (77) but rather dynamically, as conveying a special way of being-and-acting. I think, however, that the distinction suggested by Prauss between 'temperance' and 'being temperant' which leads him to say (76; 77; 83 *et al.*) that each dynamis *has* its dynamis is rather unfortunate. Apart from the fact that such a formula involves an infinite regress, it obscures the nature of dynamis. It seems to be more plausible to oppose the verbal expressions to the substantive nouns as merely two alternate formulas for the same thing, so that the substantive noun properly stands as a nominalisation for the dynamis taken as being a state of affairs.

Indeed for Plato, a particular's 'justness' (tallness) is nothing but its 'being just', ('being tall') and so on[6]. Phrases such as *sôphrosynêi sôphronein* standing for 'to be temperant by temperance' (see *Protag.*, 332A–E; *Hippias maior*, 296B–297B) are to show that it is temperance (present in us) rather than ourselves, which is temperately acting.

This may shed some more light on the relationship of transcendent and immanent forms. The transcendent Form, JUSTNESS should be taken to be the perfect, unchanging BEING JUST, as the Form, HORSENESS is nothing but BEING HORSE. Their respective participations are by nature some particular's 'being just' or 'being a horse', so that, from the linguistic point of view, the latter may be designated as that particular's 'justness' or 'horseness'. Of course, this is quite in line with Greek idiom[7].

16.13. *A Corollary On Plato's View Of The Law Of Non-Contradiction*

Unlike in modern times the law of non-contradiction is for Plato and Aristotle not a logical rule, but a law governing being. As is known, in Aristotle's formula (at *Metaph.* Γ 3, 1005b5–34; 6, 1011b13–14) it runs: "the same thing cannot at one and the same time and in the same respect both be and not be".

Prauss has well observed (95–8) that Plato's view of the law is different from Aristotle's, as is clear from the context in which he introduces it:

Rep. IV, 436B8–D2: It is obvious that the same thing will never do or suffer opposites in the same respect, in relation to the same ‹thing› and at the same time. So that if ever we find these ‹contradictions› therein[8] we shall be aware (*eisometha*) that it was not the same ‹thing› occurring but a plurality. Consider then what I am saying. Is it possible for the same ‹thing› at the same time in the same respect to be at rest and in motion? ‹.....›. If anyone should say of a man standing still but moving his hands and head 'the same man is at the same time at rest and in motion', we should not, I think, regard that as the correct way of expressing it, but rather 'a part of him is at rest and another part in motion'[9].

Thus such contradictions as arise and seem to offend against the law may be resolved by recognising that, not the same 'thing' (*tauton*) but a plurality of 'things' is what is concerned. Unlike Aristotle, Plato does not start by assuming that there is some *one* thing, ('the same', *tauton*) and by then going on to dissolve the opposites (*enantia*). He rather proceeds the other way around and maintains the opposites in their own right and goes on to correct our view of an identical subject, which is due to our linguistic behaviour that tends to unite a plurality by assigning one name to it. To his mind, properly speaking a particular which is denoted by a single name is a bundle of dynameis, some of which (e.g. tallness, shortness) are opposites. The view that they involve real oppositions is not disposed of by relating them to different extremes ('taller than Socrates', 'shorter than Phaedo', as said of Simmias). No, they are maintained as such, yet distinguished as occurring, one apart from the other, each in its own right. As separate particular occurrences in the transient world they are no longer mutually exclusive. What *is* dissolved is our incorrect notion (which results from a deceptive linguistic suggestion of the sameness ('identity') of the grammatical subject); this is really split up into a number of dynameis[10].

Plato is following the same line of argument when he calls one single feature 'uniform' (*monoeidês*), in opposition to a particular's being "multiform" (*polyeidês*) as is rightly remarked by Prauss (41; 101; 124). Gallop explains (141–2) 'uniform' in *Phaedo*, 80B2 as meaning 'of just one character', against Hackforth (81, n. 2) who understands 'uniformity' to mean 'the denial of internal difference or distinction of unlike parts'. I think that Gallop is right in thinking the notion of parts to be irrelevant here. However, I prefer myself to take 'uniform' not to mean '*of* just one character', and his translation should be corrected that when said of some specific *form* (*eidos*) the word 'uni*form*' ('mono*eidês*') rather stands for 'consisting of just one form'. Thus any 'simple' participatum might be called *monoeidês*, that is 'consisting of one single form', not compounded of more of them (*polyeidês*). Well, in distinguishing diverse 'features' (being as many participata) in a particular, Plato clears the way for the diversification of the soul's parts (at *Rep.* IV, 439A–440A), by appeal to the law of non-contradiction, stated thus: "the soul cannot at the same time act or be acted on in opposite ways in the same part of it with relation to the same subject." Now if somebody is thirsty but unwilling to drink, we cannot assign both the desire and the restraint to the same part of

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[6] For *hosiotês* meaning *being hosion*, see above, 11.4; 15.5; 16.1, and for the Greek idiom of article with adjective rather than the corresponding abstract substantive noun, see Guthrie I, 79; IV, 119; Allen [1970], 93 ff.; and above, 2.12; 2.15; 2.16.

[7] See the previous note and also Bluck [1955], 176; 202. Prauss (78–84) has properly observed that in German (and Dutch, one may add, to an even greater extent) the different senses of Greek *to leukon*, *to kalon* can more easily be rendered than in English. So *to leukon* may be translated as: 'das Weisz' (Dutch: 'het wit', as *to kalon* is in Dutch; 'het schoon'), where the phrases stand for the immanent (or transcendent) characteristics.

[8] i.e. in the soul's cognitive functions.

[9] As a sort of 'cross-examination' of a man's words there is at *Sophist*, 230B–D some dialogical procedure described in which the law of non-contradiction plays an important role: "they collect, then, the inconsistencies in his opinions by the dialectic process and, placing them side by side, show that they contradict one another about the same things, in regard to the same things, and in the same respect" (230B6–8).

[10] So the particular tallness in Simmias is to be taken as his 'being-taller-than-everything-which-is-overtopped-by-him', such that, properly speaking, not his tallness is as such a relative quality but 'his-being-taller-than'; and 'being-taller' is accordingly to be seen as a more intensive participation of TALLNESS.

the soul and must distinguish between an intellectual and an appetitive part, to begin with. Along similar lines a third part, the 'spirited' is singled out. However, the three parts are not, on their own, the causes of diverse kinds of behaviour. In fact, they are moved by several powers which are quite unequivocal as such. For example, thirst in itself is simply an appetite for drink as such, so that if the soul is thirsty, then, in so far as it thirsts, it wishes nothing else than to drink (439A9–B2). "And if anything in the same soul then draws it back, it must be something different in it from that which thirsts and drives it like a beast to drink. For it cannot be, we say, that the same ‹thing› by the same ‹thing› in itself (*tôi autôi heautou*) at the same time acts in opposite ways about the same ‹object›" (439B4–7).

As is easily seen, the appetitive part of the soul is not identified with the thirsty part, nor is the intellectual part equated with the restraining one, but the two parts are described in the example given as moved themselves by some specific (alternate) impulses. Such impulses, then, are in themselves true dynameis, specifically directed to "that ‹thing› only of which it is its nature to be directed to" (437E7–8). Now, the 'simple' character of what precisely goes on in the soul, prevents it from being an inconsistent whole, not by nullifying the contrary character of the distinct occurrences, but rather by diversifying 'the soul' into distinct dynameis acting in as many distinct ways.

Thus both Plato's view of the law of non-contradiction and his conception of the soul betray the important role of the notion of dynamis. As a matter of fact the dynameis are the constituents of 'what is' occurring in the transient world. That these are Plato's ontological views will be confirmed when his epistemology is considered. The dynameis are indeed also the constituents of 'what appears to us' in this world.

16.2. *Particulars And Knowledge*

This section aims at discussing Plato's epistemology, which, as will be seen, basically concerns our knowledge of particulars occurring in the outside world[11]. Now, the important question may arise of what precisely is the object of true knowledge.

16.21. *The Precise Object Of Knowledge*

It has been argued recently[12] that, since only BEING can be the object of knowledge, knowledge is only obtained of transcendent Forms, not of the particulars in the outside world. Prauss has rightly defended (105–10) the view that though, in last analysis, transcendent Forms are, for Plato, the true objects of knowledge it is the particular's dynameis (or immanent forms) which are the objects proper of knowledge.

[11] This is often emphasised, e.g. by Cornford [1935:146], Gulley, 76–168 *passim*, esp. 96 ff., Murphy, 97–129, Lafrance [1981], *passim*, as it is by Prauss, who is quite right in rebuking the untenable views of scholars such as Mittelstrass [1962] and Kamlah.
[12] Mittelstrass [1962], 6; 71; Kamlah, 14; see Prauss, 105–7.

Guthrie has devoted some fine pages (V, 412–7) to the problem of knowledge of the individual in Plato. "In view of the exalted status of the Forms in his philosophy, he says, the answer ... may seem paradoxical and improbable, but the risk must be run. It is that fundamentally he is concerned with individuals, the 'real things' of common sense and ordinary life, and his problem is whether we can have knowledge of these, or rather ... what kind or degree of knowledge we can have" (412–3). Indeed, "the starting-point of Plato's enquiry is curiosity about individuals" (413–4).

