PLATO ON PERCEPTUAL COGNITION

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the study is to spell out and consider Plato's views on perceptual cognition. It is argued that Plato is committed to the view that perceptual cognition can be rational, and that beliefs about the sensible world need not be confused or ill-founded.

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Plato's main target is Protagoras' view on cognition and he accuses him of conflating different cognitive phenomena that ought to be kept apart. More particularly, he suggests that Protagoras' 'man the measure' thesis is based on the conflation of sense perception (aisthesis), belief (doxa) and appearing (phantasia), and that Protagoras is committed to the view that beliefs are arrived at in a non-rational way. It is shown how Plato takes issue with Protagoras by disentangling these three cognitive phenomena. It is argued that Plato's way of understanding these notions leaves room for the possibility that reason plays a part in perceptual cognition and that we arrive at beliefs in a rational way. In the course of spelling out the argument, Plato's views on a number of topics are scrutinised: the perceptual mechanism; the objects of sense perception; perceptual content; the nature of belief; the contrast between belief and appearing; the notion of reason.

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Key words: aisthesis, doxa, phantasia, being, reason, Plato, Protagoras.

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Introduction

Perception is a remarkable power: more or less from birth we gain access to the world through the senses. By exercising the senses we discriminate between things in our environment and recognise things perceived in the past. And on the basis of repeated perceptual encounter with the world, we learn to sort things under different categories and to see patterns; and once we see patterns, we may develop the capacity to draw conclusions. For instance, on the repeated experience of eating strawberries that are red and sweet, just seeing that a strawberry is red may incline us to draw the conclusion that it is likely to be sweet. In short, the power of perception provides us with the means of getting along in the world.

But although it is evident that perception makes possible these cognitive achievements, it is far from clear, on reflection, how it makes them possible. The problems start with the very notion of perception. For on closer scrutiny, these cognitive achievements attributed to the power of perception are not all of a piece, and it seems doubtful that they are all a matter merely of exercising the senses. The issue becomes particularly urgent if we take other species endowed with the power of perception into account. We have no problem in ascribing a discriminatory power to dogs; indeed, how could we account for the behaviour of dogs without reference to such a power? In addition, it is fair to say that dogs recognise individuals. But should we ascribe to dogs the power to recognise kinds of things? And are dogs capable of inferences? Here it seems that we are inclined to waver: maybe there is a difference between man and beast in these regards. But if human cognition is unique and sets man apart from the rest of the animal kingdom, does the difference turn on the kind of perceptual power man has? Or is the difference best explained by reference to further powers that only man is endowed with?

Now these questions will not be answered by paying attention to linguistic habits. Of course, if someone was to ask me whether I understand the drift of what he or she is telling me, I may well reply "I can see your point." But it is obvious that I do not use the term 'see' in the same way when in a courtroom I say "I saw the accused that night." And there is no

reason to think that these different uses shed any light on the issue in the first place. What we need, rather, is to get clear about the things themselves, namely, the cognitive processes that are involved in these different cases.

Plato and Aristotle play an important part in the early development of the philosophy of perception. The significance of their contribution to the field must be seen against the background of how they conceived of the teachings of their predecessors. According to Aristotle there are two tenets that lie at the heart of the early theories of perceptual cognition. First, "the early thinkers say that thinking and perceiving amount to the same thing."[1] Second, "all of these assume that thinking is something corporeal like perceiving."[2] These remarks are best explained by a certain kind of attitude towards cognitive phenomena in general and perceptual cognition in particular. From our fragmentary knowledge of the early Greek thinkers a picture emerges of people keen on the physics and physiology of perception.[3] We learn about the material make-up of the sense organs and how objects impinge on them. The impression conveyed is that these early thinkers conceived of cognitive processes in terms of corporeal changes and that they attempted to explain perceptual cognition in causal terms.

It is noticeable that Aristotle sorts out the phenomenon of deception (ἀπάτη) as a decisive stumbling block for a naturalistic account of perceptual cognition.[4] An account of corporeal processes can go some way towards explaining how we become informed of the environment, but it runs into serious difficulties if it is to explain how deception comes about.[5] The problem is that deception seems to involve more than a mere malfunction of the perceptual mechanism. For comparison, think of a coffee machine: if the coffee machine gives us white coffee although we pressed the button for black coffee, it is fair to say that it malfunctioned, but it goes against our intuitions to say that the coffee machine was mistaken, let alone deceived. And there are two conditions that seem particularly important in so far as something is to count as deception. First, the deceived must be endowed with the capacity to be aware that his belief is mistaken.[6] Second, he must be able to counteract the appearance which gives rise to the deception; the deception could have been avoided if the appropriate steps and measures had been taken.

Plato's and Aristotle's main target, then, is the view that cognition comes about as a result of merely corporeal processes. Both of them stress that even as far as ordinary perceptual cognition is concerned we need to

distinguish between different cognitive operations and that all of these cognitive phenomena cannot be explained in corporeal terms. The disagreement with their predecessors has its roots in worries over the part played by reason in perceptual cognition; if perceptual cognition is a matter only of corporeal processes brought about by an affection of the body, then no room is made for a component which is not ruled by these corporeal processes. Some of the predecessors do mention the soul (ψυχή), but since the soul was conceived of as a body, it is not obvious that it escapes being ruled by the corporeal processes.

Admittedly, Plato and Aristotle are hardly fair to their predecessors. Alcmaeon, for one, did not identify thinking and perception; in addition, he sorted out something apart from perception, namely, understanding (ξυνιέναι), as a distinguishing mark of man.[7] But even though they construe the claims of their predecessors in such a way as to make them appear cruder than they probably were, this is not to say that the quarrel over perceptual cognition is based on mere misunderstanding. Rather, the quarrel has its roots in diverging views of the nature of cognitive processes; the predecessors were keen to point out the corporeal and mechanical character, whereas Plato and Aristotle emphasised the part played by the soul and distinguished between different kinds of cognitive powers.[8]

Plato and Aristotle are driving at the point that we need not be taken in by the way things strike us in perception. And in order not to be taken in by the appearance, we must exercise reason. But the exercise of reason is not a matter of how we are affected and how the body undergoes changes. So to the extent that we exercise reason, perceptual cognition is not an entirely passive process, but involves some activity on the part of the soul. This is their main point against their predecessors: a naturalistic approach to perceptual cognition leaves no part for reason to play. It is in part this need for a cognitive power not ruled by the corporeal processes which prompted Plato and Aristotle to develop, in their respective ways, a notion of an incorporeal soul.

The purpose of this study is to sort out and consider Plato's views on perceptual cognition. Plato is a watershed in the history of the philosophy of perception. It is tempting to say that Plato is the first thinker to be fully aware of the philosophical problems in understanding perceptual cognition. In particular, he argued that reason can play a part in perception and that perceptual cognition need not and to some extent cannot be a matter of an entirely passive process. Yet there is little scholarly treatment of

Plato's views on perceptual cognition. Of course, Plato's concern with perceptual cognition has not gone unnoticed, but to my knowledge there has been no attempt to treat of the subject in anything like a systematic way.[9] Admittedly, Plato's views on perception are scattered throughout his writings and there might seem to be little prospect of finding a unified picture. However, in the later dialogues, and in the *Theaetetus* and the *Sophist* in particular, Plato gives a remarkably rich and subtle picture of perceptual cognition. It is this picture that I want to lay bare.

But although I shall concentrate on the later dialogues in sorting out Plato's views on perceptual cognition, I do not work on the assumption that there is a decisive shift in Plato's views. Still, it is fair to say that there is a shift in emphasis and interest; the treatment of the topic in the later dialogues is far more detailed and subtle. So in order to see the background to Plato's efforts in the later dialogues, I shall give a brief summary of the basic tenets of Plato's views on perceptual cognition in the middle dialogues. However, it is not advisable to pretend that there is a philosophical system to be extracted from these dialogues; the metaphysical and epistemological claims must be understood primarily in the context of each individual argument. So, as I give a rough and ready sketch of the main points, it should be borne in mind that material from different contexts is fused together.

In the *Republic* Plato distinguishes between two powers (δυνάμεις), namely, the power of belief (δόξα) and the power of knowledge (ἐπιστήμη). Each of these powers is set over separate realms of reality.[10] Belief is set over the world of sensibles (τὰ αἰσθητά), knowledge over the world of intelligibles (τὰ νοητά).[11] As to the means by which each power works, belief relies on perception (αἴσθησις), whereas knowledge relies on thinking (διάνοια , νόησις).[12] In addition, perception is dependent on the body, whereas thinking is an occupation in which the soul is engaged on its own.[13] Now if we assume that there is a sharp separation between these two powers, then we might be tempted to conclude that as far as perceptual cognition is concerned, it does not involve any exercise of reason. For if beliefs about the sensible world come about through the exercise of the senses alone, then no amount of reasoning is involved in perceptual cognition.

However, it is a mistake to think that, according to the middle dialogues, reason cannot play a part in perceptual cognition. Let us consider two famous passages in the *Republic*. In the first passage Socrates points out that on some occasions the verdicts of the senses are contradictory and

provoke a higher cognitive faculty into action, namely, a certain kind of thinking (νόησις).[14] For instance, the same thing can be judged to be at the same time both small and large. And when the higher cognitive faculty is prompted into action, it becomes engaged in considering what smallness and largeness are in themselves. In that case the soul is no longer concerned with the sensible world at all, but with the intelligible world. So the point of this passage is that although a higher cognitive faculty can be prompted into action by perception, it is not concerned with the objects of perception. But in the second passage the point is completely different.[15] For in the case envisaged a conflict occurs between a judgement arrived at through perception and another judgement arrived at through reasoning (λογισμός); the stick immersed halfway into water is judged by its appearance to be bent, but judged by measuring to be straight. Here the point is that there is a part of the soul which reasons and makes use of measurement, and which, it should be noted, can be concerned with the sensible world. For measuring the stick is obviously not a matter of contemplating intelligible things. So there is firm evidence that, even according to the middle dialogues, reason can play a part in perceptual cognition.

It is important to keep the second passage in mind when turning to the later dialogues. If it is assumed that, according to the middle dialogues, reason cannot play a part in perceptual cognition, it is tempting to see a shift in the later dialogues. For in the later dialogues belief (δόξα) is characterised as something that requires thinking and reasoning: "belief is the result of thinking."[16] And I shall argue that this characterisation holds good even as far as beliefs about the sensible world are concerned.[17] If it is assumed that according to the middle dialogues beliefs are arrived at merely by the exercise of the senses, then the later dialogues might seem to introduce a novelty. But now we can see that such a view is superficial: even according to the middle dialogues an exercise of reason can be involved in forming beliefs about the sensible world. And what is more, there is no sharp division between the middle and the later dialogues even in so far as beliefs, according to the middle dialogues, can be arrived at without an exercise of reason. For Plato makes room for beliefs arrived at without an exercise of reason in the later dialogues as well. In fact, I shall argue at length that in the later dialogues Plato distinguishes between two different kinds of beliefs, namely, those that are based on an exercise of reason and those that are arrived at by exercising the senses alone.

Despite this continuity between the middle and the later dialogues,

there are differences as well. But as I have mentioned, by and large these differences turn on the mode of approaching the issue. In the later dialogues Plato spells out the different operations that contribute to perceptual cognition in a far more sophisticated way; he now carefully distinguishes between what it is to perceive and what it is to believe, and between what it is to exercise the sense organs and what it is to exercise reason. In addition, the part played by the soul gets a more subtle treatment. But not even in regard to the parts played by the body and the soul in perceptual cognition do Plato's views undergo any substantial change. Although in the middle dialogues Plato sometimes uses language which suggests that judgements arrived at through the senses alone require no involvement of the soul, I do not think that he ever thought that the body on its own can accomplish judgements, or that the sense organs can play the part of agents.[18] The view in the middle dialogues, rather, is based on the idea of a divided soul, one part of which judges without recourse to reason.[19] So when Plato speaks about the verdict of the senses upon an issue, it is presumably the part of the soul which does not reason that is responsible for the verdict. The shift in the later dialogues, if there is any, consists in the fact that the idea of a divided soul, which was brought into the discussion in the *Republic* in order to explain certain psychological phenomena, fades away. Instead, the soul seems to be conceived of as a unified thing and such that its cognitive power is not always utilised to the same degree.

Plato's views on perceptual cognition are not put forward in an easily accessible way. There is no Platonic treatise "On perceptual cognition" that we can turn to. Instead, Plato's views on perceptual cognition are embedded in lines of reasoning which are not aimed only or even primarily at the clarification of perceptual cognition. Still, if we want to extract those points of the arguments that have a bearing on the topic, then we must also take the overall drift of the arguments into account. Otherwise the study is at risk of being based on a haphazard collection of quotations the real motivation behind which remains out of sight. The best way to approach the topic, I believe, is to have a firm grip on the purpose of Plato's scrutiny of perceptual cognition in the later dialogues. As I have mentioned, the predecessors' idea that perceptual cognition is a corporeal and mechanical process is one important background tenet to Plato's effort. But in addition, Plato has a more specific target in view. For both in the *Theaetetus* and the *Sophist* he takes issue with the sophists, and with Protagoras in particular. In the *Theaetetus* he construes Protagoras' rela-

tivistic position in such a way as to suggest that it is based on a certain view of perceptual cognition. Hence, Plato's efforts must also be seen against the background of his quarrel with Protagoras.

Needless to say, Plato never uses the term 'perceptual cognition' or anything of the sort. But my employment of the term is motivated by the desire to have a convenient means of referring to a rather broad field of phenomena. So it should be admitted that the term 'perceptual cognition' has fuzzy edges. However, a few clarifications are in order. Although to a great extent I will be concerned with perception of sensory qualities such as colours and sounds, I will also consider 'perceptual' cognition of such traits as goodness and wisdom. These are apparently not sensory qualities. But the point is that they can manifest themselves in sensible particulars. Of course, although arriving at the judgement whether a sensible particular is good or wise may be a matter of getting a glimpse of the person through sense perception, the judgement may also be arrived at indirectly through reading or hearsay. So I use 'perceptual' in a broad sense as referring to all kinds of cases that have to do with the cognition of sensible particulars. Further details pertaining to the question of the objects of perception I shall consider in due course. What is more, I use 'cognition' as a success word; to have cognition is to be correctly informed of something. But to have cognition does not require anything more than that the information in question is correct. 'Cognitive,' by contrast, is used to qualify conditions of the soul which do not necessarily by themselves prompt the subject to a view about something, or give accurate information about the world, but which still contribute to cognition.

The following is how I intend to proceed. In chapter 1 I shall present Plato's construal of Protagoras' position. It will be shown that Plato uncovers a conflation of different cognitive phenomena on Protagoras' part; he argues that the rationale behind Protagoras' 'man the measure' thesis is based on a conflation of sense perception (αἴσθησις), belief (δόξα) and appearing (φαντασία). And it is precisely this conflation that Plato takes exception to. For on closer scrutiny, Plato suggests, sense perception, belief and appearing do not amount to the same thing. I shall then proceed by devoting a chapter to each of these notions: chapter 2 is devoted to sense perception, chapter 3 to belief, and chapter 4 to appearing. Of course, there is no prospect of finding a systematic use of the terms αἴσθησις, δόξα, φαντασία and their cognates throughout the corpus or, in fact, even in the later dialogues. But it is clear, or so it will be

argued, that there are three distinct phenomena that Plato discerns and calls by these names. What is more, since Plato is consciously playing on the ambiguity of these terms, we need to have some idea of other uses of them. In the conclusion I briefly consider the bearing of the results of the study on the understanding of Plato's thinking in general.

The *Theaetetus* and the *Sophist* are my main primary sources, but I shall make use of other late dialogues as well. However, I shall not go into the debate over chronology. Suffice it that I state, dogmatically, that I take the *Theaetetus*, the *Sophist*, and the *Philebus* to belong to the later dialogues. What is more, I am in agreement with Owen on the earlier dating of the *Timaeus*.[20] Admittedly, dating based on linguistic principles gives a rather different chronology from that one suggested in this study: the *Timaeus* is placed among the latest dialogues, at any rate later than the *Theaetetus*, and the *Theaetetus*, in turn, is often placed among the middle dialogues.[21] But however fallible chronology based on the philosophical content of the dialogues might be, in the end I think it is the best way to approach the question. As will be seen, from the point of view of the development of Plato's conception of perceptual cognition, I am inclined to place the *Timaeus* between the *Republic* and the later dialogues.

Of the ancient commentators on Plato's theory of perception I have opted for an extremely cautious selection: Aristotle and Theophrastus. Aristotle and Theophrastus are not only closest in time to Plato, but they are also the only ancient commentators that give a picture of Plato's views not grossly contaminated by later developments of the subject.

All translations from the Greek are mine. All quotations from the Greek texts are given in translation and in original. When I judge the exact Greek wording to be important, I give the Greek text in direct connection to the translation. Otherwise I give the Greek text in an endnote.

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I
Protagoras' conflations

Protagoras' influence on the fourth century philosophical debate is profound. It is no exaggeration to say that a discovery of Protagoras' writings would thoroughly reshape our understanding of ancient philosophy. But under the present circumstances we have to rest content with the indirect evidence available primarily through Plato's and Aristotle's accounts. This need not worry us in so far as we want to understand Plato's and Aristotle's arguments against Protagoras; in that case it is their construals of Protagoras' position that matter. But firsthand knowledge of Protagoras' teachings would make it a great deal easier to understand the details of Plato's and Aristotle's arguments against Protagorean relativism. For even if Plato's Protagoras is not the real Protagoras, the rationale behind Plato's construal of his position can be fully grasped only by comparison with the real Protagoras' teachings. So some thought should be given to the question what the basis for Plato's construal might have been.

The background to Plato's construal of Protagoras' position is particularly important in regard to his concern with perceptual cognition in the *Theaetetus*. For the concern is motivated by the challenge presented by Protagoras' 'man the measure' thesis. And as Plato sets out to take issue with the relativistic thesis he prepares the ground for his criticism by carefully laying bare what he takes to be the rationale for it, that is, the tenets we need to presuppose in order to make a fair case for the thesis. And he gives the rationale by connecting the thesis to a certain conception of perception; he develops a theory of perception according to which everything that is perceived is relative to the perceiver. So on that theory of perception, man is the measure of everything that he perceives. In addition, since the theory has it that reality consists of the things that are perceived, the thesis is claimed to hold universally. In taking issue with the relativistic thesis Plato targets this conception of perception and goes some way towards spelling out an alternative.

Protagoras' 'man the measure' thesis is the prime example of a tenet

which Plato's construes in a way that may well go beyond what Protagoras had in mind. For it is not clear what scope Protagoras intended the thesis to have. One possibility is that 'man' is to be understood as mankind and that man as a species is the measure. In that case the point would be that there is nothing beyond mankind that provides the standards for determining whether something is the case or not and, hence, whether a belief is true or false. Another option is to restrict the relativity to particular human communities: each community provides its own standards. But Plato goes for a yet narrower construal, namely, that each individual is the measure and that each of us provides his or her own standards. As I shall suggest, it is possible that Protagoras had the narrow version in mind as far as a particular kind of beliefs is concerned, and that Plato extended the thesis in a way not suggested by Protagoras so as to cover all kinds of beliefs.

Theaetetus' definition

The background to Plato's concern with the Protagorean conception of perceptual cognition in the *Theaetetus* is the following: Theaetetus, the mathematical genius, suggests at 151e1-3 that "Perception" (αἴσθησις) is the answer to Socrates' question "What is knowledge?" (Τί ἐστι ἐπιστήμη;) and that "the one who knows something seems to me to perceive that something which he knows" (δοκεῖ οὖν μοι ὁ ἐπιστάμενός τι αἰσθάνεσθαι τοῦτο ὃ ἐπίσταται). At first glance, the answer may strike us as fairly clear and straightforward. But it takes a little effort to see the real motivation behind Theaetetus' definition of knowledge (ἐπιστήμη) as αἴσθησις. To begin with, Theaetetus is hardly espousing the empiricist claim that all knowledge has its source in sense perception and that sense perception provides the ultimate test for the correctness of our beliefs. For mathematical insights fit badly into the scheme, and it seems odd that a mathematician should take such a view in the first place. In fact, it is doubtful that in giving the answer Theaetetus has in mind the means through which knowledge is to be obtained. Instead, Theaetetus treats the question as if it concerned the definition of knowledge; the question is a typical "What is ...?" (Τί ἐστι;) question familiar from the Socratic dialogues. And it makes good sense that a mathematically trained person should treat Socrates' question on a par with questions like "What is a point?" or "What is a line?".

There is a fairly overt hint at the kind of answer Socrates is looking for at 146c7-e10, a few pages before Theaetetus' definition of knowledge as

perception. Theaetetus first suggests that things like geometry and cobblery are knowledge. But Socrates objects to the answer on formal grounds: he was asking what knowledge is, not what there is knowledge of. Theaetetus gets Socrates' point immediately. In fact, he turns out to be very familiar with the kind of answer Socrates is looking for. And at 147d4-148b3 Theaetetus himself gives an example of such an answer, namely, a definition of what it is to be a power (δύναμις): if we take the side of a square of the size of *n* square feet, where *n* is a square integer, then that side is commensurable with the side of a square of the size of one square foot, that is, with one foot. By contrast, the side of a square of the size of *n* square feet, where *n* is a non-square integer, is not commensurable with one foot, although the area of the square of the size of *n* square feet, where *n* is a non-square integer, is commensurable with the area of a square of the size of one square foot. Thus the two kinds of sides, or lengths, differ as to their nature. As far as those lengths are concerned which are not commensurable with one foot, although the square is commensurable with the square of one, they are called 'powers.' Hence, the definition of power, put in arithmetical terms: the square root of a non-square integer.

The point of this example of an answer to a "What is ...?" question is to make clear that the answer to Socrates' question "What is knowledge?" should not pick out only a subclass of knowledge. That is to say, the answer "A power is the square root of a non-square integer" establishes an equivalence, and by answering "Perception is knowledge" Theaetetus suggests not only that all instances of αἴσθησις are knowledge, but also that all instances of knowing amount to perceiving.[1] This is an important aspect: if Theaetetus' answer suggests that knowing and perceiving are the same thing, then we should think twice before laying down what Theaetetus has in mind when using the terms αἴσθησις and αἰσθάνεσθαι in the first place. On the face of it, there seem to be cases of knowing which are not a matter of perceiving through the senses. How, then, can Theaetetus claim that perceiving and knowing amount to the same thing?

There are linguistic reasons to assume that in using the term αἴσθησις Theaetetus does not have in mind sense perception specifically. Αἴσθησις and the verb αἰσθάνεσθαι do not simply always mean 'sense perception' and 'to perceive through the senses.'[2] For there is a wide range of commonplace uses of the terms αἴσθησις and αἰσθάνεσθαι in which they mean things like 'to be aware of,' 'to notice,' 'to realise,' 'to understand' or 'to figure out.'[3] In fact, Plato himself makes such uses of the term. At

Gorgias 479c4-5, for instance, Polus is asked whether he can 'perceive' (αἰσθάνῃ) what follows from the argument under discussion. The question is obviously not whether Polus is able to perceive by the senses what follows from the argument, but whether he is able to figure out or understand what follows from the argument. And that is something Polus can accomplish by using his intellectual capacities quite independently of the senses. So αἰσθάνεσθαι has a much broader range of meanings than that of 'sense perception.'

But what is more, on some occasions having a perception (αἴσθησις) of something is to have a particular kind of grasp of that something, as Socrates' talk about the αἴσθησις of temperance at *Charmides* 159a1-3 makes clear.

> For if it [temperance] really resides in you, then I think it must provide you with a sense of it, by means of which you would have a belief concerning it–that it resides in you and what kind of thing temperance is;...
>
> ἀνάγκη γάρ που ἐνοῦσαν αὐτήν, εἴπερ ἔνεστιν, αἴσθησίν τινα παρέχειν, ἐξ ἧς δόξα ἄν τίς σοι περὶ αὐτῆς εἴη ὅτι ἐστὶν καὶ ὁποῖόν τι ἡ σωφροσύνη·...

Yet again, Socrates cannot have sense perception in mind in talking of the αἴσθησις of temperance. Here it seems that having αἴσθησις endows the subject with a fairly developed grasp of the thing at issue. Indeed, it even endows the subject with the ability to spell out what the thing at issue is. Now it should be noticed that knowing (ἐπίστασθαι)–the thing Socrates asked Theaetetus to define in the first place–on many occasions amounts to pretty much the same as αἰσθάνεσθαι taken in this special sense. For if we look at everyday uses of ἐπίστασθαι, it turns out that knowing is a matter of having a sense of, of being well versed in a certain art. In fact, Theaetetus' first tentative answers to Socrates' question bring this aspect out. For it is precisely expertise knowledge such as geometry and cobblery that Theaetetus comes up with. So these first answers make it clear what kind of notion of knowledge Theaetetus is thinking of. And since in everyday occurrences the two notions can be used interchangeably, it seems to be appropriate to suggest that every instance of ἐπιστήμη is an instance of αἴσθησις, and the other way round.

We can now see that Theaetetus' answer that perception is knowledge establishes an identity: perceiving and knowing amount to the same thing.

And as we turn to Socrates' interpretation of the answer it is important to keep this character of the answer in mind. For he tries to understand the details of the rationale behind the answer by making the suggestion that perception amounts to the same thing as appearing (φαντασία) and belief (δόξα), thus introducing further identities.

Sense perception and Protagoras' 'man the measure' thesis

It is important to see that Theaetetus' definition of knowledge as perception merely serves as a pretext for Socrates; from this point onwards in the first part of the dialogue Socrates develops the definition for his own purposes. For as Socrates turns to evaluating Theaetetus' answer, he puts a certain interpretation on the definition which is not borne out by Theaetetus himself. To begin with, at *Theaetetus* 152c5-6 Socrates lays it down that unerringness is the crucial distinguishing mark of knowledge. But in giving the definition Theaetetus showed no commitment to the principle that knowledge is unerring; rather, he conceived of knowledge in terms of expertise such as the skill of the craftsman. Furthermore, at 151e8-152a4 Socrates suggests that Theaetetus' definition of knowledge and Protagoras' 'man the measure' thesis go together. Yet again, since there is nothing in Theaetetus' definition suggesting such a connection, we must not think that Socrates brings out a hidden assumption on Theaetetus' part. It is rather that Theaetetus' definition serves merely as a starting point for Socrates' attack on Protagoras. So as Socrates sets out to consider what the identification of perception and knowledge amounts to, it is precisely with a view to disclosing the rationale behind Protagoras' thesis.

The purpose of Socrates' construal of Theaetetus' definition is to target a certain conception of cognition. Socrates shows that on a certain understanding Protagoras' 'man the measure' thesis gives a rationale for Theaetetus' definition of knowledge as perception. If it can be shown that man is the measure of whatever he perceives, then perception seems to be unerring. In other words, if it it can be shown that the 'man the measure' thesis holds for perception, then we seem to have a case for Theaetetus' definition. So the idea is to put an interpretation on the notion of αἴσθησις which accounts for its being unerring. And as Socrates turns to the task of construing the notion of perception in such a way as to make it unerring, it is in terms of *sense* perception that he understands αἴσθησις. So Socrates' choice to construe the notion of αἴσθησις in terms of sense perception is

motivated by the desire to pin down an interpretation of αἴσθησις which lays it down as unerring.