This may be gathered from quite a number of texts. At *Phaedo*, 65D–66A the nature of intellectual vision is described as concerning the Large, the Healthy *etc.*, "and, in short, the being (*ousian*) of all other such things, that which each one happens to be"[13]. *Ousia* is here used with reference to the being of individual forms present in particulars (as is the case at 101C2–3)[14]. It is also called 'the truest feature' of the particulars (*to alêthestaton autôn*) and the cognitive act by which each of such features (*hekaston*) is viewed, is expressed by the verbs *dianoeisthai* and *gignôskein*. I think that Prauss is right in taking (101–10) the *hekaston* to be each characteristic feature or *dynamis*, and *dianoeisthai* to be something like 'seeing through the sensible appearances and singling out each immanent form present in the particulars' (32–3). It seems that as so often the aorist infinitive *gnônai* (65E4) stands for 'recognise', 'discern'[15].

The same view of knowledge is nicely elucidated at *Rep.* VII, 523E–524D. There the defectiveness of the senses is discussed, in that sensation may report to the soul that the same thing (*tauton*) is both hard and soft to its perception (524A3–4). The soul must be, then, at a loss as to what the sensation really means in reporting that the same thing is hard and soft. In such cases as these the soul first summons calculation and intelligence (*logismon te kai noêsin*) to its aid, to consider whether each of the features reported[16] is just one 'thing' or two; that is, whether the object's being soft is the same as its being hard[17]. Well, Socrates goes

[13] *tês ousias, ho tynchanei hekaston on*, where *ho* should be taken as complement of *on*. See Gallop, 227.
[14] "you know no other way in which each thing comes to be than by partaking in the peculiar being (*tês idias ousias*) of any given 'feature' (*hekastou* = dynamis) in which it partakes.
[15] See also Snell [1924:28–32]. Unfortunately, Prauss (following Oehler [1962:72]) takes *dianoeisthai* as used in *Theaetetus* and *Sophist* to mean "that kind of thinking which is done in judging" (31). However, they feel obliged to do so since they wrongly take *logos* to mean something split up (*dia*) by a copulative verb. To my mind, the verb has quite the same sense throughout the dialogues ('to discern') and the prefix *dia* only seems to strengthen the basic meaning of *noein* ('to recognise the true nature of a thing despite its surface appearance'). Cf. Von Fritz [1943:90 and 1945:223] and De Rijk [1983:33–5]. See also Snell [1948:26–35; 193–202].
[16] Note that two pairs of examples were given, 'hard-soft' and 'light-heavy' (524A7–10).
[17] The difference runs between either two *features* or one, not, as one might be inclined to think, between two *things* and just one (being *both* soft *and* hard). The latter problem could only arise within an Aristotelian context of a 'substance-accident' structure. That the former difference is intended is clear from what follows: viewing the two as just one is called 'confusion'.

on (524B7–8), if they appear to be two, each of the two is a distinct unit (*heteron te kai hen*) and the soul will discern (*noêsei*) the two as separate; for if they were not separable, it would have discerned them, not as two but as just one. Another example is given (524C3–7): "Sight, too saw the great and the small not separated but as something confounded (*synkechumenon ti*). And for the clarification of this, the intelligence is compelled to contemplate the great and the small not as confounded, but as distinct".

So it is the correct discernment of the diverse dynameis present in a particular that is required for there being true knowledge. A similar notion is conveyed in *Rep.* VI, 507B–C and explicitly associated with our assignment of names to different features (*dynameis*):

Rep. VI, 507B1–C1: As to many occurrences of (being-)beautiful and many of (being-)good and each other multitude: it is in accordance with these features that we assert that they *are* (*einai phamen*) and delineate them through their descriptive account (*dihorizomen tôi logôi*). And again, as to the beautiful itself and the good itself, and similarly about all which we just now posited as many: reversing our procedure, we posit, according to the single idea of each feature, ‹each of them› as one single being (*ousias*)[18], and assign each its essential name (*ho estin hekaston*[19] *prosagoreuomen*). And the one class of things we say is seen but not thought, while the ideas are thought but not seen.

Some comment. Actually, this is a tricky passage, to which only Rees has paid due attention (*ad loc.* and II, 81–2). I think that it is useful to start from the leading idea of the whole section, which is to make clear the existence of two different domains, that of Intelligible Being and its lower counterpart, the visible world. Our passage intends to elucidate the distinction of the two corresponding cognitive procedures, as was done before, at 479A–B. Let us have a look, first, at this passage[20].

The people described there (476A10) as "the lovers of spectacles and the arts, and men of action" (*philotheamones te kai philotechoi kai praktikoi*) think in terms of skill, art technique, of finding out how things are done. They are able enough to recognise in practice the features that make something good, just, pleasant, beautiful, and so on. However they are of the opinion that these features are really different and cannot be reduced into just one characteristic or idea, '*the* beautiful', '*the* just' *etc.*

Socrates points out that the *philotheamôn* must concede that beautiful (or just) characteristics such as he posits, are, in point of fact, themselves also ugly, in a way (*pôs*). He defends himself the view that there *are* unique characteristics in all such cases:

Rep. V, 478E1–479B2: It would remain then, it seems, for us to discover that which partakes of both, of both being and not being (*tou einai te kai mê einai*) and could not be rightly designated either as pure being or pure not-being; so that, if it shall appear, we may justly designate it as being the opinable ‹.....›. This much presupposed, ‹. ....› let him answer me, that good fellow who does not think there is a 'beautiful itself' or any idea of 'beauty in itself' always remaining the same and unchanged (*kata tauta hôsautôs echousan*) but who does believe that *ta kala* are multiple — the lover of spectacles, I mean, who cannot endure to hear anybody say that *to kalon* is one and *to dikaion* one, and so of other things. And this will be our question: my good fellow, is there any one of those multiple *kala* that will not sometimes appear ugly?; and of the *dikaia* that will not appear *adikon*?; and of the *hosia*, that will not seem *anhosion*? — No, it is inevitable that they would appear both beautiful (*kala*) in a way and ugly (*aischra*), and so with all the other things you asked about.

Gosling is right in claiming [1960:121–4] that the phrase *ta polla kala* does not refer to particular instances (beautiful plays, stones, trees, and so on). Indeed, Socrates cannot be supposed to deny that there is a multitude of beautiful things in the world. However, Gosling's own translation (125) '*the many types of thing deemed kalon*' is not entirely satisfying, in that it seems to make *to kalon* and *ta kala* into logical tools instead of ontic constituents. For that matter, his rejection of '*ta kala*' as referring to particulars is somewhat ambiguous: the phrase refers in fact, not to particular *objects* (as Gosling has well observed) but to particular *features* or *dynameis* such as are actually observed by the *philotheamôn* in several beautiful objects. In fact, Socrates' approach states that their way of observing things is superficial. These people fail to recognise that what they think to be the *different* characteristics of beauty in different beautiful particular instances should be, on closer inspection, i.e. from the philosophical point of view, regarded as one single feature, the beautiful itself. One ought to go deeper into the matter of beauty, justice *etc.* in order to see that, on closer inspection, the beautiful feature in any beautiful object is something specific and unique and is "always remaining the same and unchanged" (479A1–3) and never has alien admixtures that may make it sometimes appear ugly in a way. We can understand now Socrates' conclusion at 479D2–4: "We would seem to have found, then, that the multitude's multitudinous standard-features (*ta tôn pollôn polla nomima*)[21] concerning beautiful and other things are tumbled about in the mid-region between that which is not and that which is, in the pure senses of these terms".

Well, this domain is that which is subject to opinion, not recognition (*gnôsis*). The latter is the privilege and task of the philosopher, who aptly discerns the different dynameis ('being-beautiful', 'being-just', and so on) and 'brings them home' (*anapherein*), relating each of them (through the noemata present to his mind by Recollection) to the respective unique (*hen*) Standards of BEING ('BEING-BEAUTIFUL', 'BEING-JUST' *etc.*). Rees correctly remarks (I, 343, note to 479D):

[18] I read *ousias* instead of the MSS reading *ousês*. See below.
[19] I take the phrase *ho estin hekaston* to be the internal object of the verb, 'to name'; for this use, see Index, *s.v. onomazein*.
[20] For a clear survey of the context (473D ff.), see Gosling [1960:120–1].

[21] Neither Rees (*ad loc.*) nor Gosling [1960:120] are right in taking *nomima* to stand for 'formulae', 'standards', 'general rules, or canons, believed in by the multitude'. The word rather refers to the multitude's (and their like, in this regard, the *philotheamones*) actual sensations of the features themselves (which are observed, of course, by having some canon or standard in one's mind). Again, Gosling is surely right in remarking (*ibid.*) that *nomima* does not mean 'particulars'. However, *something* particular *is* meant, viz. the particular features observed in the particular objects.

"The form in which Plato expresses his conclusion ... prepares us for VI, 484C, where the whole purpose of this enquiry is disclosed. It is the business of the philosopher-king to bring order out of chaos by remodelling the *nomima* of the many in conformity with the Idea".

Back to *Republic* VI, 507B2–C1, now. To my mind, Plato is speaking here of the opposition between particulars and of the specific immanent forms present in them which they are named after. For example, there are (beautiful) plays, (beautiful) stones, (beautiful) trees, and so on, which we designate because of the presence of beauty in them by calling them 'these beautiful ‹things›' or 'these ‹things› pleasant to the eyes', by means of an onoma or a logos, respectively. Well, this specific characteristic of theirs, the beautiful itself, (which is, unlike what the *philotheamôn* makes out of it, something unique and unadulterated) can likewise be identified according to its idea as one ousia, and named accordingly with its essential name, as 'the beautiful', just like 'the good', 'the just' and so on may be truly identified and given their proper, essential names. So 'beauty' ('justice', *etc.*) present in particulars is a dynamis, which is recognised and identified as such and given the essential ('being-like') name, 'the beautiful' or rather (following Plato's formula, '*ho estin hekaston*', in which *hekaston* may be taken as the 'open spot' or variable)[22], 'What Is Beautiful' ('What Is Just').

The Greek text still remains rather difficult. First the *houtôs* at 507B2. Jowett and Campbell (*Plato's Republic*, Oxford 1892, *ad. loc.*) supply *polla* and translate by "many individuals of each class". I cannot follow them. I think we had better start from the main assertion (explicitly confirmed by Glaucon's answer: "yes, we name them so") that we are in the habit of assigning being (*einai phamen*) to a multitude of beautiful things, or good things and similarly to each multitude[23] of 'things' having *f*-ness. I take the adverb *houtôs* as a determination, not of *einai* (which would be rather unusual, indeed) but of the finite verbs *phamen* and *dihorizomen*: we assign being 'along these lines' by naming and defining them as 'being-beautiful', 'being-good', 'being-such-and-such'. The objects of *phamen* and *dihorizomen* are put at the head of the sentence, which may lead to the translation 'as to ....'. Unlike Gosling (125) I think that here the phrase *polla kala* may be indiscriminately taken to mean the many beautiful instances or instantiations[24]. Hence my neutral rendering: "occurrences of ....". The verb *einai* has given rise to some difficulties among the commentators. Jowett and Campbell (*ad loc.*) say that "*einai* is not here used in the sense of 'to have real existence' but simply = 'to be'". Rees has (*ad loc.*): "*einai* is not of course used in its technical sense, otherwise it would be inconsistent with the end of Book V. Socrates means only that the Platonist (*sic*!, De R.) distinguishes between two categories, — ta polla, and the Ideas". I rather think that nothing of the sort is involved here. Socrates simply says that *we assign* (according to our actual linguistic behaviour) 'being' to things in a certain manner. The main assertion of the sentence is about *us* and *our doings* rather than about beautiful, good and other things.

At 507B2–8 Socrates keeps on considering our linguistic behaviour (involving, of course, some ontological views). He refers to what is elsewhere called our method of 'Collection', whereby we collect a number of appearances under one single form (see above, 8.3–8.4). Indeed, after we have observed and named accordingly a multitude of things in regard to their having a certain property[25], we set out to go the other way around (*palin au*; 507B6) to posit each feature as one (kind of) being, and name, then, each in accordance with this kind of being.

Rees reads *kai idean* ("and the idea") instead of the MSS reading *kat' idean* ("in accordance with the idea"). He is surely right in saying that an unduly sloping accent is enough to account for some corruption of *kai idean* into *kat' idean*. However, I see no good reason to follow him and think that there surely are good reasons to retain the MSS reading. This is easily seen if our passage is compared with a parallel one where the process of Division and Collection is likewise discussed, *Phaedrus*, 277B5–8. There we find the same key notion of 'reversing the procedure' (*palin*), and what in our passage is called *tithenai kat' idean* is there rendered by *kat' eidê temnein* (cf. 265E where the same key notions occur; and 184D3–4). At *Phaedrus*, 265D3 the notion of Collection is expressed by *eis mian idean agein ta diesparmena*; cf. *Timaeus*, 35A7.

Rees may be right, however, in doubting if *tithenai kat' idean mian* could stand for 'reduce to a single form' or 'bring under a single idea', as the phrase has been translated. To my mind, the commentators have so far not paid sufficient attention to the strange phrase *hôs mias ousês*. As it stands it can only refer to the previous *idean* and should mean something like "because this idea is one", or "forms a unity", where the absolute genitive seems to me a little bit strange, though, no doubt, grammatically possible. However, the addition of the phrase seems to be rather pointless. Do we really *either* posit some 'thing' according to some *one* idea, *because* it is one?; *or* assign to it an *essential* name, *because* the idea is unique? I confess, the point is not clear to me.

For that reason, I venture an emendation of the word *ousês* into *ousias*. It has the unmistakable advantage of making clear the assignment of being-ness mentioned at the end of our sentence. Besides, the participle *tithentes* has its object now: we posit each feature as one *ousia* (where the genitive case is easily explained as determined by the previous *hekastou*). Finally, *kat' idean mian* no longer provides

[22] For this use of *hekaston*, see e.g. *Phaedo*, 65E1, 78D3; 5. See also Rees (II, 81–2): "*ho estin hekaston*, taken by itself, is most easily and naturally understood as the generalised form of the idiom *ho estin kalon*, *ho estin agathon* etc.".

[23] Notice the plural *hekasta* at 507B2 (in contradistinction to the singular forms, *hekastou* and *hekaston* at B7).

[24] It is noteworthy that Gosling here regards Plato as talking "of *ta polla* as *objects* (my italics) of sight, not of thought" and of "observables", so that he must mean, now, by his term 'types' not some abstract standards but, as I do myself, particular *features* occurring in particular instances which are the object of somebody's actual observation.

[25] This is the phase of Division: we observe some individual property ('beautifulness') as being divided over a multitude of particulars. See above, 3.4; 11.6; 14.2.

any difficulty: we posit each feature according to *its* (genitive case in Greek) single proper idea as being one *ousia*, and so we assign to this feature its 'ousia-like' name. As is well known, the term *ousia* is often associated with a 'thing's' nature taken as its *modus essendi*, to the effect that the ousia of x (or f) is '*being*-x' (or '*being*-f'[26]). Kahn [1973¹:460] has well observed that

> the basically new conception of *ousia* in Plato is a function of its use as nominalization for the Socratic *ti esti; question*, as in *Euthyphro*, 11A7... Here *ousia* represents neither the existence of the subject nor any predicate which happens to be true (even uniquely true) of it, but the very nature of the essence of the thing, as revealed in the definition. In the *Phaedo* the term applies in a special way to the being of the Forms, which are *what (a thing) really is, auto ho estin.*

He refers (460, n. 6) to several passages in the *Phaedo* and other Platonic contexts in which "*hê ousia* (taken distributively for all the Forms) and *ta onta* are strictly equivalent in meaning". I agree with him except in his too strict opposition of 'existence' and 'essence', such an opposition being less appropriate to a Platonic ontology (see below, our 16.3).

By now, the philotheamôn's method of observing and dealing with objects has been definitely ruled out. The features are unique, unadulterated, and, as such, not subject to sensation, but need to be discerned by the mind itself, by pure thought. Rees' comment is worth quoting: "Plato's meaning will appear from a single example. We postulate both *polla dikaia* and also *hen dikaion*, viz. the *idea mia dikaiou* and we call the latter *ho estin dikaion*; cf. *Phaedo*, 75B, *Sympos.* 211C and elsewhere. We postulate only one *idea dikaiou* because we believe that there is but one; see X, 597C–D where Plato shews why there cannot be more". This comment is correct and more compatible with our reading of the text.

Winding up this section it may be concluded that for Plato the notion proper of knowledge is that the soul (mind) is able to discern among the sensible appearances which abound with confusion the diverse dynameis which are found occurring together as a bundle. The question arises by what procedure the act of knowing is accomplished.

16.22. *The Cognitive Procedure: Anapherein And Noema*

The technique of the cognitive procedure is sometimes described by Plato as 'asking and answering questions' which should lead the mind to make its definitive choice by saying 'yes, it's this or that'. At *Meno*, 81A–D and *Phaedo*, 72E–77E the process of Recollection (*anamnêsis*) is clearly connected with aptly asking and answering[27]. Questioning and answering are quite familiar in the Socratic dialogues and in *Rep.* VII, 538D6–E3 the procedure is made rather explicit. In *Theaetetus*,

[26] For parallels, see *Euthyphro*, 11A7; *Meno*, 72A9–10; *Rep.* V, 479C7; VI, 509B8, *Phaedo*, 65D9; 74B2–75D2; 78C9–D4; 101C3; *Theaet.*, 185C8; 201E3–202A1; *Sophist*, 219B4–5; 262C3.

[27] See Guthrie IV, 249–53; 329–30; see esp. *Phaedo*, 73A5–7; 75D2–3; 78D1–2.

189D7–E3 thinking is described as "carrying on a discussion, asking itself questions and answering them and saying Yes or No" (see above, 14.43). Nuchelmans has put (19) this aspect of the process of thinking in the right perspective, including the later historical development:

> A *doxa* is the result of a process of thinking. This result is reached when the inner dialogue issues in a clear yes or no, in a definite assent or dissent. For this act of judging that something is the case or is not the case in *Theaetetus* 170d4 the verb *krinein* is used, which precisely means separating one thing from others, preferring one thing to another, coming to a decision in favour of something. In *Theaetetus* 190a2, on the other hand, Plato employs the verb *horizein* for this inward saying yes or no to one of several possibilities: in forming a judgment one marks out, by drawing boundaries around it, as it were, that one of the considered states of affairs which, after due deliberation, seems to have the best credentials. Here we encounter again the idea of setting limits to something. But, more importantly, it is noteworthy that Plato uses exactly that word from which in later times the name for the indicative mood will be derived. Dionysius Thrax (*Ars grammatica* 13, ed. Uhlig p. 47) calls the indicative mood *horistikê enklisis*; and Apollonius Dyscolus (*De syntaxi*, ed. Uhlig p. 346) explains this name by pointing out that in using this mood we make known an opinion and assert something definite (*apophainomenoi horizometha*).