The attempt to construe the notion of αἴσθησις in this way affects the definition of knowledge as perception: the narrowing down of the notion of perception to sense perception seems to make the definition more vulnerable. For in so far as it is claimed that not only all sense perception is knowledge, but also all knowledge is sense perception, it seems that there are counterexamples readily available. But although Socrates accounts for Protagoras' thesis by construing Theaetetus' definition in terms of sense perception, it is not likely that he intends to restrict the thesis to certain kinds of cases. For at 152a2-3 the thesis is presented as saying that man is the measure of everything (πάντων χρημάτων). And the narrowing down of the notion of perception is but one step in Socrates' procedure; the identity between perception and knowledge is not established by just giving an account of how αἴσθησις in terms of sense perception is unerring. The procedure is far more elaborate. And as I shall argue, these further elaborations preserve Theaetetus' equation of perception and knowledge.

Socrates supports the equation of perception and knowledge by spelling out Protagoras' thesis in more detail at 152a6-8: "as each thing appears to me, so it is for me, and as each appears to you, so it is for you" (ὡς οἷα μὲν ἕκαστα ἐμοὶ φαίνεται τοιαῦτα μὲν ἔστιν ἐμοί, οἷα δὲ σοί, τοιαῦτα δὲ αὖ σοί). This first account of how perception can be knowledge brings in a further notion, namely, appearing (φαντασία), and at 152c1 Socrates makes the move manifest: "Appearing and perception amount to the same thing" (Φαντασία ἄρα καὶ αἴσθησις ταὐτόν). Furthermore, at 152b6-8 Socrates introduces an example, namely the wind's appearing warm or cold to someone and, hence, being warm or cold to that someone, which is not only an instance of someone *perceiving*, but, more particularly, of someone perceiving *by the senses*. So by connecting the notions of αἴσθησις and φαντασία, and by relating the latter notion to instances of sense perception, Socrates pins down a particular interpretation of Theaetetus' definition of knowledge as αἴσθησις which indeed connects the definition to αἴσθησις in terms of sense perception.

The introduction of the notion of appearing does not merely bring αἴσθησις in terms of sense perception into focus; the examples restrict the objects of perception to sensory qualities such as colour and sound. Whether or not the locution '... appears ... to someone' (φαίνεται τινι) was normally used in Greek when apprehension of sensory qualities was

at issue is not up for investigation. Plato might be operating with such a use of the locution, but in that case it is likely that he draws on a characteristically Protagorean use of it. At any rate, it is easy to see the point of narrowing down αἴσθησις to cases of apprehending sensory qualities. For in so far as the task is to show that αἴσθησις is unerring, perception of sensory qualities seems to be well suited as a candidate. At least there is a case to be made for the claim that we cannot err as to what sensory qualities we happen to perceive.

However, we must not mistake Socrates' account of the impossibility of erring as to what sensory qualities we happen to perceive with the idea that there are some items, labelled 'sense data' or the like, about which we cannot err. Plato does not operate with the idea of a set of items which belong to a subjective, mental sphere. For although Socrates presents a theory according to which the sensory qualities are brought about in the perceptual encounter, they still belong to the external world.[4] This tenet is characteristic of Plato and, I am inclined to believe, of ancient philosophy generally. So when Socrates turns to accounting for the claim that perception is unerring, he characteristically gives a causal story of how sensory qualities come about when a sense organ and an object meet, rather than a story about mental items which the perceiver has privileged access to.

It should also be noticed that the English locution "it appears" can be constructed in both an impersonal and a personal way; we can use it either in constructions like "It appears cold" or in constructions like "The wind appears cold." But Plato's use of the locution φαίνεται in the *Theaetetus* is restricted to the latter kind of constructions, as 152a6-8 makes clear. This is important in so far as it might seem that Plato's point about appearing is that it amounts to the mere awareness of sensory qualities and that it does not involve predication. But we can now see that even in Socrates' account of Protagoras' thesis appearings amount to something's appearing in one way or another. As we shall see, it is something of a problem what it is that appears on Socrates' construal of Protagoras' position. At any rate, I will render the locution φαίνεται with '... appears ...'.

The next step in Socrates' account of Theaetetus' definition is to develop a theory of sense perception based on a Heraclitean ontology of flux which shows that sense perception is unerring. It is a matter of argument whether the theory is of Plato's own making or whether it was held by Protagoras.[5] Be that as it may, the theory is at any rate not Plato's own,

but is introduced as a means of making sense of Theaetetus' definition of knowledge as perception, only to be rejected together with the definition.[6] The theory put forward at 156a3-157c3 has it, in short, that the world is an array of motions and that perception comes about when two motions meet. In the case of vision, there are two kinds of motions such that they keep themselves in the same location, although otherwise they are in a state of total flux. One of these 'slow' motions is such that it has the power to be affected, while the other has the power to affect. When these two kinds of motions meet, their powers are triggered, and hence the one affects, while the other is affected. And as a result of the action of the one motion on the other motion two further motions are generated. These motions, in contrast to the former ones, are in locomotion, and are identified with a colour and a visual perception. As to the object of perception, that is to say, colour in the case of vision, Socrates is anxious to point out its status as something neither in the eye nor something belonging to the other slow motion meeting the eye, but as something occurring in between the slow motions.

There is a great deal more to be said about the details of the theory, but let us rest content with stating the crucial point: the objects of perception are brought about in the perceptual encounter and, thus, are dependent on it. Here it is important to resist the impression that the theory allows of underlying perceiver independent objects.[7] The point is not just that something's being cold, say, is up to each perceiver; that would still leave open the possibility that the attribution of the sensory quality to a body goes wrong. And as we learn from 156e7-157a4, nothing taken on its own can be qualified in any way whatsoever; all there is independently of a perceiver are the motions that allow of no characterisation at all. It should not be denied that the theory allows talk not only of colours, but even of coloured things, as we can see from 156d3-7. But the point seems to be that this talk of coloured things is a manner of speaking and at 182b1-3 it is suggested that the sensory quality gets attributed to the agent, that is, the slow motion with the power to affect. In other words, the world appears to consist of stable objects with sensory qualities, but in reality there is nothing there save the indeterminate motions. This tenet is important in so far as it shows that appearings are conceived of as involving predication. Now however fanciful this theory of sense perception might seem, considering the purpose of introducing it, that is, to make the claim that sense perception is unerring, the point about the dependence of the object of perception on the meeting between the slow motions is obvious enough.

If all that gets perceived is brought about in the perceptual act, that is, in the meeting between the slow motions, then there seems to be no room for an objective world to be mistaken about.

But the equation of αἴσθησις and φαντασία as a means to equate αἴσθησις and ἐπιστήμη is only a first step. For in addition to φαντασία the notion δόξα is brought into the discussion as a further mediating link between αἴσθησις and ἐπιστήμη. The connection of φαντασία to δόξα is based on the cognates φαίνεται τινι and δοκεῖ τινι which amount to pretty much the same, just as the locutions '... appears ... to someone' and '... seems ... to someone' do. In contrast to the connection between αἴσθησις and φαντασία, the connection is not explicitly made, but is reflected in Socrates' terminology; at 158e2-6 Socrates shifts from using φαίνεται τινι to using δοκεῖ τινι.[8] It might be wondered what Plato has in mind in introducing the notion δόξα. For instance, does he reason along the lines that since at 152a6-8 Protagoras' thesis gets couched in terms of a thing's appearing, he needs to make it likely that in so far as someone is being appeared to, that someone *holds* that which appears to him to be the way it appears? In other words, is the notion of δόξα introduced in order to make the point that perceptions commit the perceiver to certain views on the world? But if that were the point, then it could be argued that the step is taken directly from αἴσθησις to φαντασία. For I do not think that φαίνεται τινι and φαντασία are used by Plato in the non-committal way or that he plays on an ambiguity between a committal and a non-committal use of the terms–not even at *Theaetetus* 152a6-8? And at any rate, Protagoras' principle that as things *appear* (φαίνεται) to someone, so they *are* to that someone suggests that appearing is conceived of as committal.

The primary purpose of the introduction of the notion of δόξα is presumably to avoid a too restricted construal of Protagoras' thesis; the thesis holds not only for perceptual judgements. In particular, the ethical qual-ities introduced in Protagoras' self-defence at 166a2-168c2 are hardly on a par with sensory qualities like colour and sound, at least not as far as their genesis is concerned. In fact, there is some evidence for the conjecture that Protagoras distinguished between things that appear (τὰ φαινόμενα) and things that seem (τὰ δοκοῦντα).[10] Together with the assumption that Protagoras held something like the theory of perception sketched above, it is likely that he made a distinction between judgements about sensible objects and other beliefs. It is tempting to think that whereas the objects of sense perception are relative to each perceiver,

ethical qualities are relative to each community: the constitution of Athens is not objectively just, but just relative to the Athenians. And maybe by the use of τὰ φαινόμενα and τὰ δοκοῦντα Protagoras meant to pick out these two cases separately. At any rate, it seems that the way Socrates chooses to interpret Theaetetus' suggestion that αἴσθησις is ἐπιστήμη is by first moving from αἴσθησις to φαντασία, thus pinning down αἴσθησις as sense perception, and then over the smooth transition from φαντασία to δόξα to the final connection of δόξα to ἐπιστήμη. Hence, Theaetetus' equation of αἴσθησις and ἐπιστήμη is elaborated into the equation of αἴσθησις, φαντασία, δόξα and ἐπιστήμη.

The introduction of δόξα, in addition to φαντασία, helps establish the principle that all instances of ἐπιστήμη are instances of αἴσθησις; those cases which are not a matter of perceiving sensible objects are now picked out by δόξα. Theaetetus' equation of perception and knowledge, thus, is preserved: all cases of knowledge are either cases of φαντασία or δόξα, and all cases of φαντασία and δόξα are cases of perception. Strictly speaking, although the locutions φαίνεται τινι and δοκεῖ τινι seem to amount to pretty much the same thing, φαντασία and δόξα are not equated, but are brought into the discussion in order to allow of a sufficiently broad construal of αἴσθησις. So, to be more precise, there are two moves: the move from αἴσθησις to φαντασία and δόξα, and the move from the two latter notions to ἐπιστήμη.

Now, whereas the rationale behind Protagoras' thesis in regard to perception of sensible objects is based on the theory of sense perception, there is no parallel theory which supports the thesis applied to other cases. In particular, the perception of ethical qualities gets no parallel treatment. Obviously, the theory of sense perception does not prove that perception is unerring when other cases than perception of sensible objects are concerned. This tenet is important in so far as Theaetetus' equation of perception and knowledge requires that perception is unerring: if the notion of perception gets equated not only with φαντασία, but also with δόξα, why should we be convinced that perception is unerring? Unfortunately, the only remedy to the problem is firsthand knowledge of Protagoras' writings. Now we are left with conjectures: perhaps ethical notions are not in need of a detailed account as to their ontological status, since they are more obviously dependent on something, namely, a community. Or perhaps we are expected to extend the point of the theory of sense perception to other cases.

The passive character of cognition

We can now see that Socrates accounts for Theaetetus' equation of perception and knowledge by introducing the mediating notions φαντασία and δόξα. The introduction of these mediating notions and their cognates φαίνεται τινι and δοκεῖ τινι is suggestive of a certain conception of cognitive processes which forms an important background to Plato's concern with perceptual cognition. For there is a certain aspect of the locutions φαίνεται τινι and δοκεῖ τινι that Plato brings into play so as to suggest that perceptual cognition is a passive process.[11] By and large both locutions can be used interchangeably, but after the first introduction of φαντασία and φαίνεται τινι at 152a6-c3, the notion δόξα and its cognate δοκεῖ τινι get the main attention; I shall concentrate on these.[12]

The connection between the locution δοκεῖ τινι, and the notion δόξα, apart from their common root, is fairly obvious. If something seems to us to be in a certain way, then it is fair to say that we take it to be that way, that is, that we believe it to be that way. Still, Socrates puts a certain emphasis on the locution τινι δοκεῖ so as to make a point about the Protagorean 'man the measure' thesis. To begin with, the view Socrates puts forward on behalf of Theaetetus and Protagoras, namely that when we perceive something, that something seems to us to be in one way or other, suggests that perceiving amounts to believing. Hence, on this understanding of perception we do in fact perceive that something is in a certain way. And if perceiving amounts to believing, then it is natural to connect perception to δόξα.

But what is important now, there is an aspect of the locution δοκεῖ τινι that Plato brings into play. For the locution δοκεῖ τινι, or more idiomatically, the locution δοκεῖ (μοι), just as the English '... seems ... (to me)' signals reservation on the part of the speaker: "Things seem to me to be that way (but, of course, that's just what I think)." So in order not to commit oneself too strongly to a certain view, '... seems ... to me' is inserted as a qualifier. But there is a wide range of different nuances that can be attached to the qualifier. The simplest way to signal the nuance is by adding an adverb: "Things really seem to be that way" or "Things merely seem to be that way." But the nuance can be signalled by intonation as well: "He seems to be guilty" can be intonated either so as to convey the message that the speaker thinks that it is almost certain that the person is guilty or to convey the opposite message that it is highly unlikely that the person really is guilty.

Now the way Plato makes use of this tension in the locution δοκεῖ τινι is by pointing out that on Protagoras' principle our beliefs are arrived at as the result of an entirely passive process: there is nothing more to our beliefs than the way things strike us. This aspect of δόξα is well captured by the weakly committal δοκεῖ (μοι): our beliefs are just a matter of how things *merely* seem to us. So if I say that something seems to me to be in one way or other, I may be suggesting that I have not given much thought to the issue: this is what it seems to me on first impression. Hence, in this case there is no effort put into the formation of the belief; I just go on the appearance. There is a rather funny instance of this way of taking the locution. At 181b8-c7 Socrates wants Theodorus to join him in considering a particular question, namely what kinds of motion there are. But his request at 181c4-6 makes a playful use of the language suggested by Protagoras' position: "Let it not seem only to me, but join in you too, so that we can be affected together by whatever it is" (μὴ μέντοι μόνον ἐμοὶ δοκείτω, ἀλλὰ συμμέτεχε καὶ σύ, ἵνα κοινῇ πάσχωμεν ἄν τι καὶ δέῃ). Of course, Socrates urges Theodorus to consider the question, that is, to make an intellectual effort in order to come to grips with it. But since Protagoras' principle seems to deny that there is any such intellectual effort involved in coming to have a view on something, or at least that there is any point in such effort, this is not the kind of thing Socrates can ask of Theodorus. On the Protagorean position Socrates cannot really urge Theodorus to join him in an intellectual venture; instead he is left with the rather bleak "Let's get affected together."

But on the Protagorean view the fact that our beliefs are a matter of how things strike us does not mean that there is anything questionable about them. For it is part and parcel of the Protagorean position that as things seem to each of us, so are they, and that we may rest confident with our beliefs. So Protagoras' position in a congenial way manages to encompass both the strongly and the weakly committal aspect of the locution δοκεῖ (μοι): our beliefs are a matter of how things merely seem to us, but since there is nothing more to things than the way they seem to us, we may commit ourselves to things being just the way they seem to us to be. In fact, on the Protagorean view there is no tension between the weakly and the strongly committal aspects of the locution δοκεῖ (μοι): things just are the way they strike us.

What we can see, then, is that Socrates develops Theaetetus' definition of knowledge as perception by connecting the definition to Protagoras' 'man the measure' thesis in such a way as to suggest that perceiving

amounts to believing, on the one hand, and that beliefs are a matter of how things strike us, on the other. So although Socrates makes the suggestion on Theaetetus' behalf that perceiving comes to something more than merely having the senses affected, that is, to believing, Socrates also suggests that on the Protagorean view beliefs are merely a matter of how we are affected. This squares nicely with the tendency among the early Greek thinkers to conceive of cognitive processes in terms of how the body is affected. And it is against the background of this picture of how perception and belief are conceived of that Socrates' refutation of Theaetetus' definition of knowledge as perception is to be seen.

The disentanglement of Protagoras' conflations

It is of paramount importance to be clear about the nature of the investigations in the first part of the *Theaetetus*. Socrates sets out to show how a certain view of perceptual cognition arises from the conflation of different cognitive phenomena. The first part of the dialogue, therefore, is not primarily, if indeed at all, concerned with criticising empiricism. Instead, Plato pins down certain presuppositions behind Protagoras' 'man the measure' thesis which he takes Theaetetus' definition of knowledge as perception to be suggestive of. It is well known that Socrates puts forward several arguments against Protagoras' thesis in the first part of the dialogue. But underlying these arguments there is a conceptual work: the fundamental flaw of Protagoras' position is the conceptual confusion suggested by it. Sense perception, appearing and belief are different phenomena, and the failure to distinguish between them accounts for Protagoras' commitment to his thesis. And against this background Socrates turns to refuting Theaetetus' definition and the Protagorean thesis by disentangling this confusion.[13] We can thus see that the challenge presented by Protagoras' relativistic thesis is the motivation behind Plato's concern with perceptual cognition.

As to the sources of Plato's conception of sense perception, belief and appearing, a few comments are in order: in the *Theaetetus* Socrates disentangles belief from sense perception and goes some way towards spelling out what sense perception and belief are. In fact, the final argument against Theaetetus' definition of knowledge as perception is based on the disentanglement of belief from sense perception. But in addition to the *Theaetetus*, we must look elsewhere in Plato's writings for further clues to these notions. The *Timaeus* and the *Philebus* provide important further clues to the notion of sense perception, the *Sophist* to the notion of belief.

What is more, the *Sophist* is the main source of Plato's conception of appearing. So as I turn to considering each of the three notions in the next three chapters, I shall make use of these dialogues.

II
The affection of the soul

Plato's construal of the notion αἴσθησις marks a new beginning in the philosophy of perception. Against the background of the broad notion of αἴσθησις comprising a whole range of different cognitive phenomena Plato not only narrows down the notion to a particular kind of perception, namely, sense perception, but also goes some way towards spelling out what sense perception is. The characteristic trait of Plato's view is the passive nature of sense perception. He has it that sense perception is brought about when a sense organ is affected and the affections (παθήματα) are transmitted to the soul. At *Timaeus* 43b5-c7, accounting for the condition of the newly incarnated human soul, Timaeus explains that material objects impinge on the body and that "the motions travelling through the body to the soul strike against it. Because of this they were later called what all of them are still called today: sense perceptions." [1] In addition, at *Philebus* 33d2-34a5 Socrates speaks about the joint shaking (σεισμός) of the body and the soul brought about by the affection of the sense organ, and he points out that "if you were to call this alteration [of the body and the soul] sense perception, you would not speak off the mark." [2]

The most important point of the passive character of sense perception is that the mere affection of the sense organs and the soul does not amount to believing. For in contrast to sense perception belief requires activity, and even effort on the part of the soul. So sense perception is a matter of the soul's merely being affected, whereas belief requires that the soul does something on the basis of being affected. Now this characterisation of sense perception leaves us with the question how much content Plato ascribes to sense perception. In particular, since he conceives of sense perception as a passive state different from belief, it seems that he cannot ascribe too much content to sense perception lest the distinction between sense perception and belief is obliterated. The question has been the subject of dispute, in which the main contenders have argued along the following lines. The one party holds that since Plato introduces a

particular notion of sense perception with a view to suggesting that sense perception is a passive state of the soul, he has it that in merely perceiving through the sense organs the soul is not aware of anything. The other party, by contrast, has it that there is sufficient evidence in the text to suggest that in merely perceiving through the sense organs the soul becomes aware of or takes notice of sensory qualities such as colours, sounds, smells and so forth. According to this reading the real distinction Plato is driving at is not that between no awareness at all and beliefs, however meagre in content, but that between awareness of sensory qualities that belong to the subjective sphere of sensory experiences and beliefs about an objective world. And on this reading, in perceiving through the sense organs the soul makes judgements of sorts, albeit judgements that do not go beyond the subjective sphere.[3]

Understanding Plato's contrast between sense perception and belief is complicated by the fact that he introduces the contrast for certain purposes and that his notions of sense perception and belief are quite specific. Hence, extreme care is called for when these notions are considered. In particular, the contrast does not run parallel to the contrast between sensation and perception treated of in modern philosophy.[4] For in so far as sensation is conceived of as the mere having of the sensory impressions such that the perceiver is not put into contact with the world, whereas perception is precisely a matter of reaching out to it, Plato's distinction between sense perception and belief does not amount to the same contrast. In addition, just as there is a problem as to what each side in Plato's distinction amounts to, so the distinction between sensation and perception gives rise to the same problem. So we should not expect the distinction between sensation and perception to be of much help in the efforts to come to grips with Plato's distinction between sense perception and belief. What really matters is how Plato spells out the distinction: it is fair to say that Plato is the first thinker who sets out to distinguish between the passive and active aspects of perceptual cognition.

The question thus raised is of paramount importance and I shall consider it at some length in this chapter. However, I am not going to opt for either of the two alternatives suggested: it seems to me that both alternatives miss the mark. As far as the latter alternative is concerned, namely that Plato has in mind a distinction between two different kinds of judgements, I am inclined to agree with those who think that it blurs the distinction between sense perception and belief. For if perceiving amounts to

judging, why should we not say that perceiving amounts to believing? Yet, although I am more sympathetic towards the former alternative, there is more to be said about the cognitive status of sense perception than that it is a passive state of the soul. The fact that sense perception, in contrast to belief, is conceived of as a passive state of the soul does not entail that anything that goes beyond the striking of the motions against the soul counts as belief. 'Passive' and 'active' are relative terms and in so far as sense perception is characterised as a passive state of the soul, it is passive in comparison to belief. And as will be shown in chapter 3, Plato is operating with a specific notion of belief (δόξα); the characterisation of belief as requiring both activity and effort does not apply to everything that we would be inclined to label 'belief.'

Moreover, the two options as to how much content Plato ascribes to sense perception seem to share one tenet, namely, that in sense perception the soul does not reach out to the world. For the idea that sense perception is the mere passive state on the basis of which the soul forms beliefs suggests that the perceptual act consists of two components– sense perception playing the passive and belief the active part–and that sense perception taken on its own does not put the soul into contact with the world. But now it should be noticed that the latter option amounts to the same conclusion: even if Plato has it that in merely perceiving through the sense organs the soul becomes aware of sensory qualities, it is still the case that sense perception cannot put the soul into contact with the world. For according to this option in apprehending the mere sensory qualities the soul does not reach out to the world.

In view of the fact that I think that, according to Plato, sense perception can amount to cognition, I find both options on the wrong track. Let us consider Plato's views on animal cognition in order to see whether he thinks that sense perception amounts to cognition. For if he thinks that beasts get along by means of sense perception alone, then he seems to embrace the view that sense perception brings about cognition.[5] Plato's remarks on the cognitive powers of beasts are scarce and do not provide us with a clear picture.[6] But there is a line of thought in the *Theaetetus* which suggests that beasts are denied belief and that beasts get along by sense perception alone. At 186b11-c5 Socrates points out that man and beast alike are born with the capacity to perceive, whereas only some can develop the capacity to believe. I will have more to say about this passage later; let it suffice for now to say that I take the point to be that man alone can develop the capacity to believe, not that some beasts and some men

can do it. What is more, the mention at *Theaetetus* 161c3-d1 of the pig and the baboon "as belonging to those which have sense perception"[7] seems to be a hint at the fact that beasts in contrast to humans are endowed with sense perception only. And despite the fact that there is some evidence for the view that Plato ascribes more than sense perception to beasts,[8] I assume that Plato has it that beasts get along by sense perception alone. I do not pretend that the issue can be proved either way, but I shall try to show that the evidence squares well with my assumption. At any rate, the assumption matters a great deal. For if we opt for the view that sense perception can bring about cognition on its own, the question is: what kind of cognition does sense perception bring about in view of the fact that some creatures get along by it alone?

The question whether or not sense perception amounts to cognition is even more complicated. For even if Plato thinks that beasts get along by sense perception alone, we may not be granted the same conclusion for human beings: the design of the cognitive equipments of man and beast may differ in such a way that sense perception has a different function in man. In fact, I shall argue that it matters a great deal what kind of cognitive equipment man and beast are supposed to have.

In defining sense perception as the affection of the body and the soul Plato is at pains to make the point that sense perception is not brought about by the mere affection of the body. For, as Socrates puts it at *Philebus* 33d2-6, in so far as the affections brought about by material objects impinging on the body are extinguished before they reach the soul, sense perception is not brought about. Sense perception is brought about when, in addition to the affection of the body, there is another affection–of the soul. It is reasonable to assume that Plato distinguished between the affection of the body and the affection of the soul so as to escape the worry over the soul's interaction with the physical world. Plato was committed to the view that the soul differs from the body as to its very nature and he may well have thought that the soul is not susceptible to the kind of affection that bodies are susceptible to. And since the soul cannot be affected by material objects, it is dependent on the body in so far as it is to get in touch with the sensible world. Unfortunately, this picture leaves us with a problem: it is not clear precisely how Plato would account for the affection of the soul brought about by the body of the perceiver. For if the soul cannot be affected by material objects, what is it about the body of the perceiver–a material object–that makes it capable of affecting the soul? Indeed, how should the affection of the soul brought

about by the body of the perceiver be characterised in the first place? There is little, if any, evidence to decide on the issue, but Plato seems at least to have in mind some sort of mediating role for the body; even though the soul cannot be affected by material objects directly, it can be affected by the motions in the body of the perceiver brought about by material objects impinging on the sense organs.

The characterisation of αἴσθησις as involving both the body and the soul makes 'sense perception' an apt rendering of the key term of this chapter. The point is that sense perception is a state of the soul which is dependent on the body: unless the soul had recourse to a body it would not be capable of sense perception. 'Sense' in sense perception, in other words, signals the involvement of the body. It must be acknowledged that there is a difficulty as to the rendering of αἰσθάνεσθαι with 'perceive' in this chapter. I shall occasionally render αἰσθάνεσθαι with the soul's perceiving this and that *in sense perception*. The rationale behind this construction is that it is an open question exactly what objects Plato thinks that the soul perceives when it merely exercises the sense organs. And it could be suggested that in so far as the soul is to perceive some things, it is not through the exercise of the sense organs alone that it perceives them. But then the English 'perceive' is used as a generic term and not as a rendering of αἰσθάνεσθαι . So I hope the qualification 'in sense perception' or the context will make my use of 'perceive' as a rendering of αἰσθάνεσθαι unequivocal.

In view of the fact that Plato conceives of sense perception as involving both the body and the soul, something needs to be said about each aspect. In section 1 I consider the part played by the body of the perceiver in sense perception. In particular, I shall sort out how the body establishes contact with things in the world by being affected by them. In section 2 I consider the question what the soul comes to perceive once the affections reach it. In section 3 I turn to the question what kind of cognitive state the soul is in when affected through the body. In particular, if sense perception amounts to cognition, the question is how we should characterise that kind of cognition.