He further points out (*ibid.*) that in the Skeptics' use of the phrase *ouden horizô*, the verb most clearly is distinguished from *legein ti* ('put something into words') and means putting forward something combined with assent, to the extent that in the skeptic formula *ouden horizô* it is especially the assertive force of *horizein* that comes to the fore. He seems to be right in remarking that "in all these contexts, we may safely conclude, *horizein* has the sense of forming or pronouncing a definite judgment, of reaching a point at which one's assent or dissent is firmly fixed on one alternative" (*ibid.*).

The procedure is itself referred to with the verb *anapherein*, that is, a reduction to the Forms. (See Prauss, 36; 110–22; 191). So in *Cratylus*, 424B–D the term is used in connection with name-giving; which is described there in the context of the task of the specialists of grammar. The important passage will be discussed shortly (16.3).

Of course, the process is not just an easy job to do. One has only to recall *Statesman*, 262A ff. where the EV warns Socrates the Younger to proceed properly in making the relevant Divisions and Collections. A common name is indeed no warrant for obtaining a true *eidos* (see above, 14.2).

Rep. III, 402A–D describes the process of learning in a comparison with our learning of the letters of the alphabet. Just as we must be able to recognise them everywhere (402B), so "by the same token we shall never be formed by the Muse of education (*mousikoi*)[28] either (neither we nor the guardians that we have undertaken to educate) until we are able to recognise (*gnorizômen*) the forms of soberness,

[28] For this sense of *mousikos* and its relationship to 'philosophy', see De Rijk [1965:48–67]. It is to be noted that for Plato, even the guardians must be able to recognise the true (immanent) characteristics of 'soberness', 'courage' and the other virtues proper to their class. Of course, 'bringing them home' (*anapherein*) to the transcendent Domain is the proper task of the philosopher.

courage, liberality, and high-mindedness and all their kindred and their opposites, as well[29], wherever they are found, and to perceive (*aisthanômetha*) them as being present (*enonta*) in the things in which they are".

Of course, such 'reducing' or rather perhaps 'bringing home' concerns our sensations of the dynameis which we 'bring back' to the transcendent Form *as far as* we know it by Recollection. *Phaedo*, 75B–76E is most explicit about that:

Phaedo, 75A3–B5: Yet we also agree on this: we have not derived the thought of it (*auto ennenoêkenai*) nor could we do so, from anywhere but by seeing or touching or some other of the senses ‹.....›. But, of course, it is *from* one's sense-perceptions that one must think that all the things in the sense-perceptions are striving for 'what is equal'[30] ‹.....› Then it must, surely, have been before we began to see and hear and use the other senses that we obtained knowledge of 'the equal itself', of what it is (*autou tou isou ho ti estin*), if we were going to bring home (*anoisein*) the equals from our sense-perceptions to that Domain (*ekeise*)[31].

Ibid., 75C5–D5: But we did know, did not we, both before birth and as soon as we were born, not only the equal, the larger and the smaller, but everything of that sort ‹.. ....›. In fact, as I say, it concerns everything on which we set this seal, viz. 'just what it is' (*to auto ho esti*), in the questions we ask and the answers we give. And so we must have obtained pieces of knowledge of all those things before birth.

That the reduction is to the 'pieces of knowledge' acquired by our souls before birth, not properly to the contemplation of them actually performed in this life, is self-evident[32].

Ibid., 76D6–E3: If that which we are always harping on, viz. Something Beautiful, or Good, and all such Being (*ousia*), *are* indeed, and if we bring home (*anapheromen*) all the things from our sense-perceptions to that Being, finding again what was formerly ours, and if we compare these ‹sensible things› with that, then .... *etc.*

Prauss seems to be right in referring to the Form as known by Recollection (in my label, the Form in its mental status) by the term the *Parmenides* uses for it, *noêma* (132A–C).

We may further refer to all those important passages in which Plato tries to clarify his views of the acquisition of true knowledge. They are found where he depicts the task of the true philosopher. These testimonies have been discussed earlier (our 8.3 and 8.4). In point of fact, they all try to explain, one way or another, how the true philosopher should be able to recognise that the objects of perception have certain stable elements ('forms' or 'dynameis') in common. He has to single each of them out of the appearances and see that it surely is stable and never

[29] To say 'no' the recognition of opposites is required.
[30] Socrates speaks of 'equal stones and equal logs' (74B6–7).
[31] For *ekei*, *ekeise* and *ekeinos* as referring to the transcendent Domain, see Des Places *s.v.* and Ast, I, 658.
[32] I confess that I cannot see any reasonable point in Prauss's attempt (111–2) to put firmly into our minds the view that the *anapherein* concerns not a reduction of the particular *dynameis* (taken physically) to the Forms as they exist in their Holy Domain but of our sensations of the former (the *aisthêta*) to our remembrances of the latter (the *noêmata*). This indeed goes without saying. Whoever is that over-cautious could also as an author fear that a reader could *deprive* him of his ideas by taking them over.

subject to change, however widely it might be scattered all over the domain of sensible things all partaking in it. As to the sensible objects themselves, he must know to analyse them into their dynameis (immanent forms). The two aspects of the procedure, so often depicted by Plato as complementary (see 8.3 and 8.4), are really linguistically interwoven and come down to one over-all procedure of naming and identification.

16.3. *Naming And Identification*

Several scholars have remarked that for Plato, the true process of cognition amounts to assiduously striving after recognition and identification of Forms[33]. However, it should be stressed, the proximate object of cognition is the forms in their immanent status occurring in particulars, which present themselves to our perception as so many different dynameis (see our 16.43).

The rôle of naming as the specific device of the identification of dynameis is made clear in a description of the ontological task of grammar at *Cratylus*, 424C–D. Socrates says:

Cratylus, 424B7–D7: Since the representation (*mimêsis*) of the ousia is made with letters and syllables, would not the most correct way be for us to discern the letters first, just as those who undertake the practice of rhythms discern first the qualities of the letters, then those of the syllables, and then, but not till then, come to the study of rhythms? ‹. .....›. And when we have discerned the beings, all of them[34], we must in turn[35] properly assign ‹them› all the names, looking if there are ‹entities› to which they all are 'brought home' (*anapheretai*) as their elements, from which it is possible to see them, as well as whether there are characteristics (*eidê*) in them, in the same way as in the elemental parts. When we have well looked through (*diatheasamenous*) all that, we must know to apply each letter with regard to its fitness, whether one letter is to be applied to one thing or many are to be mixed together.

The passage is so pregnantly composed in that Plato plays upon the *double entendre* of *stoicheia*, which stands for both letters ('elemental parts of names') and elemental parts (dynameis) of things. Things are composed of different dynameis (they are in fact bundles of dynameis; see our 16.11) and should be referred to as adequately as possible by names consisting of significative letters, whereby the ideal situation were such that a dynamis is properly designated by a specific letter. In a word, letters as well as names are identification tags of dynameis or bundles consisting of them, respectively.

McDowell rightly states (250) that "Plato evidently uses the ability to spell out words as a model for the ability to, so to speak, spell out the collection of qualities with which one is confronted when one perceives, say, a person", and rightly re-

[33] See e.g. Gulley (108–68 *passim*); Prauss, 114–36; 148–52 and *passim*, McDowell, 229–31; Kahn [1973²:160]. See also above, 14.2–14.3; 15.23; 15.4–15.5.
[34] Reading *panta dihelômetha ta onta* with the MS *B* (the MSS *TW* read *tauta* instead of *panta*); '*ta onta*' stands for the 'beings' (dynameis) found in the object of perception, I think.
[35] Reading with all our MSS *authis* instead of Badham's conjecture *au hois* which was adopted by the editors even including a conservative editor such as Burnet.

fers to *Rep.* III, 402A7–C9 (cf. above, 16.22) for the analogy between recognising letters and recognising qualities. We have put earlier (15.1; 16.12) the latter ability as that of 'naming out' the bundle of dynameis occurring in the outside world[36].

16.4. *The Nature of Semantic Identification*

It is natural to ask, now, what is the nature of the semantic identification. This important question is best understood in two closely related contexts, to wit (1) the association between knowledge and the ability to give an account (*logos*) of something, and (2) the proper sense of Greek *einai* ('be') in this respect.

16.41. *Knowledge And Account*

Several passages from the middle dialogues show us Plato associating knowledge of something with the ability to give an account of it. For example *Phaedo*, 73A9–10 where 'knowledge' (*epistêmê*) and 'correct account' (*orthos logos*) are explicitly interrelated, and 76B5–7 where the ability to give an account is said to be a necessary condition for knowledge. Another passage is *Symposion*, 202A5–9. There Diotima asks Socrates if he does not know that truly opining, without being able to give an account for it is neither true knowledge ("how could a thing-cognised-without-an-account (*alogon pragma*) be knowledge?") nor ignorance. The view is still found in the later dialogues, e.g. *Timaeus*, 51B6–E6; for this passage, see above, 14.3).