Finally, a few notes on the use of sources. The *Timaeus*, the *Theaetetus* and the *Philebus* will serve as the primary sources. But the theory of sight at *Theaetetus* 156a2-157c3 will not be taken into consideration. On the face of it, there are some superficial similarities between that theory and the account of sight in the *Timaeus*. But they do not amount to the same thing.[9] And as has been shown in chapter 1, the theory of sight in the

Theaetetus is introduced only to give backing to Theaetetus' thesis that knowledge is perception, and is refuted together with the thesis. Hence the theory of sight in the *Theaetetus* is not endorsed by Socrates, but invented by him for certain purposes. Moreover, the assumption of an earlier dating of the *Timeaus* than that of the two other main sources causes some trouble. But to put it briefly, I think the account of sense perception in the *Timaeus* goes well together with remarks on the issue in the later dialogues, and I find no reason, therefore, to discard it. However, there is one exception to this claim about which I want to be entirely open: in the *Timaeus* the soul is conceived of as having parts and these parts are located in different parts of the body. Still, by and large this difference does not make the accounts of sense perception in the *Timaeus* and in the other sources pull apart. But when they do, I shall say so openly.

1. *The sensory mechanism*

Since only the body can be affected by material objects, the soul needs the body as a means of establishing contact with the physical world. In regard to touch, there is an obvious sense in which the object affects the perceiver; the object impinges upon the body of the perceiver through direct contact with the surface of the body. Of course, even here some qualifications are required if the impingement is to count as touch. For one thing, in so far as the perceiver is to be aware of the affection of the impinging object, the pressure of the object on the body of the perceiver must be sufficiently strong. Nevertheless, there is little room for wonder as far as the basic outline of the mechanism of touch is concerned. But the same does not hold for all the senses, and in particular for sight and hearing. On reflection it might even strike us as somewhat mysterious that a mountain tens of miles away should affect our eyes. Indeed, what is it that makes possible this contact between the mountain and the eyes?

The question of the sensory mechanism in general, and of the mechanism of sight in particular, occupied the Pre-Socratics and Plato's contemporaries a great deal.[10] There seems to have been a temptation to conceive of the mechanism of sight as analogous to that of touch; just as touch is brought about by one body acting on another, so sight was thought to involve bodies acting on other bodies. And in order to accommodate this view of sight with observed facts, it was suggested that there is a transparent stream which flows either from the object to the eyes, or from the eyes to the object, so as to establish contact between them.[11]

And similar stories were suggested for the other senses. However odd this might sound to a modern ear, these speculations were not put forward without argument. But the starting points for the speculations on the sensory mechanism in Plato's time were very different from what would be taken for granted today. In particular, many scientific discoveries had not yet been made, as for instance of light and sound waves, the lense, the retina, the design of the inner ear, nerves, and so forth. Hence the ancient accounts of the sensory mechanism may strike us as fairly awkward, or simply seem to be too off the mark to deserve any closer attention. However, despite the primitive status of the natural sciences at the time, the explanations of the sensory mechanisms of the different senses are not lacking in sophistication. On the contrary, on the basis of the meagre scientific knowledge available the ancient theorists were impressively imaginative in trying to come to grips with the phenomenon of sense perception.

According to Theophrastus' account there was a basic divide between those who conceived of the process between the object and the sense organ as requiring things of the same kind and those who conceived of it as requiring things of different kinds.[12] Such views provide informative hints at the lines of reasoning and observations employed by these theorists. For instance, one argument for the latter alternative, namely that sense perception comes about only in so far as things of different kinds act on each other, was based on the observation that things of the same temperature as the body are less apt to produce sense perception than things much colder or warmer than the body.[13] But in addition to considerations that were based on such relatively simple observations there were attempts at theoretical explanations. These accounts gave a theoretical underpinning to the principle that sense perception comes about either as a process between things of the same kind or as a process between things of different kinds. For the basic idea seems to have been that sense perception comes about through a mechanical process based on one body's action on another. This process, moreover, was believed to make possible the transmission of pieces of matter between the object and the perceiver. And it was assumed that the process turns on the kind of body of which the sense organ and the object consist. So the idea was either that only bodies of the same kind can act on each other so as to bring about sense perception, or that only bodies of different kinds can do so.

In order to explain why bodies of a particular kind are well suited to act on other bodies, theories were developed about the nature of different

bodies. By and large material objects were believed to consist of one or several of the four elements. Consequently, the elements played a prominent part in the explanation of the sensory process. And since there were some speculations as to the nature of each of the four elements, it was possible to develop theories about their behaviour and, thereby, about the details of the interaction between the object and the sense organ. Indeed, much of the debate centred on the part played by each element in the mechanics of the different sense organs; the material make-up of each organ was under particular debate.

The account of sense perception in the *Timaeus* is in line with the general outlook of theories of sense perception at the time. Here too we find the idea of a bodily contact between the perceiver and the object, the insistence on the part played by the elements in the sensory process, and so forth. In particular, Timaeus' procedure makes it clear that in so far as we want to account for sense perception, we need to have a grasp of the make-up of the physical world including the body of the perceiver. It is important to see how closely Timaeus connects the account of the make-up of the sense organs and the account of the effect of things affecting the sense organ. At 61c8-d2 Timaeus has it: "It happens to be the case that neither this [the formation of flesh] can be spoken of adequately without mention of the sensory affections, nor these latter without the former, and it is hardly possible to speak of both at the same time."[14] The interdependence of these two accounts is not a trivial point: the account of the make-up of the sense organ is to a great extent motivated by the desire to explain the receptivity of the sense organs to things in the physical world.

In regard to the elements of which the sense organs and the material objects consist, the demiurge is said to fashion regular geometrical bodies which are used as models for the particular, perishable bodies. At 54a1-b5 Timaeus points out that the basic geometrical units for putting together the elements are plane figures, namely half-equilateral and right angled isosceles triangles. Using these plane figures as building blocks for the faces of the three-dimensional figures, the demiurge puts together the four figures corresponding to the elements: at 54d5-55c6 fire is given the form of a tetrahedron (a regular pyramid), air that of an octahedron, water that of an icosahedron, and earth, finally, that of a cube. What is more, at 55d8-56b2 Timaeus points out that the difference between the shapes of the primary bodies has a bearing on their behaviour. For instance, fire, that is, the tetrahedron, is thought to be the most mobile body because of its

relative smallness, its few faces and its sharp cutting edges. Earth, by contrast, is the most immobile because each of its faces is a square. However fanciful this conception of the design of the world might seem, it provides an important background to the account of the sensory mechanism. For the design of the primary bodies, of which the material object and the body of the perceiver consist, has an important bearing on how the object acts on the sense organ. Let us, then, see how this background is brought to bear on the accounts of sight and hearing.

The mechanism of sight

There are two characteristics that an account of sight should be able to accommodate. As I have already mentioned, the account needs to give an explanation of how the object at a distance can be brought into contact with the eyes. Furthermore, since we do not see in the dark, some thought should be given to the part played by light in sight. In regard to both of these characteristics, one of the primary bodies, namely, fire (πῦρ), plays a crucial part in Timaeus' account. To begin with, at 58c5-d1 Timaeus distinguishes between different kinds of fire of which two are relevant for the account of sight: flame (φλόξ) and that which flows off from the flame (τὸ ἀπὸ τῆς φλογὸς ἀπιόν), the latter being such that it does not burn. Daylight belongs to the latter kind of fire, as Timaeus points out at 45b4-6. Considering the fact that light waves were not thought of at the time, it seems that Timaeus conceives of the phenomenon of light as the outflow of a certain kind of body, namely fire, and, hence, as itself being a body.[15] There is no detailed account of what it is that makes the two kinds of fire different. But since Timaeus speaks of that which flows off from the flame as a pure fire (πῦρ εἰλικρινές), it could well be that he thinks that some kinds of fire, such as the flame which burns and consumes bodies of other kinds, are contaminated in the sense that they consist in part of primary bodies other than the tetrahedrons.

In addition, there is a fire within us which is of the same kind as daylight. At 45c2-6 Timaeus explains how the daylight and the fire within us interact.

> Hence, when daylight occurs near the stream of sight, then like issues forth towards like, the stream becoming condensed, and becoming familiar [with the daylight] it is united into one single body in a straight course from the eyes; [this happens] wherever

the stream issuing forth from within stands firm against that of the things outside with which it meets.

ὅταν οὖν μεθημερινὸν ᾖ φῶς περὶ τὸ τῆς ὄψεως ῥεῦμα, τότε ἐκπῖπτον ὅμοιον πρὸς ὅμοιον, συμπαγὲς γενόμενον, ἓν σῶμα οἰκειωθὲν συνέστη κατὰ τὴν τῶν ὀμμάτων εὐθυωρίαν, ὅπηπερ ἂν ἀντερείδῃ τὸ προσπῖπτον ἔνδοθεν πρὸς ὃ τῶν ἔξω συνέπεσεν.

The reason for the coalescence of daylight with the fire within us is that daylight is akin (ἀδελφόν) to the latter fire, as Timaeus puts it at 45b6. Here it seems that Timaeus is committed to a principle such that substances of the same kind have an intrinsic propensity to unite, whereas substances of different kinds resist one another. More particularly, the tenet that things of the same kind have the propensity to unite is presumably based on considerations on the geometrical shapes of the primary bodies. For keeping in mind that fire is a primary body with a particular shape, namely that of a tetrahedron, it might be argued that bodies similarly shaped have a propensity to unite. And in order for the fire within us and the daylight to be able to coalesce in the first place, Timaeus presumably has it that there must be a uniformity of substance; the particles of which the two bodies consist need to be of the same shape.

The suggestion that the mechanism of sight is based on a coalescence of daylight and the internal fire seems to come to this. The sense organ is extended in virtue of the stream of fire issuing forth from the eyes and reaches out to objects in the world.[16] On the assumption that there is such a stream of fire issuing forth from the eyes, the story about the daylight seems to accommodate the fact that we cannot see in the dark. For now the reason for our not seeing when there is no daylight seems to be that the daylight is needed in order to trigger the internal fire so as to make it issue forth. So if the daylight is needed in order to make the internal fire reach out to objects in the world, then the story about the internal fire coalescing with the daylight seems to accommodate both the idea of a bodily contact between the eyes and the object perceived, on the one hand, and the fact that we cannot see in the dark, on the other hand.

However, this way of construing the story about how the daylight and the internal fire interact so as to make a body of fire issue forth from the eyes runs into problems. The most obvious problem is that we do in fact see things, if not in total darkness, then at least when the sun has set. The daylight is hence dispensable in so far as the internal fire is to issue forth

and to establish contact with objects in the world. So it seems that the above picture needs to be amended lest we commit Plato to an indefensible theory.

In fact, the story is somewhat more complicated. In addition to the two fires already mentioned, namely the daylight and the internal fire, there is a third fire which is necessary if sight is to be brought about. For as the stream of fire issues forth from the eye the stream is said "to stand firm against that of the things outside with which it meets." And at 67c6-7 that which the stream meets is called "a flame flowing forth from each body" (φλόγα τῶν σωμάτων ἑκάστων ἀπορρέουσαν). So the third fire is such that it is a different kind of fire from the daylight and the internal fire: the third fire is a flame, not that which flows off from the flame. Still, in the same lines the flame is said to consist of "parts which are proportioned to the visual current so as to yield sense perception" (ὄψει σύμμετρα μόρια ἔχουσαν πρὸς αἴσθησιν). This picture gives a fairly good hint as to how the contact between the eye and the object is established. In virtue of the stream of fire, the body of the eyes is extended all the way to the object. Moreover, since the object in part consists of fire, albeit a different kind of fire from the fire of the stream, a special kind of contact between the stream and the object is established. The point about the parts of the flame being proportioned to the stream of fire is that by being so proportioned, the flame affects the visual current in a particular way. And at 45c7-d3 Timaeus explains what happens to the visual current when affected by the flame.

> All [of the stream of fire], because of the homogeneity, becomes uniformly affected, and whatever it comes in contact with and whatever other comes in contact with it, the stream passes on the motions of these things through all of the body all the way to the soul and brings about this sense perception which we hence call 'seeing.'
>
> ὁμοιοπαθὲς δὴ δι᾽ ὁμοιότητα πᾶν γενόμενον, ὅτου τε ἂν αὐτό ποτε ἐφάπτηται καὶ ὃ ἂν ἄλλο ἐκείνου, τούτων τὰς κινήσεις διαδιδὸν εἰς ἅπαν τὸ σῶμα μέχρι τῆς ψυχῆς αἴσθησιν παρέσχετο ταύτην ἣ δὴ ὁρᾶν φαμεν.

So the idea is that the stream of fire is designed in such way as to be sensitive to the fire of the object, and to transmit the motions of the object to the soul.

But in regard to the tenet that daylight is required for sight to be brought about, it might still be wondered whether the story can accommodate the fact that we see things even when the sun has set. I think the worry is best dealt with if we pose the following question: where do the stream of fire and the flame meet? That is to say, does the stream of fire travel all the way to the object becoming affected by the flame at the surface of the object, or does the flame issue forth to meet the stream in midair? The characterisation of the stream as the result of a coalescence of the internal fire and daylight makes it clear that the process brings about a united body which stands "in a straight course from the eye wherever the stream issuing forth from within stands firm against that of the things outside with which it meets." My suggestion is that the point about the stream's standing firm is that the coalescence with the daylight makes the internal fire strong enough to extend all the way to the object and to meet the flame without being damaged. The talk about making the fire firm makes sense from the point of view of the make-up of the body of fire: a greater number of tetrahedrons presumably makes the body firmer and more resistent. And at any rate it is clear that the stream can be damaged. For at 67e6-68b1 Timaeus speaks of the dazzling effect some flames give rise to even in broad daylight; the fire of these flames moves faster and dilates the stream all the way to the eye. So the point is not that the fire within us would not issue forth at all unless there were daylight, but, rather, that only in so far as the internal fire coalesces with the daylight is the internal fire made firm enough to do its job properly. In short, when the internal fire coalesces with the daylight, the conditions for sight are optimal.

By contrast, when there is no daylight, the internal fire issues forth only to find nothing akin to it with which it can coalesce, as it is put at 45d3-6. In that case the stream is too weak to extend to objects in the world. But since some things, such as torches, are self-luminous, the story leaves room for the possibility that in some cases the flame from the object reaches all the way to the eye. However, in that case the stream from the eyes is not strong enough to stand firm against the flame flowing off from the object. And this tenet could explain why we become blinded by looking at light sources in the night. For it could be suggested that the stream which consists of the internal fire alone is not strong enough to resist the flame from the object. So it matters a great deal for sight that the stream of fire is made firm enough; thence the importance of daylight.

The suggestion is that under ideal conditions the stream is strong

enough to travel all the way to the object and to be affected by the flame at the surface of the object. By contrast, under less favourable conditions, such as in the night, the stream and the flame meet closer to the eye; the stream is not strong enough to resist the flame from the object and to travel all the way to the object. Rather, the stream is affected at a longer distance from the object. Consequently, sight at night is less accurate. In other words, the daylight enters Timaeus' theory of sight in such a way as to account for the fact that we see *better* in broad daylight. Hence, on the basis of what Timaeus explicitly says, there is no reason to believe that he had overlooked the rather trivial fact that we do see in the night too.

Of course, the theory put forward is a mere sketch and a number of further objections could easily be mounted. For one thing, on the present account, there is no explanation of the fact that we can see things at night which are not self-luminous, but lit by artifical lighting. Of course, Plato must have been familiar with this fact and it might be conjectured that he held artifical lighting, such as torches, to be an inferior kind of daylight with which the internal fire can coalesce so as to reach out to objects.[17] What is more, the account cannot cover all kinds of sight, in view of the fact that sight of other animals works well without the contribution of daylight. The cat, for instance, does well without daylight. Presumably Plato could have explained the example away by referring to some ad hoc principle; perhaps cats have a different kind of internal fire which works differently. For at any rate, the look of the eyes of a cat is quite different from that of human eyes: they even shine in the dark. But all in all, the theory is not presented in sufficient detail to make possible a thorough assessment. If we judge it by the few details it provides, we run the risk of committing Plato to implausible mistakes. For instance, if it is assumed that sight is brought about simply in so far as the stream of fire and the flame from the object meet, then even in total darkness just pressing a tomato, say, against the eyes should suffice to bring about sight. For that should suffice to establish the contact between the flame and the internal fire.

But however sketchy the theory happens to be, there are a few characteristics that need to be stressed. The basic idea is that the body of the sense organ, that is, the fire of the eyes, is brought into contact with the object. This body of fire which is extended to the object is such that it can pass on the motions of the object to the soul. So the idea is that the stream of fire establishes a channel for passing information from the object to the soul.

The mechanism of hearing

As far as hearing is concerned, Timaeus spends but a few lines on the subject, and gives an even less detailed account than of sight. Still, let us briefly consider the mechanism of hearing so as to get a firmer grip on the general features of the sensory mechanism. To begin with, the problem of how there can be a contact between the sense organ and the object is somewhat different in the case of hearing. For sounds are hard to locate; they do not belong to objects in any obvious sense. And even pretheoretically it is not obvious that the perceiver should be brought into contact with the object emitting a sound. For when someone hears the dog's barking, we do not need to assume that the ear is brought into contact with the dog. And how should we treat cases like the wind's howling where the source of the sound is hard to come by in the first place? But at any rate, it seems obvious that hearing is brought about by an affection of the sense organ. So an explanation of how hearing is brought about should not be entirely different from that of how sight is brought about.

The overall picture of how hearing is brought about is fairly clear. The body involved in the mechanism of hearing is air (ἀήρ). And at 67b2-5 Timaeus gives an account of how sound is brough about.

> Sound in general we should hence lay down as the stroke on both the brain and the blood caused by the air through the ears passed on all the way to the soul. And the motion caused by the stroke, starting off from the head and ending in the region of the liver, is hearing;...
>
> ὅλως μὲν οὖν φωνὴν θῶμεν τὴν δι 'ὤτων ὑπ ' ἀέρος ἐγκεφάλου τε καὶ αἵματος μέχρι ψυχῆς πληγὴν διαδιδομένην, τὴν δὲ ὑπ 'αὐτῆς κίνησιν, ἀπὸ τῆς κεφαλῆς μὲν ἀρχομένην, τελευτῶσαν δὲ περὶ τὴν τοῦ ἥπατος ἕδραν, ἀκοήν·...

Compared to the part played by fire in sight, air plays a much simpler part in hearing. For sound, we are told, is brought about when air strikes against the brain and the blood. What Timaeus presumably has in mind is that when the primary bodies of air, that is, the octahedrons, travel at a certain speed, they form a body which strikes against the brain and the blood. The point is that air at rest or air that is not moving at a certain speed does not cause the stroke. What is more, there is no need for the body of the sense organ to extend to the body of air. The important thing

is that the ears are hollow, so that the air can travel through using them as channels. So the contact between the body causing the affection and the body of the perceiver is established in a fairly simple way.

But as far as the affection of the body is concerned, the mechanism of hearing is a complicated matter. The stroke caused by air on the brain and the blood seems not to work in the same way as the affection of the stream of fire brought about by the flame from the object. In the first place, there is no uniformity in substance between the air, on the one hand, and the brain and the blood, on the other. This, presumably, is the reason why the affection is called 'a stroke' (πληγή). Timaeus does not go into the details of the conditions for the stroke to come about in the right way so as to produce sound. But it seems that there must be something about the brain and the blood that makes them especially sensitive to air travelling at a certain speed; yet again the geometrical figures of the primary bodies are likely to explain the finer details of how the air acts on the brain and the blood.

Moreover, the stroke on the brain and the blood is said to be passed on to the soul. The parallel to sight is obvious; the stream of fire passes on the motions of the object to the soul. But what is striking about the account of hearing is that Timaeus locates a particular part of the body, namely the liver, as the receiver of the motion brought about by the stroke. In the first place, it sounds odd that it is the liver which receives the motion. But it should be kept in mind that the liver plays an important part in the psychology of the *Timaeus*; it is the seat of desires (τὸ ἐπιθυμητικόν), that is, the location of one part of the soul.[18] The suggestion, then, is that the soul is affected when the liver receives the motion. So I admit that this is a clear deviation from the general stance of this chapter in so far as the picture suggests that the soul is divided and that hearing is brought about by an affection of a part of the soul located in a particular part of the body. Fortunately, I do not think that this characteristic trait of the psychology of the *Timaeus* has any deeper consequences for the theory of sense perception put forward; what matters is that the soul gets affected through the body.

Despite all differences, the mechanism of hearing is in general conceived of along the same lines as the mechanism of sight. That is to say, there is a body which affects the sense organ and as a result of this affection motions are generated which are passed on to the soul.

These outlines of the mechanisms of sight and hearing suffice to show that Plato conceives of the sensory mechanism as a bodily contact analogous to that of touch and that the body plays the part of establishing contact with the physical world. We have also seen the importance of the primary bodies in bringing about the contact. For it is precisely in virtue of containing the appropriate kind of primary bodies that things can act on the sense organs. The accounts of sight and hearing showed fire and air to be required. And the reason for certain primary objects' being indispensible is, presumably, that the different mechanisms are dependent on the particular shape of the primary objects; for each mechanism the shape of some bodies is appropriate, while the shape of others is not.

Yet, the account of the primary bodies and how they enter into the sensory process does not explain what the soul perceives in sense perception. It was suggested that the material objects pass on motions (κινήσεις) to the body and that these motions are transmitted to the soul. But so far I have only discussed the nature of the material object in so far as it is to bring about these motions. And as we turn to the question what the soul perceives once the motions reach it, we must distinguish between the account of how the primary bodies are in themselves and what their effects are in the perceptual encounter.

2. *The objects of sense perception*

It is tempting to interpret Plato as holding that sense perception does not amount to the perception of anything. For the emphasis on the passive character of sense perception and the claim that sense perception does not amount to belief are suggestive of the view that in mere sense perception the soul just receives the affections brought about by the material object impinging on the sense organ. On that suggestion the soul perceives things in the world only if the soul gets involved in further processes which go beyond sense perception. Alternatively, it could also be suggested that if the soul can be said to perceive, or perhaps better, experience anything at all in sense perception, then it perceives or experiences the affections, but not the material objects bringing about the affections. On either view the suggestion is that although sense perception establishes bodily contact between the perceiver and the material object in the world, sense perception on its own does not bring about the perception of external objects.

Unfortunately, Plato does not address the question head-on and the

remarks pertaining to it provide us only with hints. But despite the scarce evidence, the importance of the question whether Plato thinks that sense perception amounts to the perception of external objects makes an attempt to extract his view on it indispensible. First, the question is important in regard to the characterisation of belief: if sense perception amounts to the perception of external objects, then belief does not contribute to the processing of the affections so as to make the soul perceive external objects, but with something else. Second, the question is important also in regard to the plausibility of the assumption that beasts get along by sense perception alone: if sense perception does not amount to the perception of external objects, then it seems less plausible that any animal could get along by sense perception alone.

Despite some support in Plato's writings for the view that in sense perception the mere affections are perceived, there are other considerations which suggest that external objects are perceived. Let us take a first quick look at some comments on the issue. At *Theaetetus* 186b11-c2 Socrates has it in the following way:

> At any rate, both men and beasts are by nature able to perceive some things right from birth, namely the affections which reach the soul through the body;...
>
> Οὐκοῦν τὰ μὲν εὐθὺς γενομένοις πάρεστι φύσει αἰσθάνεσθαι ἀνθρώποις τε καὶ θηρίοις, ὅσα διὰ τοῦ σώματος παθήματα ἐπὶ τὴν ψυχὴν τείνει·...

On the face of it, this is a straightforward statement that the mere affections are perceived.[19] I shall return to this passage towards the end of this section, but it should be borne in mind that the statement occurs in the context of an argument to the effect that sense perception is a matter of perceiving sensory qualities, such as colours and sounds. So Socrates' saying that the affections are perceived does not rule out that sensory qualities are perceived. And in the *Timaeus* Plato gives an account of the effect material objects have on perceivers in sense perception and at 64b3-6 we are told that some affections spread around "until they reach the seat of awareness and report on the property of the agent" (μέχριπερ ἂν ἐπὶ τὸ φρόνιμον ἐλθόντα ἐξαγγείλῃ τοῦ ποιήσαντος τὴν δύναμιν). The suggestion is that once the affections reach the soul–and I do not think that 'awareness,' or however τὸ φρόνιμον should be rendered, amounts to anything else than a part of the soul–they inform of the properties of

the material object bringing about the affection. This remark suggests that when the affections reach the soul properties of the external object are perceived.

It should be noticed that the terms for affection, πάθος and πάθημα, are equivocal. On some occasions they signify the affection of the perceiver brought about by an object impinging on the sense organ, on other occasions the sensory quality, such as the colour, which the soul comes to perceive. By and large it is not difficult to keep these two uses of the terms apart, but at times it is not easy to determine what use they are put to. The difficulty is particularly urgent in *Timaeus* 61c3-69a5 where Timaeus turns from investigations into the make-up of the non-perceptible primary bodies to an account of the look that compound bodies have for perceivers. It is even tempting to see a close connection between the two uses here: since it is through the affection of the sense organs and the soul that the perceiver comes to perceive the sensory qualities, it might even be suggested that the sensory qualities are brought about in the perceptual encounter and that in perceiving sensory qualities the soul perceives items that are dependent on the perceptual encounter and not properties of the external object. The suggestion is important in so far as it commits Plato to the view that the sensory qualities are not properties of the external object: if the sensory qualities do not belong to the external object, then perceiving them does not amount to perception of the external object.

At any rate, Plato does not explicitly claim that the affections, or motions, reaching the soul themselves are sensory qualities such as colours and sounds. So he seems to have it that the affections are processed in a particular way so as to bring about perception of sensory qualities. But does that suffice to show that in sense perception the soul perceives external objects? Or are further processes required? There are two sides to the issue. On the one hand, there is the question whether Plato thinks that sensory qualities are properties of external objects and, consequently, whether perceiving sensory qualities amounts to perceiving properties of external objects. On the other hand, even if sensory qualities are properties of external objects, it might be suggested that perceiving external objects requires something more than that the sensory qualities are perceived. What I have in mind is that it seems reasonable to say that perceiving external objects amounts to more than perceiving the sensory qualities alone; perceiving external objects seems also to involve perceiving other properties such as shape, size and motion. And if that is

accomplished by mere sense perception, then there is even more to the soul's processing of the affections in sense perception than that sensory qualities come to be perceived.

What we need now is to see whether Plato thinks that sensory qualities are properties of the external objects and whether he thinks that the sensory qualities are the only objects of sense perception. In view of the fact that there is an argument pertaining directly to the latter question, I discuss this argument first, and turn to the questions whether Plato thinks that the sensory qualities are properties of the external object and whether sense perception amounts thereby to perceiving external objects.