As we have seen earlier (13.13), a logos is an account or descriptive formula, and acts as a compound name. The descriptive formula primarily concerns the form as embodied in the transient world, not the transcendent Form as such. Failing to see this has caused many difficulties to modern interpreters. So Gallop (on *Phaedo*, 76B5–7) opposes (132–3) 'give a definition' and 'give proof' as alternate meanings of 'give an account' and thinks that the latter meaning amounts to "defending propositions about them [Forms] by rational argument" (133). However, such an opposition is quite alien to Plato, for whom true knowledge consists in identifying one or more dynameis occurring in this world, and saying (explaining) by this very act of identifying what a particular is.

In his note on *Phaedo*, 78D1–5 (138–9) Gallop brings forward a similar opposition in contrasting two senses of 'giving an account of a Form's being': (1) 'defining its essential nature' and (2) 'proving that it exists'. The existential interpretation has been defended by Loriaux [1955:26–34, and 1969:152–3; 164–5], and Gallop prefers himself (following Bluck and Burnet, *ad loc.*) the definitorial ('non-existential') reading, "in view of the reference to asking and answering questions (cf. 75D2–3)", where in his view, it seems far more natural to associate this with the Socratic quest for definitions than with proofs of the Forms' existence. He is

[36] See also Prauss, 122–5. For a person regarded as a bundle of qualities, see *Theaetetus*, 157B8–C2; 201D8–202B7.

surely right in that respect, as he is in observing that "questioning and answering to prove that the Forms exist can hardly be said to occur in the dialogues at all". However, the opposition he and the other commentators (as Loriaux and Bluck) have made between the existential and the non-existential readings may have sense from the modern point of view, to Plato it is pointless as may be clear from his view of *einai* ('be'). However, before discussing the meaning of Platonic *einai*, a few remarks may be added on a well-known question raised about the nature of Platonic knowledge, to wit, does knowledge have a propositional structure for Plato?

16.42. *Platonic Knowledge By Acquaintance*

Ryle was of the opinion (317) that the argument of the *Theaetetus* (201C–210B; see above, 15.24) to the extent that true knowledge is true opinion accompanied by an account (*logos*) means "to bring together threads from earlier and later parts of the dialogue, that knowledge requires for its expression not just a name but a sentence or statement". Likewise for Hamlyn [1955:300–2], the central problem of the *Theaetetus*, as of the *Sophist*, is how knowledge (*epistêmê*) which can be expressed in ordinary statements is possible. He rejects the idea that in *Theaetetus*, as in *Republic* (477A; 510A; 517B), the terms *epistêmê* and *gnôsis* are still interchangeable, and contrasts them there as recognition of a Form (*gnôsis*) and 'knowing-that' (*epistêmê*). Elsewhere [1957:547] he appeals to the two passages where the enumeration of the parts of a thing is discussed (203A ff.; 207A ff.) and argues that Plato is making a distinction between two kinds of knowledge, the earlier type of 'knowledge by acquaintance' and the propositional type 'knowing-that'. In his fine analysis of the basic items of the *Theaetetus*, Bondeson joins this side in remarking (113–4) that "what Plato is attempting to point out is that *aisthêsis*... cannot give us anything which can be called 'true'; it is only when we make judgments *about* what is perceived that the notion of truth becomes important". It is noteworthy that for Bondeson, the contradistinction of 'knowledge by acquaintance' and 'knowing that' is not the main purport of the *Theaetetus*. His claim is that what Plato mainly wants is to separate sense perception (*aisthêsis*) from opinion (*doxa*) and knowledge (*epistêmê*) and that this distinction is made on the grounds that, unlike the former, the latter two are propositional.

The opposite view has been sagaciously defended (after Cherniss [1936:8] and Ross [1951:25]; see also Bluck [1956:39–41]) by Bluck [1963]. He starts with references (259) to the undeniable (and generally acknowledged) fact that the Greek word *doxa* need not necessarily be associated with propositions and may refer simply to what a thing 'seems like', as becomes quite clear from passages of the *Meno* which claim that *doxa* about a thing may be converted into *epistêmê* of it, or the *Republic* where *epistêmê* is certainly a matter of 'knowledge by acquaintance' with Forms. As for the *Theaetetus*, Bluck holds that "the indications are that even there Plato is not introducing *doxa* as something essentially propositional". He rightly refers to 202B where Socrates uses the expression "to get hold of the true *doxa* of something without a *logos*" and at 190D and 209B where he uses *doxazein* ('to opine') to mean 'to think of' or 'to have in mind'.

However, what about the new epistemological doctrine of the *Theaetetus*? It is unmistakably clear that, from then onwards, in the cognitive process, what is summed up in the large list of the *koina* (185C9–D4), is most essential. Well, among the items on that list the notions of 'likeness' and 'unlikeness', 'sameness' and 'otherness', and, particularly, 'being' and 'truth' play a role of utmost importance. At 186A2–3 it is explicitly said that 'being' (*ousia*) is the most important and pervasive of these, and it is precisely because mere sense-perception cannot apprehend those common notions that it cannot be equivalent to *epistêmê*. For that matter, the common notions must be surveyed (*episkopein*) by the soul (185E1). Bondeson is perfectly right in saying (114) that "the meanings of "truth" and "being" here are crucial, and the interpretation of this section depends on what is meant by these terms".

In this respect it should be noticed first (with Bluck)[37] that Plato "seems to be interested here not so much in the fact that judgments such as 'X is F' are propositional as in the question with what sort of faculty we apprehend the element of F-ness"[38] (259). In his view, "the point seems to be that some *things* are *objects*, not of any sense-organ but of *doxa*; and it looks as though *doxa* may be introduced not in order to indicate that an object of knowledge must be something complex, but simply to show that knowledge involves, not, or not only, sense-data but mental apprehension" (259–60). He concludes (260) that "so far there is no reason to suppose that Plato had ever gone into the question whether a *doxa* would be propositional or not. Sometimes he treats a *doxa* as though it were propositional, at others he seems to be thinking of it as a sort of mental image".

Bluck has also successfully argued (262) against Hamlyn's opposition of *epistêtos* and *gnôstos* [1957:547] and shown that (especially at *Theaet.*, 209E) *gnôsis* is simply another name for *epistêmê*[39]. In Socrates' own words (209E8–210A1): "getting to know (*gnônai*) means acquiring knowledge (*epistêmên*)". If one of Plato's objects of the dialogue, argues Bluck, was to indicate an important new distinction between *gnôsis* ('knowledge by acquaintance') and *epistêmê* ('propositional knowledge'), it is surely incredible that he should allow Socrates here to identify the terms concerned.

[37] [1963:259], who is less fortunate, however, in taking *einai* and *mê* (*ouk*) *einai* to mean 'existence' and 'non-existence'. Small wonder that he thinks (260) the notions involved to be difficult "especially in the case of things like existence".

[38] Of course, I would prefer to write '*x is f*' and '*f-ness*', since transcendent F-ness is not at issue here, but rather the forms immanent in things are primarily involved. Nor are our noemata of the transcendent Forms meant which are called up by Recollection. See also above, 16.2.

[39] Cf. Lyons [1963: s.v. *epistêmê*] where it is made clear that the terms are not strictly opposed to one another.

I think that, apart from some details[40], Bluck's view is right. The 'objects' of knowing may indeed be characterised as 'mental images', or rather *pragmata*, that is, things in the outside world *as conceived of* (see also above, 15.23). However, he seems to have fallen victim to the same optical error as is at work on the side of his opponents (Ryle, Hamlyn, Bondeson), namely that 'judgmental' is uncritically equated to 'propositional', as there being a 'complex of elements' is silently identified with there being a complex of the '*S is P*' structure[41].

I want to argue for the thesis that (1) in Plato's new view of knowledge, that it possesses a complex structure is most essential (against Bluck), but (2) the complex must not be associated in any way whatsoever with our propositional structure, to the effect that indeed the new kind of 'knowledge' is still to be characterised as 'knowledge by acquaintance' (with Bluck and in contrast to the other commentators mentioned above).

All interpreters are surely right when they focus our attention on what is taken as Plato's general point, that sense-perception (*aisthêsis*) cannot be knowledge because there are in it simply none of the common notions (*koina*). The general point is clearly stated by Bondeson (112–3):

> To paraphrase the argument in 185E ff., the soul, when it operates "by itself" .... deals with certain characteristics which are not "viewed" (*episkopein*) through the sense-organs. The chief of these is "being" (*ousia*–186A2), and this characteristic "most of all pertains to everything" (186A2–3). In addition to this, there are similarity and dissimilarity, sameness and otherness, beauty and ugliness, and goodness and badness. But the point is that these are not involved until the soul starts to make comparisons between its sensations or perceptions, "reflecting within itself upon the past and present in relation to the future." (186A9–B1) .... The soul makes its comparisons and reflects about them with regard to their "being" (*ousia*–186B7) and usefulness. The use of *ousia* cannot be but important when it is connected with the following lines where it is maintained that one cannot attain "truth" without attaining "being" (186C7) and further that attaining knowledge is attaining "truth" .... And he spells out the implications further; knowledge is not in our sensations but in our reasoning about them.

However, unlike Bondeson I cannot see that the notions 'being' and 'truth' should unmistakably lead us to recognising that knowledge is propositional. Bluck has rightly observed (260) that, if Plato had intended, in introducing *doxa*, to show that what can be known is what can be truly opined and therefore stated in the propositional form, he would surely have been bound, in view of his treatment

[40] So, for example, Bluck's strange opposition of 'sense-organ' (being a faculty) and *doxa* (being a process or its product).