The proper sensibles argument

At *Theaetetus* 184e8-185a1 Socrates puts forward an argument to the effect that what is perceived through one sense cannot be perceived through another sense: "What you perceive by means of one power, it is impossible to perceive this by means of another" (ἃ δι ' ἑτέρας δυνάμεως αἰσθάνῃ, ἀδύνατον εἶναι δι ' ἄλλης ταῦτ 'αἰσθέσθαι). For instance, what is perceived through sight cannot be perceived through hearing, and what is perceived through hearing cannot be perceived through sight. The principle is unobjectionable in so far as it says that objects proper to only one sense, such as colour to sight and sound to hearing, cannot be perceived through another sense. But Socrates takes a further step at 185a4-6:"So if you think anything in regard to both, you would not perceive it in regard to both either by means of the one sense organ, or by means of the other, would you?" (Εἴ τι ἄρα περὶ ἀμφοτέρων διανοῇ, οὐκ ἂν διά γε τοῦ ἑτέρου ὀργάνου, οὐδ 'αὖ διὰ τοῦ ἑτέρου περὶ ἀμφοτέρων αἰσθάνοι ' ἄν;). For instance, if we think concerning colour and sound that they both are, then that item, namely being, is not perceived through any sense. The question now is whether the argument says that the objects that are perceived through only one sense–the proper sensibles–are the only objects perceived in sense perception and, hence, whether everything that is perceived through the senses can be perceived through only one sense.

The construal of the argument confronts us with a dilemma. On the one hand, if we construe the first step of the argument in such a way that it says that there are *some* things, such as colours and sounds, which indeed cannot be perceived through more than one sense, then the principle is sound.[20] But if we take the first step this way, Socrates' argument might seem to be weakened. For if we assume that he is driving at the

conclusion that those things which are common to objects of more than one sense cannot be perceived through any sense, then he needs something stronger: the weak principle leaves the possibility open that some things which are common to objects of more than one sense indeed are perceived through more than one sense.[21] On the other hand, if we go for the stronger principle that we cannot perceive through one sense *anything* that we perceive through another sense, then the principle provides Socrates with what he seems to need. But now the principle is false. For we actually can perceive what we perceive through one sense through another sense: at *Theaetetus* 192d3-9 it is made clear that Theaetetus can be perceived through sight, touch and hearing.

It seems to me that the dilemma arises only on the assumption that the contrast between the proper sensibles and those things which are common to objects of more than one sense (τὰ κοινά) is exhaustive in the sense that all properties of objects belong to either side of the contrast. And in addition to being, Socrates adds difference, identity, duality, unity, dissimilarity and similarity to the list. I shall discuss at length the passage and the rationale behind the claim that the commons are not perceptible at all in the next chapter, and leave the details for there. Suffice it for now to say that Plato's commons in the *Theaetetus* must not be mistaken for those common sensibles (κοινὰ αἰσθητά) introduced by Aristotle.[22] This negative point is worth pressing in view of the fact that it is tempting to see a direct parallel between Plato's commons and Aristotle's common sensibles. What is more, since Aristotle thinks that the common sensibles are perceptible, it is also tempting to think that Aristotle takes exception to Plato's view that the commons are not perceptible and that Aristotle gets the issue right. Indeed, it may well be that this is how Aristotle himself regarded the matter.

It is fairly clear that Plato's commons in the *Theaetetus* do not run parallel to Aristotle's common sensibles in the *De Anima* 2.6. To begin with, there is just one item occurring in both lists: in Aristotle's list of common sensibles, including motion, rest, shape (σχῆμα) and size, only number (ἀριθμός) has an equivalent in Plato's list.[23] The divergence between the lists is no accident. Plato does not introduce the commons with a view to making the point that in so far as we are to apprehend not only proper sensibles, but also the underlying body, we need to apprehend properties such as shape, size and so forth. I simply do not think that Plato is concerned with the question how the soul comes to perceive material objects and not just sensory qualities. Rather, Plato seeks to

establish a distinction between what the soul grasps about the object through sense perception and what it grasps through thinking–quite regardless of whether proper sensibles or material objects are at issue. In other words, the point of the discussion at *Theaetetus* 185a8-e2 is not to show how the soul processes the proper sensibles so as to apprehend material objects.

As was mentioned, I shall return to the rationale behind the claim that the commons are not perceptible at all in the next chapter; we must rest content with these negative points for the time being. But as far as the dilemma is concerned, it can be avoided in the following way. Since the commons are not *any* features that can be attributed to objects of more than one sense, Socrates does not need a principle such that *anything* that can be attributed to objects of more than one sense cannot be perceived through any sense; it suffices that Socrates holds a principle such that as far as those particular commons that he has in mind are concerned, they cannot be perceived through any sense. And the principle is not too weak in leaving the possibility open that some things can be perceived through more than one sense as long as these particular commons are not among them. This construal of the argument is based on the assumption that the contrast between the proper sensibles and the commons is not exhaustive–there may well be things that are both common to things of more than one sense and perceptible–and that the contrast is presupposed rather than introduced by the argument. Hence it is not a particularly strict argument that Socrates puts forward, and it should first and foremost be regarded as a preliminary to the treatment of the commons. And the point of the argument can be fully grasped only once we understand what the commons amount to.

If the proper sensibles argument is construed in the way suggested, it does not provide us with a basis for deciding on the question whether only sensory qualities are perceived in sense perception; it does not say that anything that is perceived through one sense cannot be perceived through another sense. Of course, the argument does not show the opposite either. So we need to look elsewhere for clues to Plato's view. But at any rate the proper sensibles argument lays down that sensory qualities such as colour and sound are perceived in sense perception. The next question is whether they are properties of external objects.

The ontology of sensory qualities

The best evidence of Plato's view on the ontological status of sensory qualities is to be found in *Timaeus* 61c3-69a5. It is worth while to give some thought to the place of this account within the dialogue as a whole. Timaeus turns to the sensory qualities when the account of the make-up of the primary bodies and the compound bodies has come to an end. The question now is how we are to understand the move from the account of the nature of material objects to the account of the sensory qualities. It is tempting to think that the move is motivated by the fact that the story so far has not accounted for the look material objects have for sentient beings; the account of the primary bodies tells us nothing about the perceptible properties of material objects.

Since at 61c6 Timaeus urges that in accounting for the sensory qualities we must assume that there is such a thing as sense perception, he might even seem to be suggesting that the sensory qualities are dependent on sense perception and, consequently, on perceivers, and that they are not perceiver independent properties of material objects.[24] Some support for the view that Timaeus actually thinks that sensory qualities are dependent on perceivers can be gathered from 61c4-5 where he says: "Next we should try to make clear the causes through which their [the material objects] properties have been brought about" (τὰ δὲ παθήματα αὐτῶν δι᾽ ἃς αἰτίας γέγονεν πειρατέον ἐμφανίζειν). The properties referred to, of course, are the sensory qualities Timaeus is about to investigate. And as was touched upon earlier, at 61c8-d2 Timaeus points out that the full account of the sensory qualities requires that we account for the formation of flesh. That tenet can also be taken to suggest that the sensory qualities are dependent on perceivers.

However, despite these remarks we must not jump to the conclusion that Plato thinks that sensory qualities are dependent on perceivers and belong to the subjective sphere of perceptual experiences rather than material objects. For when Timaeus speaks of the need to clarify the causes through which the perceptible properties of material objects are brought about, the point could just be that since sensory qualities are perceptible, an account of how the *perception* of sensory qualities is brought about is relevant. But the account of how perception of sensory qualities is brought about must not be mistaken for an account of how the sensory qualities themselves are brought about. The fact that sensory qualities are perceptible need not mean that they depend on a perceiver to be brought about. In addition, even though the sensory qualities exist

independently of perceivers, in view of the fact that it is in their nature to be perceptible, the account of them requires that perceivers and perception are mentioned.

It should be borne in mind that Timaeus may well take different stands on sensory qualities of different sense modalities. So in order to see whether or not Plato thinks that sensory qualities are dependent on perceivers, let us look for clues in the accounts of sensory qualities of particular sense modalities. It is not even pretheoretically appealing to think that colour and sound have the same sort of ontological status. Sounds, to begin with, seem not to be properties of material objects, although material objects may cause sounds. But it is nevertheless tempting to say that sounds exist without perceivers. Timaeus' account of sound at 67b2-3, as we have seen, identified it with "the stroke on both the brain and the blood caused by the air through the ears." This account suggests that sound is dependent on the body of the perceiver; unless there is the appropriate kind of body for the air to strike against sound is not brought about, and the appropriate kind of body is only to be found in perceivers.

But even if we assume that Timaeus has it that sound is dependent on a perceiver–and the evidence for that assumption is not conclusive–we must not at any rate think that Timaeus takes sensory qualities of all sense modalities to be dependent on perceivers. The account of colour, for instance, suggests that colours exist independently of perceivers. At 67c6-7 Timaeus has it that "we call [the fourth kind of sensory quality] colours, a flame flowing off from each of the bodies, having its parts proportioned to the visual current so as to yield sense perception" (χρόας ἐκαλέσαμεν, φλόγα τῶν σωμάτων ἑκάστων ἀπορρέουσαν, ὄψει σύμμετρα μόρια ἔχουσαν πρὸς αἴσθησιν). Here Timaeus identifies colour with the flame of the object, and since the flame is there at the surface of the material object regardless of whether any perceivers are around, the definition of colour suggests that colours are perceiver independent properties of material objects. The mention of how the primary bodies are proportioned to the visual current so as to bring about sight does not speak against this suggestion; it just explains what it is that makes colour visible.

We need not go into the sensory qualities of all sense modalities; it suffices for my purposes here to establish that Plato holds colour to be a perceiver independent property of material objects. By and large he seems to hold that sensory qualities are perceiver independent–sounds and tastes being the possible exceptions. But he touches upon another charac-

teristic trait of sensory qualities that is worth mentioning. For in so far as we are speaking of a variety of a sensory quality of a particular sense modality, Plato has it that there is a sense in which the different varieties of that particular sense modality are relative to other things. This is not a surprising tenet as far as some sensory qualities are concerned. For instance, Timaeus' account of varieties of touch, namely hardness and softness, makes clear that things are hard or soft only in relation to other things. At 62b6-8 Timaeus explains that we call "all the things to which our flesh yields 'hard,' and all the things which yield to our flesh 'soft.' And they are like that also in relation to one another" (σκληρὸν δέ, ὅσοις ἂν ἡμῶν ἡ σὰρξ ὑπείκῃ, μαλακὸν δέ, ὅσα ἂν τῇ σαρκί· πρὸς ἄλληλά τε οὕτως). This yielding is explained with reference to the kind of primary bodies of which the flesh and the object consist. The primary bodies with the shape of cubes which have square faces are the most resistant, so that the more earth something consists of, the more resistant it is to the human body. And if an object resists our body, then we call it 'hard.' So this attribution of hardness to the object turns on the relation between the make-up of the body of the perceiver and the object. But as the phrase "they are like that also in relation to one another" makes clear, the principle holds for the relation between any two bodies. Hence, although hardness and softness are relative qualities, they are not relative only to perceivers.

But in regard to colour there is a sense in which the specific colour is relative to perceivers, and to perceivers only. For Timaeus' account of different colours has it that what specific colour we happen to perceive is relative to the meeting between the flame of the object and the visual current issuing forth from the perceiver; it is the relation of the size of the particles of the flame to the size of particles of the visual current that determines what colour the perceiver comes to see, as Timaeus explains at 67d2-e6. If the particles of the flame are of exactly the same size as the particles of the visual current, the object is transparent and no colour is seen. But those particles which are larger than the particles of the visual current contract it and those which are smaller dilate it; in the former case we see the colour black and in the latter the colour white. And the rest of the colour spectrum, as conceived of by Timaeus, is explained by modifications of this basic scheme.

What is important now, in so far as the account suggests that only perceivers have the right kind of visual current with which the flame can interact in such a way as to determine what colour will be seen, it is also

suggestive of the view that the specific colour is relative to perceivers. Of course, by appealing to normal conditions for sight, Timaeus could have accommodated the fact that we speak of objects not only as having colour independently of perceivers, but also as having a specific colour independently of perceivers. And perhaps the visual current has the same make-up in a normal perceiver. At any rate, the point I want to press is that the specific colour's being relative to perceivers does not imply that colour as genus is dependent on perceivers; the flame is there even though no perceiver is around.

In conclusion, then, Plato does not claim that sensory qualities are items which do not exist independently of perceivers.[25] On the contrary, he identifies them with different kinds of bodies. We can thus safely assume that Plato conceives of sensory qualities–the exceptions taken into account–as properties of external objects and perceiving sensory qualities as perceiving properties of external objects. It is an open question whether he thinks that the primary bodies taken one by one have sensory qualities or whether sensory qualities are macroscopic properties that only sufficiently big compound bodies have. The mention at *Timaeus* 56b7-c3 of the tenet that the primary bodies taken one by one cannot be seen is neutral in this regard. But although we should resist the temptation to read into the *Timaeus* a distinction between real properties of things and mind dependent phenomenal qualities, it is fair to say that Plato gives the primary bodies a privileged theoretical status in relation to the sensory qualities: the primary bodies are the basic elements of the physical world, and in so far as we want to account for the perceptible properties of material objects, we need to refer to the primary bodies and their actions.

Perceiving external objects

The perceiver independent status of sensory qualities does not prove that in so far as the soul perceives sensory qualities, it perceives material objects. For it could be claimed that in sense perception only the sensory qualities are perceived, and that perception of material objects requires that, in addition to the sensory qualities, the soul perceives bodies with these qualities. And that seems to require perception of additional properties such as size and shape. Aristotle is quite explicit about the point that two kinds of properties are perceived: the proper sensibles and the common sensibles. And it seems that the inclusion of the common sensibles makes the perceptual content rich enough to accommodate the perception of material objects.[26]

The question how Plato conceives of the matter is of great importance: if Plato thinks that sense perception is restricted to the perception of the proper sensibles, then it must be the function of some other cognitive power than sense perception to bring about perception of material objects.[27] Unfortunately, the evidence of Plato's view on the matter is scarce and we must rest content with a conjecture. There are two passages that pertain to the issue.

At *Theaetetus* 184c5-d5 Socrates distinguishes between the parts played by the body and the soul in sense perception. The body, or more particularly, the sense organs are mere tools through which the soul perceives. And the reason for Socrates' insistence on the instrumentality of the sense organ is that otherwise it would seem as if the sense organs were acting on their own without a single point to which they all converge. But Socrates puts forward the view that there is such a single point, the soul, which is the agent of sense perception. So the sense organs do not operate on their own, but are exercised by a single power. This view suggests that in receiving the reports from the different senses the soul has a unifying function: the perceptions of the sensory qualities of different sense modalities are brought together so that the soul can attribute sensory qualities of different sense modalities to the same body. Socrates does not explicitly say that this bringing together is a function of the soul in sense perception, but in view of the remarks at *Theaetetus* 192d3-9 that Theaetetus can be perceived through sight, touch and hearing, the conjecture seems warranted.

Of course, this unifying function does not explain how even the bringing together of the reports of the different sense organs amounts to the perception of material objects. For if the perception of material objects requires that the sensory qualities of different sense modalities are attributed to an underlying body, how does the soul come to perceive the underlying body in the first place? And again, let us recall that Plato's mention of things that are common to objects of more than one sense is of no help; the commons are not properties that are perceptible through more than one sense and are not introduced with a view to explaining how we come to perceive not only the sensory qualities but bodies with these qualities. Here we must turn to the second passage.

At *Timaeus* 56b7-c3 Plato comes close to saying that in sense perception we actually perceive bodies with sensory qualities. When Timaeus has assigned the geometrical figures to the primary bodies he points out that "because of their smallness each kind of body cannot be seen by us

one by one, but when many are gathered together their bulks can be seen" (καθ 'ἓν ἕκαστον μὲν τοῦ γένους ἑκάστου διὰ σμικρότητα οὐδὲν ὁρώμενον ὑφ 'ἡμῶν, συναθροισθέντων δὲ πολλῶν τοὺς ὄγκους αὐτῶν ὁρᾶσθαι). The key term here is 'bulk' or 'mass' (ὄγκος) which is used fairly frequently in the *Timaeus*. As we can see from 54c6-d2 and 60c2-7 the primary bodies themselves are said to have bulk. This is not surprising in view of the fact that the primary bodies are assigned three-dimensional figures such as cubes and pyramids; the mention of bulk makes the point that they are solid. And the talk of perceiving the bulk suggests that more than the proper sensibles are perceived; perceiving the bulk presumably involves perceiving properties such as size and shape. Now saying that we can perceive the bulk of the primary bodies when sufficiently many are gathered together is a pretty straightforward way of saying that we perceive bodies.

It is noticeable that Timaeus speaks about *seeing* the bulk rather than perceiving it. And since he does not specify what kind of primary bodies the visible compound body consists of, nothing in the context suggests that it is merely sight of colour that he has in mind. So he seems to think that in sense perception we actually see material objects, that is, bodies consisting of the primary bodies. And it need not be by accident that Timaeus speaks about sight of compound bodies rather than perception in general. For it is appealing to think that sight has a certain priority in regard to the perception of bodies: through sight of the bulk and the colour that spreads over its surface a body is singled out. And on the basis of seeing the underlying body, properties accessible through other senses are attributed to it.

These remarks are about all the available evidence as to whether Plato thinks that material objects are perceived in sense perception. Needless to say, the evidence is far from conclusive and I have had to fill in some gaps in order to press the point that he actually thinks that material objects are perceived in sense perception. But on balance I am inclined to think that it is more likely that Plato is a direct realist than a phenomenalist concerning sense perception. At least I do not see how to put forward a convincing argument for the opposite. Now there remains the worry over Socrates' statement at *Theaetetus* 186b11-c2 that the soul perceives affections. Socrates makes it clear at *Theaetetus* 179c2-3 that he distinguishes between the affection (πάθος) and the sense perceptions (αἰσθήσεις) arising from the affection. The point is that apart from the distinction between the affection of the body and the affection of the soul, we also need to

distinguish between the stage at which the soul receives the affections and the stage at which the soul processes these affections in such a way that it comes to perceive things. So maybe the statement at 186b11-c2 that the affections are perceived is merely a manner of speaking. After all, in so far as Plato has it that sense perception is a matter of the soul's receiving the affections, he might just slip into speaking of the soul's perceiving the affections, or perhaps the term αἰσθάνεσθαι is used somewhat loosely for each of the two stages.

The fact that material objects are perceived in sense perception suggests that even though sense perception is characterised as a passive state of the soul there is nevertheless some amount of activity going on in it. When the affections reach the soul they are processed in such a way that the soul comes to perceive material objects with sensory qualities. And if that is accomplished by sense perception alone, then the contribution of belief to perceptual cognition must amount to something else; the function of belief is neither to unify the reports from the different senses, nor to make the soul reach out to the world. But if Plato thinks that sense perception amounts to the perception of material objects in the world, what kind of cognitive state is sense perception then, and what can be accomplished in virtue of it alone? I laid it down in the introduction to this chapter that the crucial characteristic of Plato's notion of sense perception is that perceiving through the sense organs does not amount to believing. So on the present account, even though the soul perceives material objects in sense perception, it does not have any beliefs about them. This might sound awkward: if sense perception amounts to perception of objects in the world, then surely the soul has views on the external world? And what is more, if beasts get along in virtue of sense perception alone, then the cognitive content of sense perception cannot be that meagre. So why does not sense perception amount to belief? In order to consider these questions we must first pin down what kind of cognitive state sense perception is.

3. *Perceptual content*

In view of the fact that sense perception amounts to the perception of material objects and that we can be informed of the world through sense perception, it is fair to say that sense perception has a relatively rich content. What is more, in so far as beasts even get along by sense perception alone, sense perception seems to provide them with a sufficient grasp

of the world so as to count as cognition. This characterisation of sense perception has an important bearing on Plato's distinction between sense perception and belief. For if sense perception amounts to cognition, but not to belief, then we have an indication that Plato is operating with a notion of belief such that just being correctly informed of the world and even acting on the basis of that information need not amount to believing.

Further evidence that Plato conceives of the content of sense perception as relatively rich can be gathered from a remark at *Theaetetus* 156b2-7. Socrates points out that there are all sorts of sense perceptions such as seeing, hearing, smelling and so forth. But to these sense perceptions that are tied to the five senses he adds pleasure (ἡδονή), pain (λύπη), desire (ἐπιθυμία) and fear (φόβος). Although the remark occurs in the course of spelling out the theory of sight that I have discarded as evidence of Plato's own view on sense perception, the inclusion of these mental states seems not to be required for the point he is driving at in putting forward the theory. The remark thus gives the impression that he is committed to the view that they are sense perceptions. And what is important, the inclusion of desire and fear suggests that sense perception even involves intentional attitudes; to desire something requires that the perceiver has something in mind which he or she is not obtaining at the present. So the account of the content of sense perception should be powerful enough to accommodate such mental states.

It must be kept in mind that although sense perception amounts to cognition in some creatures, it may have a different role in others. For instance, it could be that as far as some animals are concerned sense perception only provides a content on the basis of which perceptual cognition can be accomplished; even though sense perception occurs in infants and beasts, it could still be the case that in arriving at views on the sensible world adult humans normally do not rely on sense perception alone, but are involved in further cognitive processes. And in that case sense perception only provides the soul with material for the further processing. So what part the content of sense perception plays in perceptual cognition turns on the design of the cognitive equipment of the perceiver.

There is one characteristic of sense perception which is worth special attention. At *Sophist* 263d1-8 the stranger from Elea points out that thought (διάνοια), belief (δόξα) and appearing (φαντασία) have the same form as a statement (λόγος), that is, they have the subject-predicate form of a declarative sentence. And although the stranger refers to sense perception in accounting for appearing, sense perception is most notably not

listed among these other predicative items. Although the evidence is not conclusive, this negative point suggests that sense perception does not have a predicative or, more generally, a propositional content.[28] The suggestion is particularly interesting in view of the fact that desire and fear are sense perceptions; Plato seems to think that having desire and fear does not require that the perceiver adopts a propositional attitude. This suggestion will gain in plausibility in so far as it proves to make good sense in regard to how Plato goes about distinguishing between sense perception, belief and appearing and in regard to the difference between animal and human cognition.

If sense perception does not have a propositional content, then the suggestion that sense perceptions are or involve judgements is ruled out. But it should be admitted that there is some evidence for the view that sense perception can amount to some kind of grasp or noticing of the thing perceived. What I have in mind is a remark at *Theaetetus* 185e6-7, where Socrates suggests that "the soul considers some things on its own, other things through the powers of the body" (τὰ μὲν αὐτὴ δι᾽ αὑτῆς ἡ ψυχὴ ἐπισκοπεῖν, τὰ δὲ διὰ τῶν τοῦ σώματος δυνάμεων). And a few lines later, at 186b2-4, Socrates points out that the soul will perceive (αἰσθήσεται) the hardness of the hard thing through the sense of touch. These passages suggest that there is a sense in which sense perception amounts to the perception of things *as* being in a particular way; indeed, they are the main evidence for those who claim that Plato is driving at the distinction between judgements about the subjective sensory impressions and judgements about an objective world. But although I think that this is the wrong way to understand these remarks, it should not be denied that they suggest that in sense perception the soul has some kind of grasp of the thing perceived.

It must be admitted that there is only indirect evidence of Plato's view on the status of the content of sense perception; the question is not addressed in its own right. However, there are two passages that provide us with clues to his view: *Theaetetus* 191c8-195d5 and *Philebus* 33c8-35d4. They have one tenet in common which will be the starting point for my attempt to spell out how Plato conceives of the content of sense perception. In both passages memory (μνήμη) plays an important part and is conceived of as something brought about in sense perception. At *Philebus* 34a10-11 memory is even defined as the preservation of sense perception (σωτηρία αἰσθήσεως). It should not surprise us that Socrates defines memory as the preservation of sense perception rather than the

preservation of the thing perceived. The passage is concerned with pleasure and pain and in the case of bodily pleasure or pain there is not a clear distinction to be drawn between the object of sense perception and the sense perception itself; if I feel a pain in my leg, then it is fair to say that the perception of the pain and the pain amount to the same thing. And in the *Theaetetus* passage the discussion centres on cases in which a thing perceived in the past is remembered. So despite the letter of the definition of memory in the *Philebus*, there is no reason to think that Plato generally conceives of memory as the preservation of the perception of a thing rather than the thing itself.

Plato's conception of memory is crucial for my purposes here: memory is said to be brought about as the soul is affected in sense perception and there is nothing to suggest that the soul needs to be involved in any other activities than sense perception in order to have the memory. In particular, it need not form a belief in order to put the thing perceived into the archives. Now my suggestion is that if we consider what kind of capacity the memory provides the soul with, we will get a clue to the content of the sense perception that brought about the memory in the first place. For it seems reasonable to assume that the capacity that the memory provides the soul with cannot be richer than the content of the sense perception. Admittedly, this principle needs to be qualified in so far as the memory is the result of repeated perceptions of a thing. But even when the memory is brought about by repeated perceptions the crucial condition is that the memory is based on mere sense perception and not on any other activities.

Sense perception and recognition

At *Theaetetus* 191c8-195d5 Socrates introduces a simile in order to deal with the problem whether false beliefs are possible. The discussion is thus concerned with believing or judging (δοξάζειν). What is more, the simile proves impotent as a general account of how false beliefs are possible; there are cases of false belief that are not accommodated by it. But the simile manages to accommodate some cases, and it is a fair assumption that Plato endorses it as far as it goes. And in regard to those cases it manages to accommodate, sense perception plays a crucial part. For the simile is that there is a block of wax in the soul such that when we wish to remember something that we see or hear, or otherwise perceive, we just hold the wax under the perceptions so that it takes a stamp from the thing perceived. And as long as the imprint is retained in the wax we remember the thing previously perceived. So just as the definition of memory at

Philebus 34a10-11 the simile has it that there are memories that are brought about in sense perception. Indeed, it is tempting to see the simile as an account of how the soul receives the motions reaching it through the body: when the motions strike against the soul the affection results either in the assigning of an imprint to this perception or in the printing of a new imprint; the latter is the case when the thing is unknown to the perceiver.

Socrates' solution to the problem of false belief is to suggest that when the soul makes a mismatch between an imprint of one thing perceived in the past and a present perception of another thing, it mistakes one thing for another. For instance, if Socrates has an imprint of Theodorus whom he has perceived in the past, and applies this imprint to a present perception of Theaetetus, then he comes to believe that Theaetetus is Theodorus and, hence, comes to have a false belief. A great deal could be said about the merits and shortcomings of this model as an account of misidentification, but this is not my concern here. What is important for my purposes is that the simile suggests that the capacity to identify a thing is provided by the possession of the imprint, that is, the memory alone. And since the imprint is brought about by sense perception, the capacity to apply the imprint seems to be provided by sense perception. Of course, the simile has it that the very applying of the imprint is a matter of believing or judging, but the success or failure of the applying is determined by the condition of the present perception, the content of the perception that brought about the imprint and the quality of the imprint.