[41] Ryle states [1939:320]: "What I know or truly believe or falsely believe is some sort of a complex of elements, and one the verbal statement of which requires not a name only, nor even a conjunction of names but a complex expression of which the special form of unity is that of a sentence". See also Hamlyn [1955:301], and Bondeson (114): "Plato is maintaining that knowledge is propositional ....; truth requires statements or propositions" and (Plato) "rather seems to be making a distinction between *epistêmê* and *aisthêsis* ... in terms of a distinction between the non-propositional character of *aisthêsis* and the propositional character of *epistêmê*" (115).

of *doxa* in the earlier dialogues where it is not clearly propositional, to make his point more clearly in the *Theaetetus*. Plato's use of the juryman-and-eye-witness analogy is of special interest on this score. Knowledge is to true belief as is the state of mind of an eye-witness to the state of mind of a juryman who is won over by persuasion. Bluck refers to the road-to-Larissa illustration in the *Meno*, (97A-B) where the man with personal experience of the road is said to have knowledge, while the man who has merely been given correct instructions has only true opinion. He is quite right in arguing that both analogies should suggest that "some sort of personal acquaintance is the mark of knowledge". He is surely right too in stating (261) "that when in the *Theaetetus* (186E) Socrates refutes the suggestion that knowledge is perception by remarking that perception has no part in apprehending *alêtheia* because it has no part in apprehending being (*ousia*), this need not mean that *epistêmê* is knowledge of true propositions: for *alêtheia*, besides meaning 'truth', can also mean 'genuineness' or 'what is genuine or real'[42].

It is to be noted, however, that in (correctly) rebutting any propositional character for knowledge Bluck goes too far in assuming (*ibid.*) that "in the *Theaetetus* Plato is looking for the psychological rather than the logical explanation of false *doxa*"[43]. As a matter of fact, it cannot reasonably be denied that for Plato, knowledge *is* 'judgemental', that is, has everything to do with the soul's reasoning, considering and judging. This is made perfectly clear where the well-known definition of 'thought' (*dianoia*) is given (*Theaetetus*, 189E4–190A6; see above, 15.23; cf. 16.22). Bondeson seems to be right in feeling himself reminded of the language used in the earlier passage about the 'common notions'. There can be no doubt that in discoursing with itself the soul comes to make certain assertions and there is even talk of affirming and denying. All the same, this certainly needs not mean (as Bondeson (115) thinks) that "thought is propositional" and that "it is expressed in statements". It is a fact that Plato does not know of the later 'statement' of the well-known propositional form ('*S is P*') and his 'assertion' or 'declarative sentence' is of quite another nature, as has been extensively discussed earlier (15.3).

For that matter, Bondeson is even of the opinion (117) that Plato "raised himself difficulties about the view which holds that believing *x is y* entails being acquainted (in more modern terminology) with what is named by the terms 'x' and 'y'". He thinks (118–21) that Plato gives an account of opinion which seems to be propositional but in which the terms seem to be names of things known by acquaintance and that Plato gives two models (the wax tablet and the aviary models) which use the acquaintance terminology and seem to show that neither of these can account for false opinion (121). Bondeson is cautious enough, however, to say (*ibid.*) only that the fact that Plato's arguments are "presented as having difficulties would seem to indicate that Plato had some idea of what these difficulties were". In fact, he must appeal to similarities with the *Sophist* where "a more positive doctrine about *statements* (my italics) in mind" were suggested.

[42] For this sense, see also above, 7.21; 8.3.

[43] For the rest, Bluck seems to be of the wrong opinion that the *Sophist* is concerned with "the logic of propositions" (261). For that matter, the controversy Bluck [1956] *vs.* Cross [1954] seems to be due entirely to their translation of *logoi* as 'statements'.

It may be objected against Bondeson, first, that the failure of the wax tablet and the aviary models is not to be found in their adherence to the acquaintance model of knowledge but in their misconception of the pragma involved. As long as the pragma is conceived of as a monolithic whole in the way in which the Eleatic philosophers did, the problem of *pseudos* could not be solved. Second. We have seen (above, 15.23) that there are good reasons also to reject the propositional structure in respect of Plato's declarative sentence as discussed in the *Sophist*. Third. Bluck has convincingly argued (263) on account of the final part of the *Theaetetus*, that what is related there is that the reason why the ability to enumerate the elements of a thing (as, for example, a wagon) does not convert *orthê doxa* into knowledge is that you may be able to correctly make an enumeration in one instance but not in every instance of the same thing (207D–208A). But what is needed to be able to do the latter is "an inner certainty resulting from personal familiarity with the particular 'syllable' (or Form whose instances have parts) concerned". Bluck is surely right in referring, again, to the eye-witness analogy where a similar personal familiarity is clearly involved. There are good grounds to follow Cornford [1935:142; 146, n. 1] in this respect as well as Bluck's suggestion (263) that for there to be knowledge another kind of *logos* (rather a different kind of *pragma*) is needed, to wit one which harmoniously (i.e. non-atomically) represents the non-atomic structure of the object in the outside world. See also above, 7.22; 12.45; 15.24 and below, 16.43.

Bondeson quite rightly emphasises (113–4) that in the soul's reasoning or judging (which is so essential to knowledge) the elements 'being' and 'truth' have the most important role to play among the 'common notions' (*koina*). Bluck has well observed (261) that 'apprehending truth' is to be put on a par with 'apprehending being', since *alêtheia* means here 'genuineness' or 'real being', and has no bearing on 'true proposition'. The correct interpretation of what is meant by Platonic *einai* cannot but confirm the view of Platonic knowledge defended in this section.

16.43. *The Comprehensive Use Of einai In Plato*

Gallop has joined (92) the company of all those scholars who find in Plato, in some way or another, the distinction between the 'incomplete' use of 'be' (in which a complement is required, expressed or understood), and a 'complete' or 'absolute' use in which the verb stands by itself[44]. In the latter use he distinguishes between 'to be true' and 'to exist':

[44] He differentiates the incomplete use into the use of the 'is' of identity and that of predication and correctly says that "in some contexts it is not certain which of these is meant. Nor is it clear whether any such distinction was recognized by Plato when this dialogue [*Phaedo*] was written". However, together with the mass of modern interpreters he is of the opinion that in the *Sophist* a systematic clarification of the verbal use of 'be' is attempted. See, however, above, no. 2.5; 3.1–3.2.

In use (2), which survives only vestigially in English, the verb commonly means either 'to be true' or 'to exist'. .... In the present passage [*Phaedo*, 65C2–4], however, it is not clear whether 'the things that are' are thought of as 'truths' or 'existents'. They are said to become clear to the soul in its reasoning. This might suggest that, as Burnet holds (note on 65c2–4) 'truths' are meant. Yet Socrates will shortly go on to speak of 'the hunt for each of the things that are' (66a3) in connection with 'Forms', which are introduced in terms suggestive of existents.

He soundly concluded (*ibid.*) that "a sharp dichotomy between 'truths' and 'existents' need not be drawn at this point". I think that for Plato, the whole opposition is pointless. First, he equates 'true' and 'being', as has been often remarked (see above, 7.21; 8.3). Secondly, which is far more important to notice and lies at the basis of the equivalence of 'true' and 'being'[45]: the basic notion of Greek 'be' is best characterised as what I should like to call 'hyparctic'.

I use this term to avoid all controversial connotations inhering in the label 'existential', which is mostly associated rather closely with the notion of 'substance' and 'subsistence' taken with their Aristotelian flavour. The Greek grammarian Apollonius Dyscolus (2nd cent. A.D.) uses the word *hyparktikon* to denote the verbs signifying *hyparxis*, especially the verb *einai*. (Cf. Priscian's '*verbum substantivum*'.) *Hyparxis* as opposed to *noêsis* ('*idea*') stands for 'being-really-given-outside-the-mind' according to Plutarch of Chaeronea (c. 46–120 A.D.), *De communibus notitiis* = *Moralia*, p. 1067C Wyttenbach. The main reason for my preference for *hyparctic* is that 'existence' is so often understood in opposition to 'essence' which is quite alien to Platonic thinking.

Kahn [1973¹:331–70], who, in his brilliant study on the verb 'be' in Greek, has rightly distinguished the 'be the case' use of *einai* from the copulative and existential uses, has coined the label 'veridical use' for the former and takes 'be true', 'be so', or 'be the case' as its corresponding sense or translation value (331). He correlates this lexical value with a sentence pattern which he calls the 'veridical construction', where a clause with *einai* "is joined to a clause with a verb of saying (less often, with a verb of thinking or perceiving) in a comparative structure that has the general form "Things are as you say". ... In other cases we see that the veridical nuance is associated with an opposition between *being* and *seeming*" (*ibid.*). — A third case is found by Kahn where as a translation of *einai* 'be truly' can be adopted. He suggests that although only the first of these patterns is covered by the term 'veridical construction', in all three cases the veridical use of *einai* rests upon the basic verbal function of truth claim.

Kahn surely is right in regarding (185) syntactically, predication as "a very general condition for sentencehood or grammaticality, and more particularly for declarative sentencehood. However, as he significantly adds (*ibid.*), in order to describe it as *the* general condition for sentencehood, one must, rather arbitrarily, understand 'predication' simply as identical with sentencehood. Following Quine's description of predication (in *Word and Object*, 96–7) Kahn finds (186) in *be* (when it functions as copula) not only its syntactic role of providing the finite verb form required for sentencehood but also a semantic one of providing the signal of a truth claim in its indicative mood.

I really wonder if Kahn does not too easily see (187, n. 4) *unasserted* declarative sentences as "exceptions to a more general rule". Such a rule should be, then, I would suppose, that any sentence must be actually asserted. However, this seems to beg the question and perhaps confuse semantics and pragmatics. To Kahn, "A declarative sentence ... not only describes a possible state of affairs but says that it is realized" (187, n. 4). In my view, a declarative sentence properly *constructs* a (possible or impossible) state of affairs, and, *if* it is asserted, a truth claim comes up, as a result, not of its being a declarative sentence but its being *actually asserted* by some speaker. I can fully agree with Kahn when he reduces (187) the truth claim of a sentence to its possession of truth *conditions*, but cannot go all the way with him when he retreats by adding (187, n. 4): "Actually, this is not quite all.... but this something more is very difficult to formulate". Kahn's view suffers a little, I am afraid, from ontological commitment. Truth does not *exist*, it is just *claimed*. And it is claimed (as far as language is involved) by *asserting* a declarative sentence. The sentence itself only provides the description (rather construction) of a (possible or impossible) state of affairs. From the semantic point of view the difference between a declarative sentence and a proposition seems to be merely grammatical[46].

However this may be, in Platonic semantics the *logos* by itself is a proposition describing a certain (*possible*)[47] bundle of dynameis which *may* occur in the transient world[48]. When it is *actually asserted* by someone, either in inner or outward speech, the 'bundle of dynameis' is supposed and said 'to-be-already-be-given-before-the-speaker(thinker)-came-in", which is the specific sense of the verb *hyparchein* which I have in mind here. Of course, there is an alethic aspect involved, but this concerns ontological truth and is as such entirely associated with the notion of being (being = truth; *to on* = *to alêthes*; see above, 7.21; 8.3). However, this element is involved in the logos itself, in that e.g. a formula such as 'righteous man' is to be transformed into the Platonic logos [man-being, righteous-being]; see above, 15.4. For that matter, the element, 'being' which is involved in each *onoma* (and, accordingly, in each *logos*) has nothing to do with a logical copula but is rather expressive of the dynamic character of all Platonic *einai*. See above, 4.21; 5.1; 16.12, and Prauss (77).

In point of fact, the assertoric or hyparctic functor ('|—') which may be rendered: 'is the case (or 'obtains') in the transient world' refers, *not* to some situation (or 'constellation') in the outside world taken as such but as actually met with by someone *qua* already existing or actually being available. For this specific use

[45] Cf. *legein to eon* = 'to tell the truth' or 'say what is the case'. See Kahn [1973¹], 349–55, who speaks of 'the veridical construction in participial form'.

[46] From the semantic point of view, the sentence 'Little Mary is a nice girl' as long as it is *unasserted*, is equivalent to the proposition *that-little-Mary-is-a-nice-girl*. Where they are different in is their grammatical form, in that the former is able to be asserted as it stands, the latter not.

[47] It may be felt to be somewhat disappointing but Plato's semantics seem to have no room for *logoi* which describe impossible states of affairs ('Socrates-being-a-centaur') since they do not fulfil the basic requirement of 'harmoniously' representing some 'being'.

[48] On my interpretation, Plato's proper semantics is entirely focussed on (the possibility of) our speaking about *this* world. It should be borne in mind that he was not interested in logic and semantics as such. And as a metaphysician he was in no need of defending his talk of the transcendent Forms, as he was not interested in *proving* the doctrine of Forms either. In fact, he postulated them as the only tenable ontological and epistemological *hypothesis* (in the Platonic sense). Just so, he did simply make assertions about the transcendent Domain, but did not care to defend their semantics. For example, our use of onomata for the transcendent Forms is nowhere discussed, only postulated in his discussion of our using them derivatively for the immanent forms and the instances. So his semantics was bound to be partial, or rather defective.

of *hyparchein*, see Liddell and Scott, *s.v.*, B2. This use is to be found, for example, in Aeschylus, *Agamemnon*, 1656 ("of woe there is enough available"). Pindar, *Pythian Odes* IV, 205–6 "where a drove (*already present*) of Thracian bulls is opposed to a new-wrought altar"; cf. Herodotus, VII, 144: "those ships already existed" (as opposed to those the Athenians were about to build); cf. II, 15 and V, 124: "there should be a refuge *ready prepared (hyparchon)*", and also Xenophon, *Cyropaedia* I, 5, 5, and *Agesilaus*, 8.1. Demosthenes has (III, 15): "it is action, then, that must be added: of all else we have enough (*ta d' alla hyparchei*)". I regard this connotation of 'being found or encountered by the observer (thinker, speaker)' as most basic, as will shortly become clear (16.5).

16.44. '*Being*' *As A Constituent Of Plato's Declarative Sentence*

The main constituent of Plato's declarative sentence (its 'content', so to speak) is called *logos*, which as such always represents a *pragma*, i.e. a state of affairs. As we have seen before (12.42; 13.13), in Platonic semantics the logos is not split up into two parts; 'subject and predicate' divided by a copula[49], as to form the well-known '*S is P*' construct. The Platonic logos is to be equated with a 'state-of-affairs-formula' ('being man *plus* being righteous' rather than 'man is righteous' in the sense of 'there is man such that man is righteous'). To put it semantically: while the latter (Aristotelian) formula rather represents the (Aristotelian) 'substance-accidents' ontology, the former mirrors Plato's ontology of the 'bundles of dynameis', wherein each dynamis is, not some subsistent (or quasi-subsistent) entity but rather a *modus essendi*; so 'being-man' (or 'being-righteous') rather than 'a man' (or 'a righteous ‹creature›').

Kahn has rightly remarked [1973[1]:454] that the unusual substantival construction of the participle with the article ('*to on*') was of primary importance for the development of philosophical terminology. In principle, he says (455), the articular participle can denote *what is* in any sense, including 'the things that exist', whatever these may be. In some cases the locative construction is explicit, such as in the Hippocratic *De natura hominis* cap. 7: "all the things which are contained in (*eneontôn*) this world-order" (*kosmôi*)[50]. It is most interesting for our purpose that this and other similar contexts suggest "that *ta onta* are primarily conceived of as elemental powers and bodies, such as earth, water, air and fire, or hot and cold, dry and wet" (Kahn, 456). In some older cosmological texts, as well as in medical treatises, the sense proper of *to eon* seems to be, not just 'what is the case' but rather 'what is present and effective in the world' (see Kahn, 456, n. 1).

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[49] To my knowledge, the copula proper did not appear on the (logical) scene until the eleventh century A.D., when in some schools of Northern France the debate started about the question of whether a *propositio* (of the form '*S is P*') consisted of two (*S* and *is-P*) or three (*S*, *is*, and *P*) parts. Small wonder that the former position was defended by the masters (mostly grammarians) of a more or less (Augustinian) Neoplatonic character.

[50] See Kahn [1973[1]:457], where one can also find some more examples.

To my mind, this 'locative-dynamic' association is clearly present in Plato's formula of, not the logos by itself, but the logos *asserted*, (in inner or outward speech), so that the notion of dynamis is already contained in the logos as such, e.g. [man-*being*[51], righteous-*being*], while the locative, (as well as the temporal, as we will see presently) element is closely related to the sentential functor (= 'there is *hic et nunc*').

Kahn seems to be rather unfortunate in opposing (456–7) the philosophical use of *ta onta* to what he calls 'the more ordinary veridical use' of the participle. I think that he is a victim of his assignment of such a predominant position to his 'veridical use'. He quite understandably attempts to bring the philosophical use somewhat closer to the ordinary one in assuming some interaction. He writes (457):

> But if we recognize some interaction between the old use of the participle to refer to facts or events and the new use to designate whatever things there are in the world, this will help us to understand the persistent Greek refusal to make any sharp distinction between states of affairs or facts with a propositional structure, on the one hand, and individual objects or entities on the other. For the Greeks, both types count as "beings". Indeed the denotation of the participle is highly ambiguous, as Aristotle observed. In the first place *ta onta* or "what is" means *what is the case*, facts or events that actually occur or will occur ... In the second place, *ta onta* means *what is* in the locative-existential use of *eimi*, things which exist, things which are present, or which are to be found somewhere ..... Finally, since the participle can denote something *which is* in any sense, it can also refer to attributes like *being hot* or *being tall*, *being on hand* or *being priest*.

As far as Platonic ontology is concerned, the world consists, not of 'entities-in-certain-states', but so to speak, only of 'states of affairs'[52], to wit combinations of dynameis, wherein each dynamis (or immanent form) is nothing but a 'Transcendent Form-being-partaken-in'. Plato's ontology indeed has no room for more or less subsistent entities ('substances') which have certain properties. For that reason, in the case of Plato, Kahn's opposition of 'individual objects or entities' to 'states of affairs' misses the mark. On the other hand, his opposition of the 'veridical use' (concerning the states of affairs) to the locative-existential or 'thing-like existential' use (457), which is supposed to refer to 'things which are present in this world-order' has no point either, inasmuch as Plato is concerned[53].

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[51] For the 'dynamic' character of Platonic 'being', see above, 5.17.

[52] Prauss' rejection (117) of the term 'Sachverhalt' is based on his interpretation of the term as 'Ding-mit-Eigenschaft, Sach-Verhalt', in which he apparently regards 'Sache' as referring to some particular 'thing'. However this may be, the English phrase 'state of affairs' is used by the present author without any connotation of subsistent, 'thing'-like entities which *possess* states and it seems indeed to allow us of thinking of *dynameis*.