It does not speak against this interpretation that Socrates talks of the possession of the imprint in terms of knowing (ἐπίστασθαι) the thing perceived in the past. For as Socrates points out at *Theaetetus* 200c7-d2, the talk of knowing things does not imply that Socrates takes for granted what he sets out to consider, namely what knowledge is. It is just that the point of the simile is to introduce two different ways of being related to an object, namely to perceive it at present and to have a memory of it, and that Socrates occasionally uses ἐπίστασθαι, as well as other terms such as γιγνώσκειν, for the latter way of being related to it. A greater worry than the talk of knowing things is that the contrast between the two ways of being related to the object is put in terms of sense perception and thought. For as Socrates summarises the simile's solution to the problem of false belief at *Theaetetus* 195c8-d2 he points out that false belief comes about "neither in sense perceptions in relation to one another, nor in thoughts in relation to one another, but in the connection of sense perception to thought" (οὔτε ἐν ταῖς αἰσθήσεσίν ἐστι πρὸς ἀλλήλας οὔτ'

ἐν ταῖς διανοίαις ἀλλ' ἐν τῇ συνάψει αἰσθήσεως πρὸς διάνοιαν). So here the possession of the imprint is put in terms of having the thing perceived in the past in one's thought.

However, the point that the imprints enter into thought is not surprising: considering the fact that the applying of the imprint amounts to judging, the soul must frame its experiences propositionally in order to apply it. But it is not suggested that anything is added to the cognitive content of the memory when it enters into thought; the capacity for the application is based on the content of the original sense perception. It is important to keep this characteristic of the simile in mind. For as we shall see in the next chapter, thinking can also bring about a richer content than what sense perception can. But the simile's point about thinking is that the soul must frame its experiences propositionally in so far as it is to make a judgement. So sense perception on its own provides the soul with a grasp of the thing such that the soul can draw on that grasp in carrying out these cognitive acts at the level of thought.

Let us start off with a natural, but yet misleading suggestion as to how the grasp involved in sense perception should be conceived of. The saying at 191d9-10 that the soul will remember and know the thing perceived in the past as long as there is an image (εἴδωλον) of it in the soul suggests that Socrates conceives of memory in terms of pictorial representation. Indeed, the simile of the block of wax suggests that the imprints are pictorial representations; the wax takes on a picture of the thing perceived and on encountering the thing a second time the soul compares the picture with the thing perceived at present. But as we can see from 191d6-7, the simile has it that the wax takes imprints not only from things perceived, but also from things that the soul has in its thoughts on its own. As far as those things which the soul has in its thoughts on its own are concerned, Socrates is presumably thinking of abstract objects such as numbers taken up again at 195e1. Imprints of the latter kind, it seems, cannot be characterised along the lines of pictorial representation. But now that some imprints fulfil their function without being pictorial representations, we should not commit Plato to the view that the imprints are pictorial representations, even as far as imprints of things perceived are concerned. What matters as far as memory is concerned, it is pointed out at 192d4, is that the soul remembers what the thing perceived is like (οἷός ἐστι).

There are two ways to conceive of how the memory of the thing perceived is activated: it is one thing to be able to recall the thing perceived in the past without presently perceiving it, but another thing to be able to

recognise a thing perceived at present as a thing perceived in the past.[29] The latter form of memory capacity seems to require less; here the present perception triggers the recollection of the thing perceived in the past. And it even seems that the mere recognitional capacity need not presuppose that the perceiver took any particular notice of the thing on the first occasion. It suffices that he can recognise it as something he has encountered before, although he might not be able to recollect the thing unless he is perceiving it at present.

The simile's account of how the memory of the thing perceived is activated accommodates only recollection triggered by a present perception of the thing. But it should not be denied that the simile leaves room for recollection of a thing not perceived at present. And even if Plato is committed to the view that the memory provides the perceiver with the mere recognitional capacity, this capacity may come in varying degrees. For at 194c5-195a9 Socrates explains that the wax may differ in quality so that the imprints in some souls are clear and distinct, in others less so. Consequently the quality of the wax will have a bearing on the capacity to recognise the thing perceived in the past; the better the wax is, the better the imprints will be and the more successful the soul will be in recognising the thing of which the imprint is an imprint.

The recognitional capacity provided by sense perception suggests that the content of sense perception is relatively rich. Yet it is an open question how the recognitional capacity should be conceived of: is it restricted to the recognition of individuals, or is the recognition of kinds included as well? Socrates' examples of things recognised, namely individuals such as Theodorus and Theaetetus, suggests that recognition of individuals is at issue. Here it is worth while to give some thought to the question whether such a recognitional capacity could account for animal cognition. Of course, recognition in the simile, that is, the applying of an imprint to a present perception, is a matter of believing and requires a capacity to frame the experience propositionally, and if beasts are deprived of that capacity, then the simile cannot be applied to animal cognition directly. But in so far as beasts are not deprived of memory, it is fair to assume that they are equipped with the capacity to recognise the individual perceived in the past. It is actually attractive to conceive of animal cognition as a matter of recognising individuals; on encountering a dog the second time, the cat need not recognise the dog as another thing of the same kind as the one which attacked it yesterday. For even though the cat encounters another dog, in order to realise the risk of being attacked it

suffices that the cat recognises the dog as the same attacking individual; the cat can get along without universals.

But it must be borne in mind that the simile in the *Theaetetus* can be used only indirectly as a clue to Plato's conception of the content of sense perception, because recognition in the simile is not thought to be carried out at the level of sense perception. Hence, the simile does not even show that sense perception amounts to cognition. Let us now turn to the *Philebus* for further clues.

Sense perception and desire

Philebus 33c8-35d4 contains an interesting discussion of different psychological states which is suggestive of how Plato conceives of the cognitive content of sense perception. The discussion occurs as part of an extensive argument that pleasures and pains can be true or false. In order to show that pleasure and pain can be true or false, Socrates singles out a fairly special kind of pleasure and pain. This kind of pleasure and pain arises in the soul from expectations of future bodily pleasure and pain. What Socrates has in mind is that on expecting that a bodily pleasure will occur in the future, the soul will have pleasure on its own from the mere thought of it. And it is these expectation pleasures that Socrates claims to be true or false; if the state of the body which the soul expected to bring about pleasure turns out to cause pain, then the pleasure from the expectation was false. Now I shall not evaluate the plausibility of this way of conceiving pleasure and pain as true or false.[30] But it should be noticed that these expectation pleasures and pains are conceived of as judgements, or, as it is put at 37e10-11,at least as coupled with judgement. So the question is whether this particular kind of pleasure and pain counts as sense perception and whether it can be used as a clue to Plato's conception of the cognitive content of sense perception.

Socrates' account makes it clear that the pleasures and pains arising from expectations of something pleasurable or painful are true or false derivatively: pleasures are false if they are ill-founded, that is, if they are founded on expectations that are false, and the other way round for true ones. But the pleasures and pains are not themselves propositionally formed and do not amount to judgements. In fact, pleasures and pains are conceived of as objects of sense perception. Socrates' talk at *Philebus* 41d1-3 of sense perceptions of pleasure and pains suggests that pleasures and pain are, if not identified with sense perceptions, as at *Theaetetus* 156b5, then at least graspable by sense perception alone. And at *Timaeus*

64a2-65b3 pleasure and pain are counted among the different objects of sense perception.

But even if pleasure and pain are objects of sense perceptions, it is Socrates' account of how pleasures and pains arise from expectations that matters for my purposes here. For in the course of spelling out the conditions for these pleasures and pains to come about, Socrates brings in sense perception, memory and desire (ἐπιθυμία); indeed, as we can see from 33c8-11 and 34d1-3, Socrates has it explicitly that we need to sort out what each of these items is. It is the discussion of these items that gives a clue to Plato's conception of the cognitive content of sense perception. To begin with, in order to be able to expect something pleasurable, the soul must have had some previous experience of the pleasurable state. For instance, in order to expect that quenching one's thirst will be pleasurable, we must have enjoyed the pleasure from quenching the thirst in the past. By contrast, if someone has never enjoyed the pleasure of quenching the thirst, then he will not expect the quenching of the thirst to be pleasurable. The question now is how sense perception, memory and desire are brought to bear on the possibility of having pleasures and pains from the mere expectations.

As we have seen, at 33d2-6 sense perception is defined as the joint affection of the body and the soul, and at 34a10-11 memory as the retention of the sense perception. Socrates then proceeds by distinguishing between memory and recollection (ἀνάμνησις) and accounts for the latter at 34b6-8 in the following way.

> When the soul by itself without the body recovers as much as possible what it once underwent together with the body, I think we say it recollects.
>
> Ὅταν ἃ μετὰ τοῦ σώματος ἔπασχέν ποθ' ἡ ψυχή, ταῦτ' ἄνευ τοῦ σώματος αὐτὴ ἐν ἑαυτῇ ὅτι μάλιστα ἀναλαμβάνῃ, τότε ἀναμιμνῄσκεσθαί που λέγομεν.

This is a crucial characteristic of Socrates' account. For he needs to establish that the soul can recollect the thing perceived in the past even when it is not present; the very idea of expectation makes no sense if the soul has no access to the object of the expectation. And in so far as the retention of the sense perception, that is, the memory, provides the soul not only with the capacity to recognise the thing perceived in the past when encountering it a second time, but also with the capacity to recollect

it when it is not present, the content of the sense perception bringing about the memory provides the soul with a sufficiently rich grasp of the thing so as to enable it to recollect the thing when it is not present.

The account of recollection is brought to bear on a particular case of being related to a thing not present. For the capacity to recollect a thing not present at the moment explains how the soul comes to desire it. For instance, having enjoyed the pleasure of quenching the thirst, we may come to desire the quenching of the thirst when we are thirsty. The point of introducing desire is twofold: it shows that we can be related to a bodily pleasure even when it is not obtaining and that it is the soul on its own which is related to it through memory and recollection. And this is the scheme Socrates needs in order to establish one of the conditions of expectation pleasure to come about, namely, that the soul can be related to a bodily pleasure which is not obtaining.

Of course, this is not the full story of how pleasures and pains arise from expectations; it just explains the possibility of being related to bodily pleasures which are not obtaining. But my concern here is not with the full story, but what the account of desire tells us about the content of sense perception. As I have mentioned, it is in the first place noticeable that desire and fear are counted among the sense perceptions at *Theaetetus* 156a5. This suggests that desire belongs to the same level of cognition as sense perception and that desire is not a belief. The suggestion can be supported by a remark at *Timaeus* 77b3-6 where "the sense perception of the pleasant and the painful accompanied by desires" (αἰσθήσεως δὲ ἡδείας καὶ ἀλγεινῆς μετὰ ἐπιθυμιῶν) is said to require no belief (δόξα), reasoning (λογισμός) or understanding (νοῦς). And what is more, the account of desire in the *Philebus* does not equate desire with expectation. This is important in so far as expectations are a kind of belief and require the capacity to adopt propositional attitudes. For then it is possible that Plato conceives of desires and fears as cognitive states below the level of belief. And I shall work on the assumption that in addition to the capacities to remember and recollect, sense perception also equips the soul with a capacity for desire and fear.

In the course of characterising desire Socrates points out that the object of the desire is the opposite to the present bodily state and such that the soul has experienced it in the past. To be more precise, since he conceives of bodily pleasure as the restoration of the body to its normal state, it is the very change from the disturbed to the normal state that gives pleasure. For instance, being thirsty is a matter of the fluid balance

being disturbed, and pleasure comes with the very quenching of the thirst rather than the fluid balance being normal. In any case, the idea is that memory of the opposite state arouses the desire for it. But Socrates is anxious to point out that the object of desire is the opposite state rather than the means of obtaining it: thirst is the desire for the filling and not the drink, as it is put at 35a1-2. The remark is interesting since it raises the question whether the desire for the filling also provides the soul with knowledge of the means of obtaining it. For if that were the case, we would be able to explain some actions in virtue of desire alone.

Unfortunately, Socrates does not spell out his view on the issue in sufficient detail so as to admit of any safe conclusions. But at 35c3-d4 it is pointed out that the account of desire has proved desire to be dependent on memory, and that just as remembering is a state of the soul, so are desire, impulse (ὁρμή) and rule (ἀρχή). Now Socrates does not say that the desire brings about impulse and rule, but in view of the fact that he refers to animal in general (ζῷον) at 35c10 and 35d3, it is tempting to think that the point of bringing in impulse and rule is to provide the basic requisites for an account of the action not only of men, but also of beasts. In fact, the mention of ζῷον might even suggest that Socrates has beasts in particular in mind. That is to say, beasts are moved to action in virtue of the desire which is based on the memory of a previous sense perception. But now it seems that in prompting the beast to act, the desire provides it with knowledge of the means of obtaining the object of desire. And if the impulse and rule do not involve the soul in any higher level of cognition than sense perception, then it seems that the content of sense perception is rich enough to provide the beast with knowledge of the means.

The account of desire in the *Philebus* suggests that the content of sense perception is sufficiently rich so as to bring about cognition. For now it seems that the perceptual content even provides the soul with the capacity to fulfil its desires. So if the simile in the *Theaetetus* suggests that the perceptual content is such that the soul can use it as a basis for cognitive achievements which involve other cognitive processes, such as thinking, the account of desire here in the *Philebus* suggests that some kinds of cognition can be achieved through sense perception alone.

In narrowing down the notion αἴσθησις Plato's main purpose is to strip the notion of connotations that are suggestive of intellectual activity, such as 'figuring out' and 'understanding.' This is the point of sense perception's being a passive state of the soul. But in view of the fact that

sense perception gives access to the external world and even makes possible certain achievements such as recognition and the fulfilling of desires, Plato's characterisation of sense perception as a passive state of the soul must be qualified. The impingement of the material object on the sense organ and the transmission of the affection to the soul is a matter of a passive receiving, but even in mere sense perception the affections are processed in such a way as to give the perceiver access to material objects in the world and to make possible certain cognitive achievements. This characteristic is important in so far as it suggests that sense perception amounts to something more than the receiving of the raw data.

But although in mere sense perception the raw data are processed in such a way as to make possible certain cognitive achievements, it was also suggested that sense perception has no propositional content. And as I shall show in the next two chapters, this characteristic is crucial. For it is a noticeable thing that the content of sense perception amounts to such a grasp of the thing perceived that it makes possible certain cognitive achievements although it is not propositional. In view of the fact that sense perception seems to provide the beast with a recognitional capacity and, in so far as it provides it with knowledge of the means of fulfilling its desires, even with an inferencelike capacity, it could be suggested that Plato conceives of the perceptual content as conceptual. Now 'concepts' and 'conceptual' are terms of art and there is a tendency to tie the possession of concepts to the capacity to make predications and to the capacity to frame one's experiences propositionally. So on such a construal of the notion of concept, the content of sense perception cannot be conceptual on Plato's account. But if the possession of concepts is tied to cognitive capacities such as the recognitional capacity and the capacity to take practical decisions, then it seems fair to characterise the content of sense perception as conceptual.

However, rather than entering into the vexed question how concepts and concept possession should be conceived of, let it suffice for now to acknowledge this crucial characteristic of Plato's notion of sense perception, namely, that the content of sense perception is not propositional, but yet makes possible cognitive achievements.[31] This characteristic sheds light on the quarrel over the nature of the content of sense perception. For it now seems that although sense perception is a passive state of the soul and such that it does not amount to any kind of judging, not even about the immediate sensory qualities we happen to perceive, it is still correct to say that sense perception involves awareness of things. And Plato's com-

mitment to the view that sense perception amounts to an awareness of the world can be supported by comments on how belief is said gradually to arise from sense perception: at *Philebus* 38b12-13 Socrates has it that the capacity for belief arises from sense perception and memory, and at *Theaetetus* 186b11-c5 the capacity for sense perception is said to be there right from birth whereas other capacities develop only gradually. Since these remarks suggest that the contrast between sense perception and belief is a matter of degree, it is reasonable to assume that the difference between them does not turn on the question whether or not they involve awareness of the world.

Now the suggestion that sense perception has a non-propositional content, but yet makes possible a wide range of different cognitive achievements might seem questionable. For what sense can be made of cognition that is not propositional? The question is difficult, and this is not the place to enter into it. But is seems to me that although there undoubtedly is a difficulty as to how non-propositional cognition should be conceived of, the suggestion that sense perception has a non-propositional content, but yet makes possible cognitive achievements, makes good sense in so far as it is assumed that beasts get along by sense perception alone. For although no one would deny cognitive capacities to beasts, ascribing to them the capacity to frame their experiences propositionally is not so easy to accept.

But it must be kept firmly in mind that in so far as man is endowed with the capacity to frame his experiences propositionally, sense perception may well have a different function in man. That is to say, although beasts may act with recourse only to sense perception, this is not to say that men normally act with recourse to sense perception alone. On the contrary, it will be a crucial point in the following chapters that the capacity to frame one's experiences propositionally has a bearing on the nature of human cognition. So although sense perception in some cases amounts to cognition on its own, there may well be other cases in which sense perception only provides a basis for cognition.

The real problem with this construal of the notion of sense perception as a rather rich cognitive state is that the distinction between sense perception and belief is at risk of becoming blurred. But as I shall show in the next chapter, it is crucial that we are clear about this notion of sense perception; it is only against the background of Plato's conception of sense perception as a relatively powerful capacity that his particular notion of belief (δόξα) can be properly understood. Of course, the non-

propositional character of the content of sense perception is a differentiating mark. But despite that, it might be wondered what the point is of drawing a distinction between sense perception and belief if sense perception amounts to awareness of things, and even to cognition. Here it is important to keep in mind that Plato's notions of sense perception and belief are introduced in the particular context of answering the Protagorean challenge. For on the Protagorean position sense perception is not differentiated from belief; to perceive is to believe. What is more, Plato ascribes to Protagoras the conflation of sense perception and belief with a view to indicating that Protagoras holds belief to be a passive state of the soul; just as sense perception is a matter of being affected, so belief is a passive state of the soul.

In distinguishing between sense perception and belief Plato takes issue with Protagoras' view that believing is a matter of holding things to be the way they strike us. So Plato does not deny that sense perception amounts to some kind of cognition; what he takes exception to is the Protagorean view that beliefs are arrived at in a passive way involving no effort on our part. This is the key to Plato's characterisation of sense perception as a passive state of the soul: although mere sense perception amounts to some kind of activity on the part of the soul, it is a passive state in comparison with belief. Plato may thus well agree with Protagoras that sense perception, although a matter of the soul's being affected, amounts to an awareness of the world, and yet deny that sense perception is belief. So the question that needs to be addressed is what it is about belief that makes Plato want to distinguish it from sense perception. In particular, in so far as the distinction turns on the active nature of belief in comparison to sense perception, what kind of activity does belief require?

III
Soul's effort

Plato's characterisation of belief (δόξα) must be seen against the background of his quarrel with Protagoras. For Plato takes exception to Protagoras' suggestion that beliefs are arrived at through a passive process on a par with how sense perception comes about through the affection of the soul. Instead, he commits himself to the view that belief, in contrast to sense perception, requires an activity on the part of the soul. At *Theaetetus* 187a3-8 Socrates points out that it is not in sense perception we should look for knowledge, but in what the soul does "when it is busy by itself about the things" (ὅταν αὐτὴ καθ 'αὑτὴν πραγματεύηται περὶ τὰ ὄντα), that is, believing (δοξάζειν). And at 189e6-190a7 in the same dialogue it is suggested that in arriving at belief the soul is involved in the activity of thinking (διάνοια). At *Sophist* 264b1, moreover, the stranger from Elea gives a definition of belief along the same lines: "belief is the result of thinking" (δόξα δὲ διανοίας ἀποτελεύτησις).

But although it is clear that Plato commits himself to the view that belief requires an activity on the part of the soul, it is not immediately clear what this activity amounts to. In particular, since sense perception involves some amount of activity too, we need to spell out in what sense belief is active in comparison to sense perception. There is at least one sense in which the activity involved in belief is distinguished from the activity involved in sense perception: belief requires not only activity, but even effort. At *Theaetetus* 186c2-5 arriving at a belief is said to be a matter of toil and pain (μόγις) and to take time (ἐν χρόνῳ). This is a surprising and, it seems, unappealing claim. For even if we agree that belief involves some kind of activity, it does not go without saying that it requires effort; indeed, it seems that most of our beliefs we just end up with.

The mention of thinking goes some way towards explaining what Plato has in mind. But the question then is what notion of thinking Plato is operating with. And since he has it that it is through thinking that efforts are involved in belief, Plato's characterisation of belief might still seem

implausible. However, the tenet that belief requires effort on the part of the soul suggests that Plato has a particular notion of belief in mind. So before we dismiss his characterisation of belief, an attempt should be made to pin down what notion of belief is at issue. The question is complicated by the fact that Plato puts the term δόξα to different uses. And not even in those dialogues in which the particular notion of belief is introduced and discussed is the term used in an unequivocal way. In particular, the term is put to both a generic and a specific use; it can mean belief in general or a particular kind of belief. As we can see from *Theaetetus* 190a4-6, *Sophist* 263e10-264a2 and *Philebus* 38e1-7, belief is a statement (λόγος), that is, an assertion (φάσις) or denial (ἀπόφασις), which the soul expresses silently to itself. But this is a characterisation of belief in general; it is only in so far as the specific kind of belief is concerned that effort and thinking are required. In fact, there is another kind of silent assertion or denial which requires no thinking and effort. I shall have more to say about this double employment of the term δόξα and beliefs that require no thinking in the next chapter; in this chapter I discuss the specific notion of belief.

The best clue to the specific notion of belief is the final refutation of Theaetetus' definition of knowledge as sense perception at *Theaetetus* 184b4-187a8.At 186c7-e12Socrates puts forward a straightforward argument that sense perception cannot be knowledge and points out that for anything even to be considered as a candidate for knowledge it must attain (τυγχάνειν) or grasp (ἅπτεσθαι) truth (ἀλήθεια), and in order to attain truth it must attain being (οὐσία) in the first place. But earlier on in the passage Socrates has introduced the premise that sense perception cannot attain being. Hence, sense perception cannot attain truth, and as a consequence cannot be knowledge. But what is important now, Socrates also distinguishes between sense perception and belief. For belief accomplishes something that sense perception fails to do, namely, to attain being. This is the crucial clue to Plato's notion of belief. And it should be noticed that in this context Socrates does not say that belief attains truth, and even though he will discuss, and dismiss, true belief as a candidate for knowledge, it is never suggested that attaining truth is a necessary condition of belief. So the grasping of being is the important condition as far as belief is concerned.

There are thus two properties that differentiate belief from sense perception: belief requires thinking and attains being. In addition, in the last chapter it was suggested that belief differs from sense perception in virtue of having a propositional content. These differentiating marks are interest-

ing in view of the suggestion that sense perception amounts to an awareness of the world and that beasts get along by sense perception alone; in so far as sense perception amounts to cognition, it may be wondered what bearing these differentiating marks have on the cognitive character of sense perception and belief respectively. And in particular, what do these differentiating marks suggest in regard to the tenet that belief requires effort? As will be seen, it is precisely the conditions for grasping being that gives content to the suggestion that belief requires effort. What is more, the tenet that beliefs are propositional will be shown to make good sense from the point of view of the definition of belief as the result of thinking. And the propositional form of belief has a crucial bearing on the question how belief as cognition differs from sense perception as cognition.

The task now is to consider the crucial notions as far as belief is concerned, namely, thinking and being; I shall attempt that in section 2 using *Theaetetus* 184b3-187a8 as the starting point. In section 3 I discuss a further aspect of this particular notion of belief and what part it plays in Socrates' refutation of Protagoras' 'man the measure' thesis at *Theaetetus* 178b2-179b9. But in view of the fact that the term δόξα is put to so many different uses both by Plato himself and his predecessors, in section 1 I begin by considering different aspects of the notion of δόξα in philosophical as well as ordinary Greek.

1. *Background to the notion δόξα*

The notion δόξα plays a prominent part in early Greek philosophy. It enters into the debate over the nature of knowledge and is singled out as the opinion of the many in contrast to knowledge that only the expert has.[1] The point is to show that a mere δόξα does not meet the conditions for knowledge (ἐπιστήμη). This notion of δόξα draws on the cognate 'seeming' (δοκεῖν); a δόξα is a matter of something's seeming to be in one way or other. But since there might be a difference between how things seem and how they are, we are likely to get things wrong if we have a mere δόξα of something. Knowledge requires that we come to grips with how things really are; only then can our views be immune to error. So the notion has a derogatory flavour, and may be rendered with 'mere opinion.'

Δόξα as mere opinion is important also in Plato's philosophy. In the early and the middle dialogues it is precisely the contrast between mere opinion and knowledge that is at issue. But the characterisation of δόξα as

something that involves thinking and requires effort squares badly with the notion of δόξα as mere opinion. Indeed, there is something of a problem in Platonic scholarship as to how δόξα as mere opinion is to be reconciled with δόξα as an achievement on the part of the soul.[2] And it seems that whereas in the early and the middle dialogues the contrast between mere opinion and knowledge is emphasised, it is the contrast between belief and sense perception that is at issue in the later dialogues. Now the fact that δόξα features in both of these contrasts need not imply that the term is used in different ways; even if belief comes about through an effort on the part of the soul, it could still be a mere opinion that the soul achieves. In fact, since not even the particular notion of belief in the later dialogues amounts to knowledge, it seems that the two aspects of δόξα are compatible.

Still, it is fair to say that the particular notion of belief has not yet been introduced in the early and the middle dialogues, although it is anticipated: at *Republic* 10, 602e8-603a9 Socrates suggests that the soul has a rational and a non-rational part such that each forms beliefs (δοξάζειν) independently of the other and such that the rational part calculates and reasons in arriving at the belief. Nevertheless, in the early and the middle dialogues it is for the most part the aspect of being a badly thought-out view on something that attaches to δόξα. What makes δόξα a badly thought-out view is that it is based on a grasp of the surface features of the thing, its appearance, without getting at what it really is, that is, its being. Indeed, in the early and the middle dialogues Plato's position bears a resemblance to the position which he ascribes to Protagoras: belief is based on a grasp of the mere appearance of things.

But it should be noted that there are uses of the term δόξα in ordinary Greek which are neutral as to whether the belief is ill-founded or not and which bring forth the point that δόξα amounts to a particular kind of grasp of things. In Thucydides I 5, to begin with, we are told that both the Greeks and some of the foreigners were, in addition to trading with one another, in the habit of robbing weakly defended settlements and of distributing part of the booty to the poorest of their own communities. And this rather harsh kind of redistribution of resources "was not a shameful business, but brought a great deal of reputation" (οὐκ ἔχοντός πω αἰσχύνην τούτου τοῦ ἔργου, φέροντες δέ τι καὶ δόξης μᾶλλον). Whatever the details were of the ethical considerations behind this kind of activity, it apparently won the robbers a reputation (δόξα), and not an unfavourable reputation for that matter. In Pindar, moreover, at O. 8, 62-64,

the victors' trainer, Melesias, is praised for his skill: "But he could tell of such things beyond anyone else: what means will advance a man who wants to gain the most desirable fame from the sacred games" (κεῖνα δὲ κεῖνος ἂν εἴποι | ἔργα περαίτερον ἄλλων, τίς τρόπος ἄνδρα προβάσει | ἐξ ἱερῶν ἀέθλων μέλλοντα ποθεινοτάταν δόξαν φέρειν). So Melesias is praised for helping the victor, Alcimedon, to gain a certain reputation by wrestling well. But the fame that was to be gained in the ancient games seems not to have been of a purely athletic kind; success in the games was, not least according to the impression Pindar gives of the public perception of the victors, an equally important test of character as a whole. So the kind of reputation Alcimedon was eager to gain was not just the reputation of wrestling well, but that of having a good character, of being a noble man.

These two instances of δόξα are a matter of someone's conveying an impression of himself. More particularly, in gaining honour and fame the robbers and Alcimedon give clues to their character or nature, that is, they convey an impression of the *kind* of people they are. And what is important now, in coming to think that they are a particular kind of people, it seems that we come to have beliefs that go beyond the present appearance of them. For by grasping what kind they are we come to have expectations of them. And interestingly enough, δοκεῖν and δόξα on many occasions mean expecting and expectation. In Herodotus I 79, learning that Croesus has decided to disband his army after the battle at Pteria, Cyrus, on the expectation (ταῦτα ἔδοξε) that the Lydians would not be able to assemble their army all of a sudden, seizes the opportunity to attack Sardis. The point is that it seems to Cyrus that the Lydians are not able to assemble their army all of a sudden. But since Cyrus is concerned with warfare, what the enemy seems to be able to do is not a trivial matter. Instead, Cyrus' view about what the enemies are able to do or not to do has some rather critical consequences for what the outcome of the struggle with them is going to be. So how the enemies seem to be to Cyrus commits him to a great deal in terms of further strategic steps and measures. Cyrus' decision, furthermore, comes as a total surprise to Croesus; "things turned out against his expectation" (οἱ παρὰ δόξαν ἔσχε τὰ πρήγματα). Again, it did not seem to Croesus that Cyrus would be so bold. But this view of his proved to be a disaster for his future fortunes.

But there is more to expectations of something than that they are beliefs about the future behaviour of that something. In Homer K 324, for instance, Dolon, excited by the prospect of receiving horses and a bronze

chariot from Hector if he does some spying for him, assures that "Neither shall I be your spy in vain, nor will I not meet your expectation" (σοὶ δ' ἐγὼ οὐχ ἅλιος σκοπὸς ἔσσομαι οὐδ' ἀπὸ δόξης). It should be noticed that Hectors' expectation of Dolon is a matter of what he thinks of him, that is, of how Dolon seems to him. And in this particular context, the belief Dolon urges Hector to have about him is future directed. Hence, it is not merely a matter of how Dolon seems to Hector at present; in addition, how Dolon seems to Hector at present involves expectations on Hector's part as to how Dolon is going to behave in the future. But what is important now, Hector's expectation of Dolon is not based on a wild guess as to how Dolon is going to act. Rather, Hector's expectation of Dolon is based on the conception Hector has of Dolon, that is, on what kind of person Hector thinks that Dolon is. So on many occasions having a δόξα of something in the future is not a matter of merely predicting something to happen, but is based on views about what kind of thing the thing in question is.

There obviously is a connection between the question of what kind a thing is and what we can expect of it. For having an expectation of something or someone is not just a matter of venturing a guess as to how that something or someone is going to be. Instead, it is precisely by having an idea of what kind something is that we come to have certain expectations of it. So someone's expectations of something is not a matter of having views on how that something is going to be like by accident.

This quick survey of uses of δόξα provides an important background to Plato's particular notion of belief. Above all, the idea that a thing's δόξα gives a clue to what kind of thing it is has a direct bearing on the question what notion of being Plato is operating with in his characterisation of belief. For it will be argued that grasping the being of a thing amounts to grasping what kind it is. What is more, the idea that having a δόξα of a thing commits us to expectations of it plays an important part in Plato's treatment of the notion. This is not to say that δόξα in terms of mere opinion should not amount to views on the character of things and to expectations of them. But as far as Plato's particular notion of δόξα is concerned, he goes to great lengths to show that in going beyond the appearance and getting at the being of things beliefs are not based on how things merely seem. For arriving at a δόξα is a matter of exercising reason so as to get behind the appearance. So in this case the views on the character and the expectations of the thing are based on a grasp of the being of the thing, rather than the mere appearance.

2. *Belief and being*

Plato distinguishes between sense perception and belief by claiming that only the latter attains being (οὐσία). So a proper understanding of what being amounts to in this context is the key to coming to grips with what it is for the soul to have a belief. What is more, a proper understanding of being will also shed light on the question what thinking (διάνοια) is: for it is through thinking that the soul comes to be in a state such that it attains the being of things. The view that belief attains being is put forward in the difficult passage at *Theaetetus* 184b4-187a8, where Socrates gives the final argument against Theaetetus' definition of knowledge as αἴσθησις. The aspect of the argument that matters most for my purposes here, namely, that belief in contrast to sense perception attains being, has given rise to a considerable debate.[3] However, to my mind no one in the debate has come up with the correct interpretation as to what Plato is driving at in this passage.[4] Let me briefly discuss two options as to the notion of being before I develop my own reading.

Apart from the stretch of text at 186c7-e12 where the argument that sense perception cannot be knowledge is put forward, the notion of being features crucially from 185a8 onwards. Unless it is assumed that Plato is operating with several notions of being in the passage as a whole, it is actually the earlier part, and 185a8-b7 in particular, that gives the best clue to what notion of being Plato has in mind. So on this assumption the notion of being is established well ahead of the argument. This makes good sense; Socrates does not develop the notion of being at such length only to drop it for another notion when the refutation of Theaetetus' definition is at issue. A unified interpretation of the notion of being at *Theaetetus* 184b4-187a8 is preferable.

The notion of being is first introduced as one of the commons (τὰ κοινά) in contrast to those things that are proper to only one sense, such as colour and sound; for the first thing the soul thinks about colour and sound is "that they both are" (ὅτι ἀμφοτέρω ἔστον). The first option as to the notion of being is that it amounts to existence. That is to say, Plato is driving at the point that the soul comes to think that both the colour and the sound exist; in mere sense perception the soul just has the sensory experience of colour and sound, but in applying being to them it posits them as existing.[5] It must be admitted that this is a natural way of understanding the clause. The problem with this option is that it threatens the

unity of the notion in the passage. For as we can see from 185c4-7, Socrates has it that the commons apply to all things, and that, in addition to being (ἔστι), not-being (οὐκ ἔστι) is one of the commons as well. So the suggestion seems to be that both being and not-being applies to everything. If these instances of being are rendered with 'existence,' Socrates is made to say that the soul thinks about everything that it both exists and does not exist. A reading which is not hampered by this problem is preferable to the existential reading.[6]

The second option is that the being which the soul is said to attain in regard to things of all senses is the copula which the predicative form of belief requires; if the soul is to believe anything at all concerning what it perceives, then it needs to frame its perceptual experience along the '... is ...' scheme.[7] Of course, what I have in mind is the logical, not the grammatical form. The point is clearly made by Aristotle at *De Interpretatione* 21b9-10: "It makes no difference to say that the man walks or that the man is walking" (οὐδὲν γὰρ διαφέρει εἰπεῖν ἄνθρωπον βαδίζειν ἢ ἄνθρωπον βαδίζοντα εἶναι). Hence, "Socrates walks" can be rendered "Socrates is walking," and the 'is' gets displayed. At any rate, this option is attractive in so far as it makes good sense of the claim that both being and not-being attach to everything; for instance, a colour both *is* a perceptible quality and *is not* a sound. In other words, there are lots of things that a thing is and lots of other things that it is not.

Although the second option has more to be said for it than the former one, in the end I do not think that Plato has the copula in mind either. In particular, the point of the remark that being must be attained if truth is to be attained is not that in so far as something is to count as a candidate for knowledge, it must have a form that makes it possible to ascribe truth values to it. Attaining being amounts to something other than that. It should not be denied that beliefs involve predication and that this aspect has an important bearing on the nature of belief, but in the end I do not think that framing one's experiences in a propositional form and giving one's assent or dissent to the proposition is a sufficient condition in so far as Plato's particular notion of belief goes. As we shall see, it is only in so far as the assent or dissent to the proposition is arrived at in a particular way that they count as beliefs in the specific sense.

Being and the proper sensibles

It is of paramount importance that the contrast between the proper sensibles, such as colour and sound, and those things which are common to

objects of more than one sense modality, such as being, difference and identity, is conceived of in the correct way. Above all, it must be noticed that as far as the latter items are concerned, they are not supposed to be considered in themselves, but in relation to those things which are accessible through only one of the senses. Indeed, the point is precisely to differentiate between those things that can be thought about in regard to both an object of one sense and another object of a different sense, and those things which are proper to only one of the senses. And when Socrates has established that it is impossible to perceive sounds through the eyes or colours through the ears, he moves on at 185a8-9 to ask whether it is not the case that we can, in fact, think about being "in regard to [both] sound and colour" (περὶ δὴ φωνῆς καὶ περὶ χρόας). So instead of a contrast between two different sets of objects which are unrelated to one another, Socrates spells out a contrast between colour and sound, and the being, difference, identity, and so forth, *of* colour and sound. [8]

Note that I use the locutions 'object of one sense,' 'object of vision' and so forth in a particular way: they refer to the proper sensibles such as colour and sound. In view of the fact that it was argued in the last chapter that Plato may well admit that more than colours can be seen, it is important to be clear about my usage here, which tries to capture Socrates' way of speaking about those things that are proper to only one sense regardless of whether they are conceived of as properties of material objects. So the concern here is with the contrast between proper sensibles and features that are common to proper sensibles of different sense modalities.

The contrast is complicated by the fact that the common things are claimed not to be accessible through any sense and, thus, not to be perceptible by the senses at all. This becomes clear at 185a4-6 as Socrates points out that those things which are common to objects of different senses could not be perceived through any of the sense organs, and then rhetorically asks Theaetetus "So if you think anything in regard to both, you would not perceive it in regard to both either by means of the one sense organ, or by means of the other, would you?" (Εἴ τι ἄρα περὶ ἀμφοτέρων διανοῇ, οὐκ ἂν διά γε τοῦ ἑτέρου ὀργάνου, οὐδ ' αὖ διὰ τοῦ ἑτέρου περὶ ἀμφοτέρων αἰσθάνοι ' ἄν;). As I have argued in chapter 2, Plato does not positively say that anything that is perceived through one sense cannot be perceived through another sense; the principle seems to be introduced in regard to the particular commons under discussion. And now it should be noticed that Socrates explicitly says that

those things which cannot be perceived through any sense organ are *thought* about both colour and sound. This is further evidence for the view that Socrates does not have in mind any feature that is common to objects of two different senses. For in introducing the contrast between the proper sensibles and the commons Socrates actually pins down the commons as things accessible in a particular way, namely, through thinking (διανοεῖν). This suggests that he is not arguing that everything which is common to objects of more than one sense is not perceptible by any sense, but that proper sensibles have some features which are perceptible by the senses and other features which are not perceptible by the senses.

This view is particularly suggestive as far as being is concerned. For it is now suggested that being is a feature of proper sensibles, such as colour and sound, which is not perceptible by the senses. The suggestion is at first glance puzzling: how could colour and sound have features which are not perceptible by the senses? But as we shall see, this is really what the passage is all about.

Being and predication

There is a further question which has to be dealt with before we turn to the account of being. For the idea that there are things that are proper to objects of only one sense and things that are common to objects of more than one sense might seem to be suggestive of the following. Perhaps Plato has in mind a distinction between different kinds of predicates: some predicates, such as '... is black,' apply to things proper only to one sense–in this case to things proper to sight, while other predicates, such as '... is different from ...', apply to things common to more than one sense. For instance, it can be said only of a colour or of a thing in respect to that aspect which is perceptible through sight that it is black, whereas it can be said both of colour and sound that they are different from something else. Needless to say, we actually say of objects not seen that they are black; the point is that the normal way of verifying such a saying is through sight. At any rate, if this were the contrast Plato had in mind, it could also be suggested that it is only the application of predicates like '... is different from ...' that the soul cannot accomplish in mere sense perception, whereas it may well manage to apply predicates like '... is black' merely by exercising the senses. Of course, the suggestion is flawed in so far as it amounts to the view that the soul can apply predicates like '... is black' in mere sense perception: it violates the principle that sense perception does not have a propositional content.

Although the suggestion is flawed, it is worth while to give some thought to the fact that a predicate like '... is black' contains an 'is.' And despite the fact that I have ruled out the copula as a candidate for the notion of being at issue, it is illuminating to use this instance of being as a starting point in spelling out Plato's notion of being. For on what I will dub 'the Platonic analysis' the 'is' here does a great deal more than connect the subject to the predicate. Indeed, the Platonic analysis provides a crucial background to the notion of being at *Theaetetus* 184b4-187a8.

In the first place it is far from clear how the 'is' in a predicate like '... is black' should be accounted for. It might be tempting to say that it singles out the subject of the predication as a member of the set of black things. But this set-theoretic conception of how we are to understand something's being predicated of something else does not underlie Plato's approach. For in so far as the ascription of a predicate to a sensible particular is at issue, Plato conceives of the relation between the sensible particular and the predicate as a matter of the sensible particular's partaking in or having a share (μετέχειν) of the predicate, or, in Plato's terms, the form. It is precisely this conception that gives rise to the characteristic difficulties addressed in the *Parmenides*. In particular, at 131a8-b2 the problem is raised of how many things with separate locations can partake in one form without threatening the unity of the form. But what is important now, on this conception an assertion like "X is black" is not to be analysed in set-theoretic terms, but in terms of the relation between the particular and the form of which it has a share: X is black in virtue of having a share of the form blackness.

If we expand a little on the analysis of the assertion "X is black," then we can render the predicate '... is black' in terms of the 'having a share' relation as '... has a share of blackness.' At first glance, then, '... is ...' can be rendered '... has a share of ...'. So on this analysis the 'is' expresses a relation between the sensible particular and the form in terms of having a share. However, things are slightly more complicated. For so far the analysis has established that a sensible particular is this and that in virtue of having a share of the form. But now it should be noticed that there is a sense in which it can be said of the form, or the predicate, that it is this and that. In her remarkable study Constance Meinwald has shown that Plato distinguishes between two different kinds of predication.[9] On the one hand, there are predications the subject of which is a sensible particular; "Aristides is just" may serve as an example. Here we have an

instance of the 'having a share' relation: Aristides is just in virtue of having a share of the form justice. In this case the predication expresses a relation between a sensible particular and a form. On the other hand, a form itself can be the subject of a predication; "Justice is virtuous" is one example.[10] This predication is not concerned with the same kind of relation as the former one. For whereas the former predication says that this sensible particular, Aristides, has a share of the form justice, the latter tells us something of the nature of justice: to be just is to be virtuous. Here it is helpful to think of the genus-species trees familiar from botany and put forward in dialogues such as the *Sophist* and the *Statesman*. The form justice has its place in such a tree and the predication "Justice is virtuous" expresses the relation of the form justice to the form virtue. So in this case the predication expresses a relation between forms. But notice that the distinction between these two kinds of predications must not be mistaken for the distinction between essential and accidental properties. For although the assertion "Aristides is human," in contrast to the assertion "Aristides is just," expresses an essential relation, it tells us only something about a sensible particular's relation to a form, but nothing about the form's internal structure, that is, its relations to other forms.

The distinction between the two kinds of predicates makes it clear that even forms are this and that in virtue of having their place in a genus-species tree. So the 'is' in "Justice is virtuous" plays the part of relating one form to another form in such a tree. And if we render the assertion "X is black," where X is a sensible particular, with "X has a share of blackness," we may in the next instance turn our attention to the form, namely blackness, and ask about its being. For instance, part of what it is to be black is to be a colour. And on this analysis the assertion "Blackness is a colour" is a predication informing us about the nature of blackness, rather than about the instantiation of colour in the sensible world, and belongs, thus, to the latter form of predication. So there is a sense in which the predicate has being, namely, in virtue of its relations to other forms.

Now, the distinction between the two different kinds of predication suggests that there are two kinds of being: the being which relates the sensible particular to a form and the being that relates a form to other forms. But although the two kinds of being are distinguishable, there is a connection between them as well. For in so far as we have a grasp of the being of a form, that is, the form's relation to other forms, and relate a sensible particular to that form, we will also, at least implicitly, relate the sensible particular to those forms to which the form at issue is related. Let

us say that X is the colour of a particular wall. Saying that "X is black," then, relates X to blackness. But in so far as we have a grasp of the being of blackness we also relate X to those forms to which blackness is related. For instance, we relate X not only to blackness, but also to colour. Of course, the 'is's featuring in the assertions "Blackness is a colour" and "X is a colour" differ as to their function: the former relates a form to another form and the latter a sensible particular to a form. But the point is that the latter assertion may be inferred from the assertion "X is black" in virtue of grasping the internal relations of blackness: since blackness is a colour and X has a share of blackness, X is a colour.

So the function of 'is' which enters into the predication scheme '... is ...' is not just a matter of putting together the subject and the predicate word; it is closely connected to Plato's metaphysics. Of course, this analysis of being does not by itself explain what notion of being is at issue in *Theaetetus* 184b4-187a8 and why the being of colour and sound is not perceptible by the senses. But with this analysis of the predication scheme in place we are better equipped to address these questions.

Considering the commons in regard to colour and sound

The best clue to Plato's notion of being at *Theaetetus* 184b4-187a8 is the stretch of text running from 185a8 to 185b7 where the commons (τὰ κοινά), that is, being (οὐσία), difference (τὸ ἕτερον), identity (τὸ ταὐτόν), duality (δύο), unity (ἕν), dissimilarity (ἀνομοιότης) and similarity (ὁμοιότης) are introduced. On the face of it, it might seem that Socrates simply wants to exemplify the contrast between the proper sensibles and the commons. But it is with some care that he introduces the latter items; instead of just listing them, Socrates introduces them step by step and in a certain order. So we need to pay due attention to the details of this elaborate introduction of the features that are common to both colour and sound.

Socrates starts off at 185a8-9 by asking:

> In regard to sound and colour you think in the first place this same thing in regard to both, namely, that they both are, don't you?
>
> Περὶ δὴ φωνῆς καὶ περὶ χρόας πρῶτον μὲν αὐτὸ τοῦτο περὶ ἀμφοτέρων ἢ διανοῇ, ὅτι ἀμφοτέρω ἐστόν;

In view of the fact that I have ruled out the existential reading of the clause ὅτι ἀμφοτέρω ἐστόν the question arises: what is it that Theaetetus is

supposed to think that sound and colour are?[11] For if the existential reading is ruled out, then it seems that the ἐστόν is elliptical. Now my suggestion as to how we are to understand being in this context makes sense of the ellipsis. For I suggest that we grasp what being amounts to here by looking ahead to the further commons which Socrates introduces.

At 185a11-12, after Theaetetus' assent to the first question, Socrates moves on and asks:

> Do you not, therefore, think also that each is different from the other and the same as itself?
>
> Οὐκοῦν καὶ ὅτι ἑκάτερον ἑκατέρου μὲν ἕτερον, ἑαυτῷ δὲ ταὐτόν;

Here it is crucial that we get the force of the adverb οὐκοῦν right. For the adverb has an inferential force; it suggests that Theaetetus' assent to the former question entails the assent to the latter question.[12] So Socrates' suggestion is that Theaetetus' thinking that the colour and sound are entails his thinking that each is different from the other and the same as itself. Judging by Theaetetus' answer to the latter question, "Well, what of it?" (Τί μήν;), he is not entirely clear about the implication of his assent to the former question. But Theaetetus' slight hesitation is natural; Socrates elicits his assent to the first question only to lay bare what he takes the assent to be suggestive of.

It is also to be noticed that Socrates reverses what might seem to be the natural order when speaking about identity and difference; if identity and difference were introduced only to give examples of things that are common to both sound and colour, then it seems that it would have been more straightforward to introduce them in precisely that order. And at 186a6-7, once they have been introduced, he speaks about them in the more natural order. Now I believe that in introducing difference before identity Plato gives an account of how the soul discerns colour and sound in the first place: the first thing the soul recognises as it encounters sound and colour for the first time is that there is a difference. But recognising the difference does not presuppose that the soul has identified each beforehand; rather, on the basis of recognising the difference the soul is enabled to identify each. So from the point of view of how the soul singles out sound and colour it makes sense to introduce difference before identity.

As was mentioned, Theaetetus does not immediately see the point of

Socrates' rhetorical question, and at 185b2 Socrates picks up Theaetetus' demand for further elucidation by posing the following question.

> And also that they both [taken together] are two, yet each [taken by itself] is one?
>
> Καὶ ὅτι ἀμφοτέρω δύο, ἑκάτερον δὲ ἕν;

Theaetetus' ready assent to the question, "This too" (Καὶ τοῦτο), indicates that Socrates' further question goes some way towards satisfying Theaetetus' demand for elucidation. And yet again, the order of introducing unity and duality seems reversed. But now there is a background for the order in which they are introduced. For once the soul recognises that colour and sound are different from one another, it also recognises that they are two things. And when it recognises that they are two things, it is but a short step for the soul to recognise that each of the things that makes up the duality is one taken by itself. And what is particularly important, the recognition of each thing's being identical to itself amounts to the recognition of its unity; this seems to be the reason why Socrates introduces the pair duality/unity as an answer to Theaetetus' request for elucidation of the pair difference/identity.

At 185b4-5, finally, Socrates asks:

> You can also, therefore, consider whether they are dissimilar or similar to one another, can't you?
>
> Οὐκοῦν καὶ εἴτε ἀνομοίω εἴτε ὁμοίω ἀλλήλοιν, δυνατὸς εἶ ἐπισκέψασθαι;

Yet again the adverb οὐκοῦν signals that Theaetetus' assents to the previous questions entail the suggestion of the present question. I take it that the disjunctive clause εἴτε ... εἴτε does not have an exclusive force; the soul may well consider in what respect colour and sound are dissimilar *and* in what respect they are similar. The recognition of similarities and dissimilarities between colour and sound is best seen as a more developed grasp of their unity and difference. For their unity and difference can be seen in a larger scheme of similarities and dissimilarities. For instance, colour and sound are similar in virtue of belonging to the same genus, that is, the genus sensory quality, but dissimilar in virtue of being different species of that genus. And at the level of genus the unity of colour and sound amount to the same thing: they are both sensory qualities. But at

the level of species colour and sound do not make up a unity. So by recognising the similarities and dissimilarities between colour and sound the soul grasps more than the fact that they are different unities; it also grasps the relation between these unities.

There is, then, a rationale for the rather cautious and seemingly roundabout way in which the commons are introduced; they are introduced in the order in which the soul becomes aware of them. Now in regard to the first common introduced, namely being, I suggest that it is best explained by the other commons introduced. This is the point of the ellipsis: colour and sound are precisely in virtue of being different, identical, a duality, unities, dissimilar and similar. And unity is the crucial property. For in order for anything to be, it has to be a unity; and to be a unity crucially involves being different from other things and identical to itself. This makes sense of the introduction of not-being as well; for in being different from other things the unity is not what it is different from. As far as dissimilarity and similarity are concerned, they help in establishing the appropriate relations between the unities. For instance, they help in seeing whether two unities relate to one another as a species to a genus, or as genus to another genus, or as a species to another species of the same genus. The only thing that drops out from the picture is duality; but as far as duality is concerned the awareness of it seems to be required as a step in coming to recognise each thing of a pair as a unity and the pair itself as a unity.

Discernment, kinds and sense perception

The suggestion that attaining the being of colour and sound amounts to singling them out as unities does not explain why their being is not perceptible by the senses. For why not say that the soul perceives colour as a unity by the senses? In order to consider the question, let us bring in another aspect of the view that the being of colour and sound is not perceptible by the senses. At 185e1-2, answering Socrates' question through what sense organ being is perceived, Theaetetus comes to the conclusion that the being of colour and sound is not perceived through any sense organ, but that the soul considers their being through itself: "... it seems to me that the soul itself through itself considers the commons in regard to everything" (... αὐτὴ δι 'αὐτῆς ἡ ψυχὴ τὰ κοινά μοι φαίνεται περὶ πάντων ἐπισκοπεῖν). As has been mentioned, the view might seem puzzling in so far as it is applied to colour and sound–how could the soul consider the being of colour and sound through itself without exercising the senses?

Perhaps in saying that the soul considers the being of colour and sound through itself without recourse to the senses Socrates has in mind a particular kind of perception, namely, intellectual perception. I do not deny that this is what he is up to. But rather than taking for granted what intellectual perception, which is a problematic and theory-laden notion, amounts to, I shall suggest that Socrates actually has in mind an argument to the effect that the being of colour and sound is not perceptible by the senses.

Socrates' treatment of the issue is complicated by the fact that he does not spell out how the object of belief is to be conceived of. For instance, in so far as believing is a matter of attaining the being of colour and sound, is the belief just a matter of picking out a particular instance of colour or sound in the world, or of laying down something about the nature of colour and sound? In order to see the difference between these two ways of conceiving of the object of belief, let us distinguish between beliefs in which colour and sound occupy the subject position and beliefs in which they occupy the predicate position. The colour black may serve as an example: either it has the subject position–'the colour black is ...,' or the predicate position–'... is black.' As far as the predicate '... is black' is concerned, it should be noticed that I leave it open here whether it is predicated of a sensory quality or a material object of which the sensory quality is a property; my account applies to both cases.

In view of this distinction, let me repeat what I have said about the predication scheme. The assertion "X is black" relates the X to the form blackness and, implicitly, to those forms to which blackness is related. So even though attaining the being of blackness is a matter of grasping the relation of blackness to other forms, that grasp has a bearing on the belief "X is black." For instance, what grasp the soul has of blackness determines what it is prepared to conclude from that belief. Now the principles that the soul attains the being of colour and sound through itself and that their being is not perceptible by the senses are best understood from the point of view of beliefs in which colour and sound occupy the subject position. For I suggest that Plato has it that in attaining the being of colour and sound the soul is not concerned with the question whether a sensible particular exhibits colour and sound, but with the question what colour and sound are. And considering what colour and sound are involves forming beliefs in which the colour and sound occupy the subject position. In fact, this tenet has been borne out by the account of *Theaetetus* 185a8-b7: what the soul thinks in regard to colour is precisely

"Colour is different from sound," "Colour is identical to itself," and so forth.

The present suggestion gains in plausibility if we consider the first common which is thought in regard to both colour and sound, namely difference. It hardly requires arguing that the difference between colour and sound at issue is not a numerical difference between two distinct objects at two different locations in space. For the examples referred to are things of different sense modalities, and what is so particular about colour and sound is that they could be located in the same place; they could be the colour and sound of the same object. So the very examples introduced, namely colour and sound, suggest that the soul considers the difference between two different kinds of things. What is more, the language at 185a8 suggests that Plato has in mind a difference in kind; if the point were that the soul considers the numerical difference between two distinct objects in space, then in order to avoid ambiguity 'sound' and 'colour' in the clause περὶ δὴ φωνῆς καὶ περὶ χρόας at 185a8 should have been qualified by demonstrative pronouns or by the indefinite pronoun τις. But as the clause stands, it suggests that the soul is concerned with colour and sound as kinds.[13] The point is that being a kind amounts to being a unity according to Plato. For in so far as the soul recognises that colour differs from sound as to what kind of thing it is, it also recognises that colour is identical to itself in kind and, hence, that it is a unity in virtue of being a kind.