[53] His remark (457) that "when the veridical nuance associated with the first use is combined with this [second, De R.] thing-like existential use we get the typically Platonic conception of *ta ontôs onta*, the true entities which are 'really real' but which need no longer be 'in this world' ", seems to completely miss the point. First, the phrase *ta ontôs onta* has primarily an *intensional* meaning; an immanent form is as such no less *ontôs on* than the transcendent one. Second, the transcendent Forms must not be associated with the notion of 'state of affairs'. For that matter, the expositions in Kahn [1973[1]:305–20] should accordingly be reformulated, I think.

So much for the notion of being as conveyed by the logos (and of course, its constituents, the names). The locative-temporal notion (which I have represented by the sentential functor, '|—'), in fact reduces to what is properly conveyed by names and logoi *when actually asserted*. From the ontological point of view, the locative-temporal notion reflects the way that transcendent Forms *are partaken of* in the Receptacle ('locative') at a certain juncture ('temporal'). Much has already been said about the locative aspect in our discussion of the deictic function of Plato's onoma *as used*, especially when the well-known *Timaeus* passage (48E2–51B6) was under discussion (14.3). A few remarks, now, on the temporal aspect.

First, there is a passage in the *Parmenides* in which the 'temporality' of being is pointed out *a contrario*, in that 'being-in-time' is most vigorously denied to 'the One' (140E–142A). 'What is' ('being') is explicitly said to *be* if, and only if, it has something to do with time (141E4–10).

All this is made more explicit in the *Second Hypothesis* of that dialogue. There 'being' is added to 'unity' with the result that, now, a series of characteristics can simply be deduced from that new notion ('THE ONE IS'). We can indeed associate it with extension, shape, 'being-as-a-physical-'thing'-in-space', the capacity for motion, change, and rest, for having a kind of 'identity' (142B–151E), and its capability for 'being-in-time' (151E–157B). This capacity is the more important in that it is characterised as a pre-condition to all specific kinds of change or becoming, the list of which contains, apart from 'coming-into-being' and 'ceasing-to-be', 'increasing' and 'decreasing', 'becoming like or unlike', also the capacity for combination and separation (155E–156B). Plato makes himself quite clear regarding the issue 'being-in-time':

> *Parmenides*, 151E6–152A3: Since the One *is* one, of course it has being (*einai*). Well, to be (*einai*) means precisely participation (*methexis*) of *ousia* in conjunction with time present, as 'was' and 'will be' mean partaking (*koinônia*) of *ousia* in conjunction with past and future time. So the One has a share in Time, since it has a share in being (*einai*).

This may be compared with the EV's exposition of the Temporality of that which is conveyed by a logos *asserted*, in *Sophist*, 261D1–262C6 [our 12.42, esp. remark (10)], where it is most explicitly associated with a state of affairs (or *pragma*, represented by some *logos*) 'being in fact the case', or 'obtaining' at a certain juncture (present, past or future).

16.5. *Conclusion*

From what has been discussed so far it may be concluded that for Plato, the basic semantic act is the identification of one or more dynameis in the transient world by means of a name. Some 'thing' presents itself to the observer as a vague bundle of dynameis, and he tries to discern and 'name out' each of them just as the letters of a word are 'spelled out' (see above, 15.1). This process may be seen as assigning significative 'tags' to all dynameis discerned. In principle, these tags or names have a descriptive function but when actually used (often with the addition of determiners such as 'this', 'that', and so on) they also pragmatically act as deictical signs and designate the occurrence of some immanent form(s) (dynamis, dyna-

meis) in the outside world at some place and at some time. As we have seen, this deictic aspect should be associated with Plato's doctrine of the Receptacle (see above, 14.3; 15.5; 16.11).

As a matter of fact, Plato also makes use of compound names or *logoi*. They may either occur, like simple names, on the *onomazein* level merely calling up some 'thing' (or rather some bundle of dynameis) in the outside world, or on the *legein* level, in order to state ('declare') (either in inner or outward speech) some 'thing' about something and thus form a 'declarative sentence'. Such a sentence should, as far as Platonic semantics is concerned, be clearly distinguished from our 'statement-making utterance' or 'statement' of the well-known '*S is P*' form. It rather is (and its surface structure should be accordingly tranformed into) a compound name (logos) representing a pragma ('state of affairs' *as conceived of*) preceded by some sentential functor ('|—') signifying 'obtains' or 'is the case in the outside world'[54]).

The peculiar character of Platonic sentencehood is closely related to the nature proper of Platonic knowledge. For Plato, knowledge has always been knowledge by acquaintance. To take an example. To know this man's (Socrates') being wise ('wisdom') comes down to identifying, somewhere in the outside world, a bundle of dynameis partaking in the Transcendent Domain of True Being[55]. Such an identification is accomplished by means of partial identifications of constitutive dynameis, in each case with the help of appropriate names; in our example, 'man-being *plus* wise-thing-being'). The type of knowledge resulting from this procedure is not some 'knowing-that' about some 'thing' *previously* discerned, but rather getting acquainted with a bundle of dynameis, first by sense-perception, next by supervening intellectual knowledge which comes about by 'bringing home' (*anapherein*) the immanent forms perceived and tracing them back to (our noemata of) their respective transcendent Sources. For this reason, Platonic sentencehood should be expressed, in our example, not as

* 'This man (Socrates) is wise',

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[54] It should be stressed again that Plato does not seem to be very interested in the problems concerning sentences about Transcendent Forms. Of course, he knows and uses them, for instance, at *Sophist*, 255E ff. where their relations seem to be under discussion. However, he mainly concerns himself with the Forms in their immanent status.

[55] To my mind, in any final analysis Plato's doctrine of Forms is untenable unless the Transcendent Domain is taken as the entire Domain of Perfect BEING (or Perfect GOOD), not split up into a number of distinct Forms. The distinction of them seems to concern, in as far as the Transcendent Domain is concerned, only a *potential* articulation, which might be actualised in the act of participation. Small wonder that in what *we* (as late as the nineteenth century) have been accustomed to call '*Neo*platonism', Plato's doctrine has developed, along the lines, it actually did, into a doctrine of *One* Principle, *One* Cause prior to both being and intelligence. — I confess that this is surely not predominant in Plato. However, it should be noted in this connection that participation *is* sometimes regarded as some partaking in *einai*. See e.g. *Rep.* V, 478E, *Phaedo*, 92D and 102C where Socrates speaks of *Being* as the proper object of the soul's apprehension; and especially *Sophist*, *passim*. Cf. the broader definition of 'predicate' (including, the copula) discussed by Kahn [1973¹:38–9). See also De Rijk [1984], 23–6.

but as

'here and now obtains: [man-being, wise-being]',

as the corresponding cognitive act is, not

* 'I know that this man is wise'

but rather something like

'I am acquainted with here and now man-being *plus* wise-being'.

It is easily seen, then, that Plato's main concern is the sublunary world, its being and our coming to know it as it is, here and now. The Transcendent Domain must inevitably become involved since it is the only Source of this world's being as well as the only criterion and guarantee for our truly knowing it. Plato has indeed rehabilitated Matter and Becoming by taking this world most seriously and relating it, as it stands, to the Domain of TRUE BEING.

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as 'thing conceived of' (or 'essential feature conceived of'): 3.3; 5.2; 5.3; 5.4; 11.3; n.12; 11.4; 13.32; n.48; 14.2; 15.21–15.25; 15.31; 15.5; 15.6; 16.5; the precise meaning of the term: 11.3, n.12; 14.2, n.10; 15.23; see also s.v. *ergon*; — opp. *hekaston*: 15.21; n.39; *ousia kai pragma*: 2.17, n.32; 14.2; 16.42; onoma-pragma-dynamis: 11.3; 16.12; logos and pragma: 16.44; Eleatic ('monolithic' or 'atomic') view of pragma: 15.21–15.23; 15.22, n.49; the novel view of pragma: 15.25; 15.32; 15.4; 15.5; 15.6; 16.42; 16.44; 16.5; — *alogon pragma*: 16.41; see also s.vv. *dynamis*, *sentence*, *significate*
praktikos
praktikoi and philotheamones: 16.21
praxis
praxeis as 'appurtenances' ('Sach-haltigkeiten'): 12.42, n.16; see also s.vv. *ousia*, *rhêma*
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15.23; 15.5, n.113; 15.6; 16.43; nor any 'predication without predicates' (Allen): 15.5; not predication but naming: 3.2; 4.21; 5.1; 7.2; 7.3; 9.1; 9.31–9.34; 9.34, n.9; 15.23f.; 15.5; 15.6; n.128; attribute, not, predicate: 2.14; 4.21; 6.3; 'predicational structure': 15.4, n.95; 'predicative complex' (Matthen): 15.4, n.97; no 'self-predication' in Plato: 2.5; 15.5; 15.6; n.128; no 'Pauline predication' (Vlastos) either: 3.2; 15.5, n.113

property
no 'properties' proper in Plato: 15.5; 15.6; see also s.vv. *dynamis*, *substance*

proposition
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proslegein
7.22, n.12

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Receptacle
2.44; 14.3; 15.21; 15.5; 16.11 ('plastic substance'); 16.44

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self-predication
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sêmainein
12.42; 13.2; 13.32; n.48; see also s.vv. *dêloun*, *name*, *onoma*, *significate*

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