However, the suggestion that attaining the being of colour and sound amounts to discerning them as kinds does not by itself account for the principle that the soul attains the being of colour and sound through itself. For even though the soul discerns colour and sound as different kinds of things rather than as numerically different objects, it might still seem that the soul perceives sensible particulars when it discerns colour and sound as different kinds of things and, hence, that it exercises the sense organs in attaining the being of colour and sound. But in that case the principle that the soul attains the being of colour and sound through itself is violated.

The problem is best dealt with if we give some thought to what it takes to recognise the difference between colour and sound. Suppose that the soul perceives only colour. In that case, it can be argued that it does not perceive the difference of colour; it makes no sense to say that the soul perceives the difference of colour if it does not perceive that from which colour differs. But now it must be noticed that when the soul perceives

both colour and sound, that is, sees colour and hears sound, and recognises that colour is different from sound, it cannot perceive the difference by the senses. For there is no sense through which the difference can be perceived; if the soul is to *see* the difference, it must see not only colour, but also sound–which it manifestly cannot. This is the point of Socrates' repeated question through what sense the commons in regard to colour and sound are supposed to be perceived. But since there is no sense through which the difference between sensory qualities of two different sense modalities can be perceived, the difference cannot be perceived by the senses at all, but has to be accessed in some other way.

It might be objected that the argument does not work in so far as the difference between two colours is concerned; since both black and white can be seen, why not say that the difference between them can be seen? But I take it that the argument that the difference between colour and sound cannot be perceived by the senses is sufficient to show that difference is a feature which is not perceptible by the senses. So the argument establishes the general point that difference is not perceptible by the senses; and the same goes for the other commons. And since the being of a thing boils down to the other commons introduced, being is not a feature perceptible by the senses either.

This account of the principle that the soul attains the being of colour and sound through itself makes clear that the being of colour and sound actually is a feature which is not perceptible by the senses. It must also be borne in mind that in characterising believing as a matter of attaining the being of things Plato is concerned with beliefs in which the examples considered, namely colour and sound, occupy the subject position. And beliefs in which colour and sound occupy the subject position are a matter of establishing how the kinds colour and sound are related to one another and to other kinds by considering the commons in regard to them. So beliefs like "X is black," where X picks out a sensible particular and where the sense organs indeed seem to be required, are not at issue in *Theaetetus* 184b4-187a8, although, as we shall see, attaining the being of the colour black has a bearing on such beliefs.

Thinking, effort and being

It should be noticed that if the soul attains the being of colour and sound, that is, discerns them as different kinds, only in so far as it is engaged in believing, then in mere sense perception it does not discern them as different kinds. This might seem surprising: it can hardly be

denied that the soul is capable of discriminating between colour and sound through sense perception. In particular, if beasts get along by sense perception alone, then sense perception must provide them with that capacity. The conclusion must be that it is one thing to discriminate between colour and sound, another thing to discern them as different kinds. This characteristic is important in so far as the distinction between sense perception and belief is at issue. For if it is assumed that sense perception makes discrimination between things possible, why not say that it makes discernment of kinds possible? In addition, the view that belief involves the discernment of kinds is the key to coming to grips with Plato's characterisation of beliefs as involving an effort on the part of the soul. For it is precisely discerning kinds that involves an effort; Plato takes exception to Protagoras' claim that belief is merely a matter of how things strike us by pointing out that attaining the being of things, that is, discerning kinds, requires effort.

The soul attains the being of colour and sound through thinking and not through sense perception; it *thinks* the commons in regard to colour and sound. And thinking (διάνοια) enters crucially into the definition of belief; at *Sophist* 264b1 belief is defined as "the result of thinking" (διανοίας ἀποτελεύτησις). And thinking, in turn, is at *Sophist* 264a9-b1 defined as "the soul's own conversation with itself" (αὐτῆς πρὸς ἑαυτὴν ψυχῆς διάλογος) and at *Theaetetus* 189e6-7 as "a speech which the soul goes through with itself concerning whatever it is considering" (λόγον ὃν αὐτὴ πρὸς αὑτὴν ἡ ψυχὴ διεξέρχεται περὶ ὧν ἂν σκοπῇ). It should in the first place be noticed that the definition of thinking comes close to the characterisation of belief as the soul's silent speech (λόγος) at *Sophist* 264a1-2, *Theaetetus* 190a4-6 and *Philebus* 38e1-4. The similarity is no accident; belief just is the result of the soul's silent conversation with itself.

At *Theaetetus* 189e7-190a4 Socrates expands on the definition of thinking and gives a fuller characterisation of what thinking is.

> It seems to me that in thinking [the soul] is not doing anything else than having a conversation, posing questions to itself and answering them, giving its assent and not giving its assent to them. And when it reaches something determinate, either slowly or quickly, and finally affirms the same thing without hesitation, we lay this down as its belief.

τοῦτο γάρ μοι ἐνδάλλεται διανοουμένη οὐκ ἄλλο τι ἢ

διαλέγεσθαι, αὐτὴ ἑαυτὴν ἐρωτῶσα καὶ ἀποκρινομένη, καὶ φάσκουσα καὶ οὐ φάσκουσα. ὅταν δὲ ὁρίσασα, εἴτε βραδύτερον εἴτε καὶ ὀξύτερον ἐπάξασα, τὸ αὐτὸ ἤδη φῇ καὶ μὴ διστάζῃ, δόξαν ταύτην τίθεμεν αὐτῆς.

This is the best evidence of how Plato conceives of the process which results in belief. Now I suggest that we see this account of thinking in close connection to *Theaetetus* 185a8-b7 where the commons are introduced. For it makes good sense to think that the questions which the soul asks itself are questions pertaining to the being of the thing under consideration. For instance, the soul asks itself whether colour is different from sound, whether it is identical to itself, and so forth.

The point can be confirmed if we take a closer look at the details of the account of thinking; two expressions are worth special attention. First, Socrates' talk of the soul's "reaching something determinate" (ὁρίσασα) suggests that he has the discernment of kinds in mind. For although the verb ὁρίζειν hardly has the technical meaning 'to define' in this context, the meaning must be close to it; ὁρίζειν is a matter of separating things, of telling things apart, that is, of sorting out things according to their kinds. The expression makes good sense if we read it together with *Theaetetus* 185a8-b7; by asking and answering questions the soul arrives at what the thing in question is, that is, it sorts out what kind it is. Second, the somewhat curious expression "affirms the same thing" (τὸ αὐτὸ φῇ) is to be understood in the same context; reaching something determinate is a matter of laying down the identity of the thing under consideration– identity being one of the commons.[14]

The difference between discerning kinds and discriminating between sensible particulars is that in discerning kinds the soul grasps the relation of the kind to other kinds. The contrast can be seen if we consider a belief about a sensible particular like "X is black." As has been mentioned, it is important to keep in mind that the discernment of kinds has a bearing on beliefs about sensible particulars. For in order to form the belief that X is black the soul must attain the being of that aspect of the thing, that is, grasp its kind. And that is something the soul does by itself through thinking without recourse to the senses. So forming the belief "X is black," where X picks out a sensible particular, presupposes that the soul has discerned the kind black.

In so far as the soul has a grasp of the kind's relations to other kinds, its belief that a sensible particular is of this kind amounts to more than just

discriminating the sensible particular from other sensible particulars. In particular, the grasp of the kind's relations to other kinds makes inferences possible. To take a simple example, if the soul grasps that the kind black is related to the kind colour as a species to a genus, then it can infer from whatever it knows about the kind colour that this holds for the kind black. For instance, it might know that colour is such that it features on surfaces and that if a particular colour spreads all over a surface, then that surface cannot at the same time have another colour. So when the soul forms the belief "This wall is black," it can infer that the wall cannot at the same time be white.

Socrates seems to have this inferential capacity in mind at *Theaetetus* 186d2-3, where the mere affections (παθήματα) are contrasted with the reasoning (συλλογισμός) about them. The point is to make a contrast between the passive nature of sense perception, and the activity involved in believing. It is not clear what notion of reasoning is at issue–and συλλογισμός is a rare term in Plato. But in view of the fact that the cognate συλλογίζεσθαι on many occasions means inferring,[15] it is reasonable to think that the reasoning involves making inferences. This would make clearer the contrast between sense perception and belief. Although mere sense perception makes discrimination between sensible particulars possible, and even provides the soul with a grasp such that it is able to recognise them in the future, mere sense perception does not provide the soul with the inferential capacity. For instance, discriminating a black thing from other things does not provide the soul with the capacity to infer that the thing cannot be white at the same time.

This way of understanding the contrast between sense perception and belief makes good sense of the tenet that propositional content is ascribed to belief, but not to sense perception. For the suggestion that sense perception does not have a propositional content explains why it cannot meet the condition for belief. To begin with, without a propositional content the soul cannot be engaged in asking and answering questions, that is, in thinking. And unless the soul is engaged in thinking it cannot attain the being of things. Hence, sense perception does not meet the condition for belief. In addition, since mere sense perception does not have a propositional content, it cannot provide the soul with an inferential capacity.

But despite the fact that belief, in contrast to sense perception, is a matter of attaining the being of things, why does belief require an effort? The suggestion that belief requires an effort might not strike us as appeal-

ing, but here it must be borne in mind that Plato introduces a particular kind of belief. And he characterises this particular kind of belief as involving an effort with a view to repudiating Protagoras' claim that belief is merely a matter of how things strike us, that is, how we are affected. So his point is precisely that, against all appearances, arriving at a belief need not be a matter of how things strike us, but can involve an effort on the part of the soul. Content can be given to the claim by considering the account of how the soul is engaged in asking and answering questions, and considering the commons in regard to things. And although this is something we might not reflect on, it nevertheless requires effort and takes some time.

It is appropriate to compare the discernment of kinds to concept formation. The parallel is that unless the soul possesses the concept black it cannot employ the term 'black.' And perhaps it is correct to say that forming concepts involves an effort. At least this is the case as far as theoretical concepts are concerned, such as mathematical and philosophical concepts. Here the parallel to relating a kind to other kinds is striking; learning a theoretical concept is to some extent a matter of grasping how the concept is related to other concepts. But what about the concept black? Even here it seems that it may well take an effort to learn how to employ the term 'black;' it takes some time and some mistakes before the child learns to master the concept.

However, I have chosen not to speak of the discernment of kinds in terms of concept formation. For apart from introducing a notion absent in Plato's framework, it seems to me that on a certain understanding of what concepts are it might give the wrong impression of his starting point. First, discerning kinds is a matter of grasping something which is independent of the soul; kinds are there to be discerned. Second, Plato is not concerned with language, at least not explicitly; he is not driving at the point that the soul must discern the kind black if it is to employ the term 'black' in a correct way. But as long as we keep Plato's starting point in mind, the comparison is illuminating. In particular, since Socrates emphasises that at birth the only capacity the child has is to perceive, and that it attains the being of things only later, the comparison to concept formation is suggestive.

But in order to see the full rationale behind Plato's claim that a particular kind of belief requires an effort it should be pointed out that he does admit that beliefs can be arrived at without an effort. His target is Protagoras' view that beliefs in general require no effort. I shall discuss the contrast

between beliefs that have been arrived at through an effort and beliefs that have been arrived at without an effort in more detail in chapter 4. But let me anticipate the discussion by pointing out that beliefs have been arrived at through an effort in so far as the soul has been engaged in discerning kinds and everything that goes with it. And although coming to believe that a sensible particular is black, say, may not require an effort, it is based on an effort in so far as the soul has discerned the kind black. And having discerned the kind black, the soul is committed to other beliefs some of which it can infer from the belief "X is black" and some of which the belief "X is black" can be inferred from. These further beliefs may play an important part as far as the reason for holding the belief "X is black" is concerned; in short, with the grasp of the kind at issue goes the capacity to draw on that grasp in regard to beliefs about sensible particulars.

Belief and being

We can now see what part the notion of being (οὐσία) plays in Socrates' final refutation of Theaetetus' definition of knowledge as αἴσθησις. For the condition that the soul must attain the being of things is such that the soul must get at what things are. And in order to get at what a thing is the soul must discern what kind of thing it is. But sense perception cannot attain the being of the thing and, hence, not discern what kind of thing it is. Belief, by contrast, meets at least the condition that the soul must attain the being of things; it discerns kinds and grasps the relation between kinds.

This notion of being, it seems to me, has a lot to be said for it as far as Plato is concerned. I refrain from entering into the debate over different notions of being in Plato, but rest content with a few observations. [16] Most notably, in posing the characteristic "What is ...?" (Τί ἐστι;) question familiar from the Socratic dialogues Plato is looking for a definition of the nature of the thing at issue. Hence, picking out any characteristic of the thing will not do; what matters are those characteristics which make up the thing's nature. So the copula or the predicative being is too broad as a characterisation of Plato's notion of being; not any predication will bring out the nature of the thing. What is more, in so far as to be is to be a kind, it could be argued that Plato has existence in mind in the sense that the existence of a thing requires that it is of a certain kind. But in that case we are dealing with a notion of existence such that a fairly strict condition for existence is spelled out. So I think on balance that if there is any fit label

for this notion of being, then the being of essence or real nature is the most appropriate one.

If the main point about the soul's coming to believe is that it must discern kinds such as colour and sound, then it seems that we are dealing with a notion of belief that differs from what we might have expected from the start. In so far as Plato tries to pin down what it is to believe, it might seem odd that he has such special kinds of beliefs in mind. And even though the account of what it is to attain the being of colour and sound has a bearing on beliefs about sensible particulars, the suggestion might seem to be unwanted in regard to the question in what respect sense perception falls short of knowledge. For the distinction between merely perceiving something black and believing that something is black seems to be what matters as far as knowledge is concerned: the belief that something is black is the kind of thing that can be true or false. But here it must be kept in mind that a contingent empirical fact like something's being black is unlikely to be the kind of thing which would be of any interest for Plato as far as knowledge is concerned. For what Plato is keen on as far as knowledge is concerned, is the nature of things. And in regard to the kind black, the interesting thing is not primarily whether some sensible particular is of that kind, but that it belongs to the genus colour and the genus perceptible thing, and so forth.

3. *Belief and expectation*

Plato disentangles belief from sense perception with a view to repudiating Protagoras' 'man the measure' thesis. He makes it clear that arriving at a belief is not a matter of how we are affected, but involves the soul in an activity such that it discerns what kind of thing the thing at issue is. However, the disentanglement of belief from sense perception does not by itself prove Protagoras' thesis to be wrong. For although an activity, and even effort, is required for a belief like "X is black" to come about, there is no obvious reason why man should not be the measure of whether something is black. At *Theaetetus* 179c1-d1 Socrates even admits that there is something to be said for Protagoras' thesis as far as some beliefs are concerned, pointing out the following:

> Theodorus, in many other ways could such a point be proved, namely that not all beliefs of all men are true; but concerning the affection which is present to each, and out of which becomes

> sense perceptions and beliefs in accordance with these sense perceptions, it is harder to prove that they are not true. But perhaps I am talking nonsense; for it may be that they are unassailable, and that those who say that they are clear and that they are pieces of knowledge perhaps speak the truth, and that Theaetetus here was not speaking off the mark when he laid it down that perception and knowledge are the same.
>
> Πολλαχῇ, ὦ Θεόδωρε, καὶ ἄλλῃ ἂν τό γε τοιοῦτον ἁλοίη μὴ πᾶσαν παντὸς ἀληθῆ δόξαν εἶναι· περὶ δὲ τὸ παρὸν ἑκάστῳ πάθος, ἐξ ὧν αἱ αἰσθήσεις καὶ αἱ κατὰ ταύτας δόξαι γίγνονται, χαλεπώτερον ἐλεῖν ὡς οὐκ ἀληθεῖς. ἴσως δὲ οὐδὲν λέγω· ἀνάλωτοι γάρ, εἰ ἔτυχον, εἰσίν, καὶ οἱ φάσκοντες αὐτὰς ἐναργεῖς τε εἶναι καὶ ἐπιστήμας τάχα ἂν ὄντα λέγοιεν, καὶ Θεαίτητος ὅδε οὐκ ἀπὸ σκοποῦ εἴρηκεν αἴσθησιν καὶ ἐπιστήμην ταὐτὸν θέμενος.

The context of the remark is this. At *Theaetetus* 178b2-179b9 Socrates argues that Protagoras' thesis does not hold in so far as beliefs about the future are at issue: if it seems to someone that he is going to have a fever, and even if this is so in the Protagorean sense that it is going to seem to him that he has a fever, then that belief may be false, and false for the Protagorean too. So Socrates puts forward an argument against Protagoras by singling out beliefs which are future directed. But in the remark above Socrates admits that the argument does not rule out the possibility that beliefs about what we are perceiving at the present are free from error.

Of course, Socrates does not positively say that beliefs about what the soul perceives at the present actually are free from error; the point is merely that the argument at *Theaetetus* 178b2-179b9 has not proved that such beliefs can be false. And in view of the dialectical context of the first part of the *Theaetetus* Socrates' seeming admittal that these beliefs cannot be false makes good sense. For the purpose of Socrates' construal of the Protagorean 'man the measure' thesis, by connecting it to the Heraclitean theory of sense perception at 156a3-157c3, is to provide a way of understanding the thesis. But since Socrates does not endorse the theory of sense perception, there is no reason to think that he actually holds that beliefs about what the soul perceives at the present cannot be false. What is more, in the last chapter it was shown that Plato is committed to the view that sensory qualities such as colour and sound are objective prop-

erties of material objects; he does not hold that they are perceiver dependent items brought about in the perceptual process. So we need not assume that Socrates endorses Protagoras' thesis even as far as the perception of sensory qualities goes.[17]

But the introduction of beliefs that are future directed is nevertheless an important move; it shows that Protagoras' thesis does not hold even in so far as we endorse the Heraclitean theory of sense perception. In particular, it adds a further distinguishing mark between sense perception and belief. For in so far as it can be shown that the content of belief need not be tied to what the soul perceives at the moment, belief differs from sense perception as conceived of by Protagoras in virtue of allowing a temporally richer content than sense perception.

Momentary beliefs

Socrates' refutation of Protagoras' 'man the measure' thesis as far as beliefs about the future are concerned must be seen against the background of Socrates' construal of Theaetetus' definition of knowledge as αἴσθησις. For by connecting the definition to Protagoras' thesis and the Heraclitean theory of sense perception Socrates points out that on this account we cannot have knowledge of the past. The point is brought home in a rather playful manner at 163d1-164e1. For Socrates suggests that if we are to take Theaetetus' suggestion that knowledge is αἴσθησις at face value, then memories cannot be knowledge. For if we merely remember something without presently perceiving it, then we do not perceive it, and, hence, we do not know it either. For instance, if we see something at a particular moment, and hence know it at that moment, but shut our eyes at the next moment, we will no longer see it, and, hence, no longer know it. On the face of it, this sounds like a silly play with words. But it should be borne in mind that Socrates construes Theaetetus' definition as laying down an identity: every instance of αἴσθησις is an instance of knowledge and the other way round. So in so far as remembering is not a matter of exercising the sense, it cannot amount to knowing.

Yet, the main point of the argument that memory cannot be knowledge is to show that on Socrates' construal of Protagoras' position only the immediate sense perception of a thing counts as knowledge. This tenet is motivated by the theory of sense perception which was invoked to underpin Protagoras' thesis that things are as they appear to each of us. For the theory explicitly ruled it out that the object of sense perception has any existence beyond the moment at which it is perceived. In other words,

before and after the perceptual process there is nothing there except the array of indeterminate motions. So according to the theory of sense perception, the objects of knowledge are restricted to those objects which exist simultaneously with each instance of sense perception. Any memory we have of an object perceived in the past provides us with no knowledge about the present; the object remembered will be long gone out of existence. And in so far as we think that a memory at least amounts to knowledge of the momentary objects in the past, it is pointed out at *Theaetetus* 166b2-4 that even if a memory arises from sense perception, the memory can never be the same kind of experience as the actual sense perception. Hence, memory is a poor candidate for knowledge on all accounts.

But what is important now, it is not only knowing and perceiving that get restricted to the momentary objects of sense perception by Socrates' construal of Protagoras' position; the same thing holds for believing. This is not surprising in view of the fact that sense perception, belief, and knowledge amount to the same thing on the Protagorean view. At 167a7-8 Socrates makes the point explicitly: "Neither is it possible to believe what is not, nor anything beyond the things one happens to be affected by, and these things are always true" (οὔτε γὰρ τὰ μὴ ὄντα δυνατὸν δοξάσαι, οὔτε ἄλλα παρ' ἃ ἂν πάσχῃ, ταῦτα δὲ ἀεὶ ἀληθῆ).

On Socrates' construal of Protagoras' position beliefs cannot commit the believer to any views about the past and the future. To begin with, the objects of belief do not point beyond the moment at which they occur. This follows from Protagoras' equation of sense perception and belief. For according to the theory of sense perception the objects perceived are brought about in the perceptual encounter. Consequently, if a thing is perceived at one moment, then that thing cannot be perceived at another moment, simply because there is no stable thing surviving from the one moment to the next. Furthermore, there is no link between these things perceived at different moments such that the one, although existing only momentarily, could point to another thing existing momentarily at another moment. In short, whatever we perceive, and, hence, believe at one moment cannot have any bearing on views about the past and the future.

It should be noticed that Socrates' construal of Protagoras' position makes no room for beliefs about the future. For having beliefs about the future implies having beliefs about states of affairs which are not perceived at the moment. And if we were to admit that beliefs about the future can be arrived at on the basis of what we perceive at the moment, then we would have to allow that what we perceive points beyond the moment at

which it is perceived. But there are good reasons for Protagoras to deny that what we perceive could point beyond the moment at which it is perceived. For it is a good thing to restrict the content of belief to what is experienced at the moment for someone who wants to rule out the possibility of mistakes. In particular, the tenet that things are as they appear to each of us has the best chance of working in so far as the appearing is restricted to the present; it is important that the tenet says that as things appear now, so also they are now. By contrast, if the appearing involved a reference to how things are going to appear, and, hence, how they are going to be in the future, then the position would seem less secure.

It should not be denied that Protagoras has resources to deal with beliefs about the future. For instance, if it were insisted that even Protagoras has to admit that there are beliefs about what is going to seem, and, hence, going to be in the future, then Protagoras could claim that such beliefs are not a threat to the 'man the measure' thesis. For he could claim that whatever the outcome of the future, the belief that it was going to be in a particular way was still true for whomever *then*. In particular, at 159e7-160c2 Socrates argues that on the Protagorean view not only is the object of sense perception brought about in the perceptual process, but also the perceiver. And by undermining the stability not only of the object of sense perception, but also of the perceiver, Protagoras can show that beliefs about the future do not speak against the 'man the measure' thesis: the Protagoras who held the particular view about the future in the past is another Protagoras than the Protagoras to whom things now seem different from what the earlier Protagoras has predicted. So how things seem to the present Protagoras cannot show that the previous Protagoras was wrong about how things were going to seem to him in the future.

Still, however resourceful Protagoras might be, Socrates' argument against Protagoras' thesis, as we shall see, is based on the quite simple observation that Protagoras himself makes assumptions which contradict the thesis that every man is an equally good measure of how things are going to be. And the starting point for Socrates' argument is precisely the principle that beliefs are momentary in two respects according to Protagoras. First, beliefs are held only momentarily; if Protagoras entertains a belief, then he can entertain that belief only as long as he is perceiving whatever it is that he believes. Second, the content of belief has no bearing beyond the present; if Protagoras entertains a belief, then that belief does not commit Protagoras to any views about the past or the present.

Socrates' refutation

Socrates' argument against Protagoras' 'man the measure' thesis at *Theaetetus* 178a5-179a9 is prepared well in advance; Socrates develops Protagoras' position so as to provide himself with a fuller picture of it. Socrates first points out that if each of us is the measure of whatever, then each of us is the measure of wisdom too. How, then, can it be that Protagoras charges fees from his students? As it is put at 161d7-e3, if each of us is his own best judge, what could Protagoras have to offer in the way of instruction? A few pages later, at 166e2-167b4, when Socrates acts as a stand-in for Protagoras, he amends the Protagorean position by claiming that although no beliefs are truer than others, it is still the case that some beliefs are better than others. And just as the medical doctor can bring it about that a sick person to whom the wine appears bitter becomes healthy and to whom, subsequently, the wine will appear sweet, so Protagoras can bring about a change of the state of his students so as to give them, if not truer, then at least better, beliefs. So Protagoras can still lay claim to being wiser than the layman in virtue of being able to bring about better beliefs in his students.

The idea that some beliefs are better than others is developed in terms of the relative benefit of different beliefs. For instance, according to the Protagorean view whatever laws a city makes, they are just for that city in so far as they seem just to it. But although the justice of the laws of a city boils down to whether they seem just to the city, it is hardly the case that they are beneficial (ὠφέλιμα) to the city just because they seem beneficial to the city, as it is put at 177c6-d7. Theodorus, who plays the part of Protagoras in this passage, readily agrees. So Socrates achieves an agreement over the fact that there are things that are not entirely a matter of how they seem to each of us or even to a community as a whole. It is easy to see the further bearings of this remark; it suggests that some beliefs are better in virtue of being more valuable from a practical point of view. For instance, even if we assume with Protagoras that the belief that one will be killed if one jumps from the window on the 90th floor is no truer than the belief that one will not be killed if one jumps from the window on the 90th floor, it is tempting to say that the belief that one will be killed if one jumps from the window on the 90th floor is more beneficial in the sense that it has more value for our survival.

As Socrates turns to the refutation at 178a5-10, he first remarks that beneficial things are related to the future; when the city makes the laws, it is for the time to come that it makes them. Whether or not they are good in

the sense that they are going to be to the benefit of the city is something the future will show. At 178b9-c7 Socrates considers another example of beliefs about the future: if a layman thinks that he is going to catch a fever, whereas the medical doctor thinks that the layman is not going to catch a fever, should we put the same trust in both judgements? Indeed, should we think that it is going to seem, and be one way to the layman, another way to the medical doctor, and that, hence, both beliefs are equally accurate? Theodorus admits that the conclusion would be ridiculous. And as Socrates moves on and introduces further examples which suggest that experts are better equipped than laymen to make predictions within their own field of expertise, Theodorus accepts the point. It should be borne in mind that Theodorus acts as a stand-in for Protagoras. So it is not surprising that he gives in on Protagoras' behalf a little too easily and is not particularly keen on defending him. At this stage of the refutation of Protagoras' 'man the measure' thesis Socrates' point that the expert seems to make more accurate predictions than the layman, and that, in fact, the layman's predictions can be false, need not hit Protagoras severely, although it makes his position less tenable from a commonsense point of view.

The real blow to Protagoras' thesis comes from the fact that the difference between the layman and the expert applies to Protagoras himself. For just as the doctor is an expert on what kind of drugs will cure the sick, and the legislator is an expert on what kind of laws will be to the benefit of the city, so Protagoras is an expert on what kind of speeches will be convincing in the lawcourt. Indeed, it is precisely the skill to produce convincing speeches in the lawcourt that the students are keen to learn; and as Protagoras can provide the students with this skill, he can charge fees from them. But if Protagoras believes that a certain kind of speeches is going to be convincing in the lawcourt, then that belief commits Protagoras to views about the future. In particular, the belief is not merely a matter of a certain kind of speeches seeming to Protagoras to be convincing, but of a certain kind of speeches seeming to Protagoras to be going to be convincing in the future. So, as Socrates puts it at 178e4-6, Protagoras is better equipped than the layman to anticipate (προδοξάζειν) the effect of the speeches.

Socrates' strategy so far is obvious: he shows that since Protagoras entertains a belief without simultaneously perceiving whatever it is that he believes, not even Protagoras himself acts in accordance with the view that the content of our beliefs is restricted to what we perceive at the present. What is more, he also shows that the belief about the effect of the

speeches commits Protagoras to views which point beyond the present. Against the background of these commitments we can make Protagoras contradict the 'man the measure' thesis. Imagine the following dialogue: "So, Protagoras, you claim that each of us is the measure of everything? Right. And you also predict the effect of speeches in the lawcourt? Indeed. But you also lay claim to being better at predicting the effect of speeches in the lawcourt, don't you? Very much so. And you even charge fees because of your expertise? That's fair enough, isn't it? So not everyone can accurately predict the effect of speeches in the lawcourt? What a silly suggestion. Well, Protagoras, then it seems that each of us is not the measure of everything, after all."

It should be acknowledged that this refutation of Protagoras' thesis is my own construal of what is at issue at *Theaetetus* 178a5-179a9; rather than expressing the contradiction Protagoras performs it, as it were. But it seems to me that this way of construing the refutation makes Socrates' case stronger.[18] In particular, the argument is not that since it is evident that beliefs about the future can be false, each of us cannot be the measure of what is going to be in the future. As I have mentioned, Protagoras could deny that beliefs about the future can be false by restricting the truth of the belief about the future to the moment in the past at which it was formed; if it seemed to Protagoras in the past that it was going to be in a particular way in the future, then however things will seem to Protagoras in the future, it was still true for the Protagoras of the past that it was going to be in that particular way in the future. The problem, in short, is that if Protagoras admits that his beliefs about the future are more accurate than the layman's, then the thesis that things are as they seem to each of us does not hold. So it seems that there is more to Protagoras' wisdom than that he can bring about better beliefs in his student; his wisdom is based on beliefs which are not a matter of how things merely seem to him.

But the argument at *Theaetetus* 178b2-179b9 is not only a matter of proving the 'man the measure' thesis to be wrong. Socrates points out that Protagoras' conflation of sense perception and belief is suggestive of the view that beliefs are momentary; just as the content of sense perception is restricted to the moment at which the senses are affected, so is the content of belief. This is probably not a faithful characterisation of the historical Protagoras' position. But whatever the position of the historical Protagoras might have been, by construing his position in this particular way Socrates brings home an important point about belief: the content of belief goes beyond the present.

Character and expectation

The principle that beliefs have a bearing beyond the moment at which they are arrived at is touched upon also in the final argument against Theaetetus' definition of knowledge as αἴσθησις at *Theaetetus* 184b4-187a8. For having discussed how the soul through itself considers the commons, namely being, difference, identity, and so forth, in regard to colour and sound Socrates at 186a9 expands the discussion to the ethical notions beauty (καλόν) and goodness (ἀγαθόν). Being beautiful and good (καλὸς κἀγαθός), as is well known, was a matter of having a virtuous character, and the two notions are so closely related that it is not easy to keep them apart.[19] At any rate, by introducing these notions Socrates prepares the ground for the point that not only beliefs about the future commit us to views about what will happen, but also present tense beliefs, such as beliefs about people's character. The contrast I have in mind is this. The belief "Theaetetus is going to act bravely" commits the believer to the view that Theaetetus is going to act bravely in the future in an explicit way; the future tense shows that the believer has views about the future. But now the point is that even a belief like "Theaetetus is καλὸς κἀγαθός," which is in the present tense, commits the believer to views about the future doings of Theaetetus. For being καλὸς κἀγαθός arouses expectations of how Theaetetus is going to act in the future.

There is a fairly obvious hint at this kind of commitment at *Theaetetus* 142a6-c5, in the very opening scene of the dialogue. Learning that Theaetetus lies ill with dysentery Terpsion asks Eucleides how Theaetetus copes with the state he is in. He is καλὸς κἀγαθός, Eucleides answers. What Eucleides has in mind must be that despite his critical condition Theaetetus acts bravely. But this does not surprise Terpsion, for it was precisely this kind of thing that Socrates "had prophesied" (μαντικῶς εἶπε) about Theaetetus. And the basis for the prophecy is, of course, the encounter between Socrates and Theaetetus which we are about to witness. So on the basis of the experience Socrates has had of Theaetetus in the past, he comes to form a belief about his character, namely that he is καλὸς κἀγαθός. And that belief commits him to views about how Theaetetus is going to act in the future.

At first glance, the introduction of things that are beautiful and good, together with their opposites, that is, things that are ugly (αἰσχρόν) and bad (κακόν), might seem to be a matter of listing further commons in addition to those already mentioned; the step from 186a6-7 to 186a9 sug-

gests that. But the ethical notions and the commons do not stand on the same footing. First, the commons are said to be common in virtue of being considered in regard to everything (περὶ πάντων), as we can see from 185e1. The ethical notions, by contrast, are such that only some things qualify as the right kind of thing to be sorted under them–and it is fair to say that it must be men in the first place that Socrates has in mind. Second, it is fair to assume that the commons are considered even in regard to these ethical notions. For in order to discern the good thing and the bad thing as kinds, the soul must think the commons in regard to them; just as the soul attains the being of colour and sound by discerning what kinds they are, so it attains the being of the good thing and the bad thing by discerning what kinds they are. So 186a9 actually marks a new beginning in the discussion.

The similarity between the ethical notions and the commons is merely that as far as the being of ethical notions is concerned the soul considers it through itself. But in view of the fact that the soul considers the being, that is, discerns the kind, of everything through itself, the introduction of good and bad things does not seem to add anything to Socrates' account of what it is to attain the being of things and, hence, to believe. But Theaetetus' answer at 186a10-b1 to Socrates' question what we should think about the beautiful, the ugly, the good, and the bad gives a good hint at what Socrates is driving at.

> It seems to me that the soul considers the being also of these things [the beautiful, the ugly, the good, and the bad], especially in relation to one another, calculating by itself past and present in relation to future instances.
>
> Καὶ τούτων μοι δοκεῖ ἐν τοῖς μάλιστα πρὸς ἄλληλα σκοπεῖσθαι τὴν οὐσίαν, ἀναλογιζομένη ἐν ἑαυτῇ τὰ γεγονότα καὶ τὰ παρόντα πρὸς τὰ μέλλοντα.

To begin with, it should be noticed that the sentence is somewhat compressed and allows of different construals. But it seems to me that the following gives the best sense to Theaetetus' answer. The phrase 'especially' (ἐν τοῖς μάλιστα) qualifies 'in relation to one another' (πρὸς ἄλληλα), the point being that in regard to the good, the bad, and so forth, their being is considered in a special way. The clause beginning with 'calculating' (ἀναλογιζομένη), in turn, gives an explanation of what this special way of considering their being amounts to. The explanation is this.

The question what character a person has is particularly important for the time to come; if we wonder whether a person is good or bad, it is really the likely future doings of that person that we want to know about. Sorting out whether the person is good or bad may well require that we take the past and present doings of the person into account; nevertheless, our main concern is with his or her future doings. Now since it matters a great deal for the time to come whether a person is good or bad, it is particularly important in these cases to make a comparison between the past and present behaviour of the person with the future behaviour, that is, how the person is likely to act in the future. Let us assume that we are choosing a leader for the city and that we consider the character of a candidate. By taking the past and present doings into account we can make a calculation as to how he will act in the future. This considering of his past and present doings amounts to sorting out whether he is good or bad. And what expectation we will have of him turns on whether we come to the conclusion that he has a good or a bad character. So the significance of being good or bad becomes particularly clear when the future is taken into account.

Socrates introduces these ethical notions in order to make it clear that as far as some beliefs are concerned, such as believing a person to be good or bad, they crucially commit the believer to views about the future; the content of such beliefs points beyond the present. It should not be denied that the same point could be made in regard to beliefs about what colour a thing has. For instance, let us assume that we become accustomed to associating a certain shade of red to a particularly juicy apple. In that case it seems that on encountering another apple with the same shade of red we may expect it to taste juicy. However, in this case the particular shade of red is an arbitrary sign for what the apple will taste like; after all, a particular shade of blue could have done the work equally well. So the particular shade of red is not intrinsically suggestive of what the apple will taste like and the belief that an apple has that particular shade of red does not commit us to the view that it will taste juicy in virtue of being that shade of red. For if it turns out that the apple does not taste juicy, there is no reason to doubt that it really has this particular shade of red. But if we believe a person to be καλὸς κἀγαθός, then that belief commits us to views about the future doings of that person precisely in virtue of being καλὸς κἀγαθός. And if the person acts in a way not in line with our expectations, we will have to revise our belief; the person turned out not to be καλὸς κἀγαθός after all.

From the point of view of *Theaetetus* 184b4-187a8 considered as a

whole, 186a2-b1 would be rather redundant if the passage did not add something further to what has been said already about considering the being of things. So it makes good sense that the ethical notions are brought into the discussion in order to make the point that the being of some things is such that considering it involves taking the future into account and, hence, that the content of some present tense beliefs is such that it commits the believer to views about the future. In particular, in view of the fact that at *Theaetetus* 179c1-d1 Socrates is presumably speaking of beliefs the content of which is restricted to "the affection which is present to each of us" (τὸ παρὸν ἑκάστῳ πάθος), the rationale for introducing present tense beliefs the content of which points beyond the present is obvious enough. And yet again the introduction of such beliefs serves the purpose of showing that belief has a temporally richer content than sense perception even as far as present tense beliefs are concerned.[20]

Plato's point against Protagoras is that believing differs from sense perception in so far as belief is not a matter of how things strike us, but requires that we get at what the thing is, that is, attain its being. And attaining the being of the thing requires reasoning. The point is made clear at *Theaetetus* 184b4-187a8 by considering sensory qualities such as colour and sound; beliefs involving sensory qualities have the best chance of vindicating Protagoras' claim that believing is a matter of how we are affected. For to believe that something is black, it is tempting to say, does not require that we get involved in reasoning. But now that Socrates shows that even in regard to sensory qualities like colour and sound believing requires reasoning, he has a strong case for the claim that the same holds for other beliefs as well. In fact, Protagoras and Plato seem to follow opposing strategies. Protagoras, for his part, makes a case for the claim that a belief like "X is black" is a matter of how the soul is affected, and he extends the point that this belief is a passive state of the soul to all beliefs. Plato, by contrast, shows that even a belief like "X is black" requires that the soul has attained the being of blackness, which, in turn, requires reasoning.

By showing that beliefs committing us to views about the future can be false, Plato brings home the point that the effort put into the formation of a belief can be more or less successful. For instance, let us assume that the belief that Alcibiades is καλὸς κἀγαθός turns out to be false because Alcibiades acts in a way not expected of a person who is καλὸς κἀγαθός. It can then be claimed that the belief was not based on a proper grasp of

what it is to be καλὸς κἀγαθός. In particular, Alcibiades' family, wealth and good looks, which might incline us to believe that he is καλὸς κἀγαθός, are not really relevant in regard to the question whether he is καλὸς κἀγαθός. So only by having a grasp of what it is to be καλὸς κἀγαθός may we resist the temptation to believe that Alcibiades is καλὸς κἀγαθός. And if the expectation of Alcibiades' future doings is disappointed, then we can come to realise the need to consider once again what it is to be καλὸς κἀγαθός.

Plato's characterisation of belief suggests that beliefs are rational, that is, based on an exercise of reason. But it should be noticed that even though it is fair to say that Plato holds a belief to be a well thought-out view on something, it is rational in virtue of being based on a grasp of the being of the thing, that is, what the thing is. This tenet is worth stressing in view of the fact that Plato's concern with what it is that makes a belief rational is rather different from the concern with the question whether we can trust that empirical evidence on which the belief is based. For instance, as far as the belief "X is black" is concerned, Plato's point is that we need to exercise reason in order to grasp what it is to be black, not in order to consider the question whether we can trust our senses.

The real problem with this conception of belief is that it seems to rule out non-rational beliefs, that is, beliefs not based on an exercise of reason. And it seems odd indeed that Plato would rule out such beliefs. What is more, the account at *Theaetetus* 184b4-187a8 of what it is to attain the being of things seems implausible as a general account of belief; surely, all beliefs do not require the effort involved in attaining the being of things. But as I have mentioned, Plato does make a distinction between beliefs that are based on an exercise of reason and those that are not. But although the ground is prepared for the distinction in the *Theaetetus*, it is not clearly spelled out in the dialogue, which might give the impression that what Socrates says about believing at 184b4-187a8 and 189e6-190a6 applies to all beliefs; indeed, the difficulty involved in interpreting *Theaetetus* 184b4-187a8 is in part due to the fact that Plato has not made the distinction explicit. But in the *Theaetetus'* sequel the *Sophist*, as we shall see, the distinction between rational and non-rational beliefs is spelled out in a more straightforward way.

IV
Judging by appearances

In the *Theaetetus* Plato discloses a conflation of different cognitive phenomena on Protagoras' part. He suggests that Protagoras' 'man the measure' thesis is based on the presupposition that sense perception (αἴσθησις), appearing (φαντασία) and belief (δόξα) amount to the same thing. This conflation of different phenomena that ought to be kept apart becomes the target of Plato's criticism. The distinction between sense perception and belief has been dealt with at some length in chapters 2 and 3. As far as appearing is concerned, Plato introduces the notion in the *Theaetetus* where it plays an important part in the construal of Protagoras' position. But in contrast to belief, appearing does not get a separate treatment in the *Theaetetus*. And since the locutions from which Plato derives the notions appearing and belief, namely '... appears ... to someone' (φαίνεται τινι) and '... seems ... to someone' (δοκεῖ τινι), are well nigh synonymous, Plato might even seem to hold that appearing (φαντασία) amounts to the same thing as belief (δόξα).

However, my suggestion is that Plato distinguishes also between appearing and belief. The problem now is that in the *Sophist*, the main source for Plato's notion of appearing, appearing is characterised as a belief. For at *Sophist* 264a4-b4 the stranger from Elea defines appearing as a belief which does "not occur by itself, but through sense perception" (μὴ καθ' αὐτὸ ἀλλὰ δι' αἰσθήσεως παρῇ τινι), and '... appears ...' (φαίνεται) is characterised as "a blend of sense perception and judgement" (σύμμειξις αἰσθήσεως καὶ δόξης). How, then, is appearing to be distinguished from belief in so far as appearing is characterised as a belief?

The characterisation of appearing as a belief or as involving judgement as a constituent suggests that there is not a sharp division between appearing and belief. In particular, since appearing has a judgement as a constituent, appearing might seem to be just one kind of belief and the relation between appearing and belief to be a matter of a narrower and a broader notion, or species and genus. In other words, the point could be that all appearings are beliefs, but not all beliefs appearings. And since the

distinguishing mark for appearing is the connection to sense perception, it is tempting to think that appearings form one subset of beliefs, namely those concerned with the proper sensibles: some beliefs, such as "This tastes sweet," are appearings, whereas other beliefs, such as "This is unjust," are not appearings. On this suggestion the question whether a belief is an appearing turns on the content of the belief.

But I shall argue that it is a mistake to conceive of the distinction in this way. Even at first glance, there are statements that speak against the suggestion. To begin with, at *Sophist* 263d6-8, as the stranger has shown that false statements are possible, he prides himself on having shown that "thought, belief, and appearing" (διάνοιά τε καὶ δόξα καὶ φαντασία) can be false as well. And at 263d10-e1 he explains that Theaetetus will be able to understand this better once he grasps "what they are and in what way they differ from one another."[1] Consequently, a few lines below, at 264a1-6, δόξα and φαντασία are accounted for separately. I take these passages as an indication that δόξα and φαντασία are treated as things at the same generic level. Furthermore, the account of δόξα in the last chapter suggests that the distinction between δόξα and φαντασία does not turn on the content of the belief. For when Socrates accounts for how the soul arrives at beliefs concerned with proper sensibles through itself without recourse to the sense organs, he cannot have φαντασία in mind– a belief through sense perception. So even when the belief is about proper sensibles or contains a predicate picking out proper sensibles it need not be a φαντασία.

Plato's account of appearing makes it clear that he has in mind a distinction between two different kinds of judgement. For the point of saying that appearings have δόξα as a constituent is that appearings commit the subject to views about the world. The problem, as was mentioned, is that if appearings have δόξα as a constituent, then appearing is characterised as a belief (δόξα) and the distinction between appearing and belief as two different things at the same generic level is blurred. But this conclusion can be avoided if we assume that the term δόξα is used in two different ways. On the one hand, we have δόξα as a generic term comprising both appearing and belief, the point being that both appearing and belief commit the subject to views about the world. When used in this generic sense, I shall render it 'judgement.' On the other hand, since there is a distinction to be made between two different kinds of judgements (δόξα), some are called appearings (φαντασία), others beliefs (δόξα)–thus the same term is used for the genus and for a particular species of that genus. When used

in the specific sense, I shall render it 'belief proper.' This might not seem immediately plausible, but as I hope to make clear in the course of the chapter, once this twofold employment of the term is realised Plato's comments on appearing and belief make better sense.

There are only six occurrences of the term φαντασία in the entire Platonic corpus.[2] Although the term is frequent in Aristotle and in Hellenistic philosophy, we have no evidence for it before Plato. It is possible that the term was used before Plato, and in particular by Protagoras. For at *Theaetetus* 152b6-c3, where Plato sets the term to work, it is precisely in connecting Theaetetus' definition of knowledge as αἴσθησις to the Protagorean 'man the measure' thesis that Socrates uses the term. But it could also be that Plato expands on some Protagorean lines of reasoning and introduces the term so as to bring forth an unarticulated assumption on Protagoras' part. On that alternative, the term is first introduced by Plato with a view to laying bare the background to the 'man the measure' thesis, and is then taken over by his successors. But whether or not the term is introduced by Plato, his particular use of the term does not survive beyond his work. For starting with Aristotle, the term is put to a different use from that of Plato's. So as we approach Plato's notion of φαντασία we cannot take these later uses of the term as evidence for Plato's notion.

Φαντασία is a cognate of the verbs φαίνεσθαι, φαντάζεσθαι and the noun φάντασμα, all of which are attested before Plato. It is a matter of argument from which of these notions φαντασία is derived. But at *Theaetetus* 152b6-c3 Plato introduces the term as a nominalisation of the locution '... appears ... to someone' (φαίνεται τινι). For as Theaetetus has defined knowledge as αἴσθησις, Socrates develops the definition by laying bare what he takes it to be suggestive of.

> Socrates: This '... appears ...,' then, amounts to perceiving?
> Theaetetus: Indeed.
> Socrates: Hence, appearing and perception amount to the same thing...
>
> ΣΩ. Τὸ δέ γε "φαίνεται" αἰσθάνεσθαί[3] ἐστιν;
> ΘΕΑΙ. Ἔστιν γάρ.
> ΣΩ. Φαντασία ἄρα καὶ αἴσθησις ταὐτόν...

If this is the first occurrence of the term φαντασία in Greek, Plato makes it clear that he derives it from the locution '... appears ... to someone' (φαίνεται τινι). For in the context of Socrates' interpretation of

Theaetetus' definition it is obvious that '... appears ...' (φαίνεται) is an ellipsis of '... appears ... to someone.' So the suggestion is that being appeared to amounts to perceiving. As we have seen in chapter 1, Socrates equates sense perception and belief via the notion of appearing. The reason for this move on Socrates' part is that the locution φαίνεται τινι connects nicely with the interpretation of αἴσθησις as *sense* perception, on the one hand, and with the locution δοκεῖ τινι and its cognate δόξα, on the other. By that move Socrates establishes the important assumption in Protagoras' theory as conceived by Socrates, namely, that perceiving through the senses amounts to believing. In other words, since φαντασία connotes both sensory experience and judgement, it is well suited to connect sense perception and belief.

In section 1 of this chapter I shall proceed by considering one of the cognates of φαντασία, namely φάντασμα, which plays an important part in the *Sophist* and which I take to be a crucial clue to Plato's notion of appearing. In section 2 I turn to the stranger's account of appearing and the part it plays in the attempt to define the sophist as a deceiver. Particular attention will be paid to the question in what sense appearing involves or is based on sense perception. Moreover, the account of the part played by sense perception will shed further light on the tenet that we considered in chapter 3, namely, that the soul arrives at beliefs about sensory qualities through itself without recourse to the sense organs. In section 3, finally, I shall discuss Aristotle's criticism of Plato's notion of appearing in *De Anima* 3.3. In the first place, Aristotle's criticism sheds important additional light on Plato's notion of appearing. What is more, it will be shown that although Aristotle opts for a different notion of appearing, there are important similarities between the two notions as well. In the end, it will be possible to see the rationale behind Plato's and Aristotle's disagreement over the notion.

1. *The notion φάντασμα*

In the *Sophist* Socrates gives an account of φάντασμα which plays a crucial part in the attempt to define the sophist. My suggestion is that this account of φάντασμα has a bearing on how Plato's notion of appearing is to be conceived. For as we shall see in section 2 of this chapter, Plato's account of φάντασμα gives a clue to the characterisation of appearing as a judgement occurring through sense perception (δι' αἰσθήσεως). The claim is not that the notion of φάντασμα has a bearing on how appearing

is to be conceived simply because φάντασμα and φαντασία are cognates; rather, it is the relevance of the notion for the drift of the dialogue that matters. So before we turn to the details of Plato's conception of appearing, let us prepare the ground by considering the notion φάντασμα in the *Sophist*. In order to distinguish between φαντασία and φάντασμα terminologically I shall render the former as 'appearing,' the latter as 'appearance' and 'appearance image.'

A quick look at uses of the noun φάντασμα, and the verb φαντάζεσθαι, another cognate of φαντασία, provides us with a background to Plato's use of the term φάντασμα in the *Sophist*.[4] Before Plato, these terms apply to such things as ghosts, phantoms and things appearing in dreams. Ghosts and phantoms are said to present themselves (φαντάζεσθαι) to someone and to be φαντάσματα. The point of these uses is to signal that although it might appear that there is something presenting itself, there actually is nothing there. But the terms φάντασμα and φαντάζεσθαι are also used in contexts where the point is that something real presents itself in different guises. The verb φαντάζεσθαι is occasionally used in constructions signifying not only 'making oneself visible' or 'presenting oneself' in general, but 'presenting oneself in a guise.' What is more, the verb can be used when something appears in different guises, regardless of whether the thing willingly presents itself in a guise or whether the thing just happens to appear in a guise. These aspects are evident in Plato's own use of the verb. At *Republic* 2, 380d1-2, for instance, Socrates asks "Do you think, then, that the god is a magician cunningly presenting himself in different guises on different occasions ..." (ἆρα γόητα τὸν θεὸν οἴει εἶναι καὶ οἷον ἐξ ἐπιβουλῆς φαντάζεσθαι ἄλλοτε ἐν ἄλλαις ἰδέαις). At *Sophist* 216c8-d2, again, Socrates speaks about philosophers appearing (φαντάζονται) in different guises: now as statesmen, now as sophists, sometimes even as lunatics.

In addition to cases where a particular thing is said to appear in different guises, Plato uses the verb φαντάζεσθαι when the relation between a form and sensible particulars participating in the form is at issue. At *Republic* 5, 476a4-7 Socrates points out that the form of the just and the form of the good "is each in itself one, but in combination with actions and bodies and with one another they present themselves everywhere and each appears many" (αὐτὸ μὲν ἓν ἕκαστον εἶναι, τῇ δὲ τῶν πράξεων καὶ σωμάτων καὶ ἀλλήλων κοινωνίᾳ πανταχοῦ φανταζόμενα πολλὰ φαίνεσθαι ἕκαστον). Presumably, the idea is not merely that when sensible particulars partake in the form, the form is

displayed in many different locations at the same time, but also that the form is displayed in different kinds of contexts and takes on all sorts of shapes and is consequently displayed in multifarious ways.

The noun φάντασμα is also put to different uses, two of which are worth special attention. First, reflections of sensible particulars are called appearances. At *Republic* 6, 509e1-510a2, introducing the divided line, Socrates explains that the lowest part consists of "images: shadows in the first place, and furthermore appearances in water and on surfaces that have been made fine in texture, smooth and bright" (τὰς εἰκόνας πρῶτον μὲν τὰς σκιάς, ἔπειτα τὰ ἐν τοῖς ὕδασι φαντάσματα καὶ ἐν τοῖς ὅσα πυκνά τε καὶ λεῖα καὶ φανὰ συνέστηκεν). So in this case the appearance is an image of the sensible particular and in so far as the image is perceived, the sensible particular is perceived indirectly, that is, in virtue of the image being perceived.

Second, a sensible particular perceived from a perspective is called an appearance. At *Republic* 10, 598a7-10it is made clear that the fact that a bed looks different from different points of view does not imply that the bed really differs from itself. But as far as a painting of the bed is concerned, Socrates wonders at 598b3-4, "is it an imitation of the appearance or the truth?" (φαντάσματος ἢ ἀληθείας οὖσα μίμησις;). And the answer comes without hesitation: "Of the appearance." So what is called an appearance here is neither a reflection of the bed, nor an imitation of it, a painting, say. It is precisely the bed as it appears from a perspective that is called an appearance. And since the painting presents the bed from one perspective, it is more to the point to say that it imitates the bed as it appears from a perspective rather than as it is in itself. So Plato also uses the term when a sensible particular is perceived directly.

There are thus three aspects of Plato's use of φαντάζεσθαι and φάντασμα that should be borne in mind: the terms are used in expressions signifying something's being presented through a reflection, or from a particular point of view, or in a guise. It should be noticed that these uses are not suggestive of the idea that something is unreal in the sense in which ghosts and phantoms are unreal. And what is important now, Plato also uses the term when something appears in a deceptive way. To begin with, the idea that a thing appears in a guise is obviously suggestive of the possibility that we may come to believe that the thing is something which it is not. But as I shall argue, under certain circumstances something's being perceived through a reflection or from a particular point of view may also give rise to deception. The idea, in rough outline, is that we

may be deceived in so far as there is more to the thing than the appearance conveys; if a thing is perceived from one perspective or through a reflection, it is only a limited aspect of the thing that is perceived.

In the *Sophist* Socrates uses the term φάντασμα in yet a further sense by characterising appearance as a particular kind of image (εἴδωλον), and exemplifies what he has in mind with works of art such as sculptures and paintings. This characterisation of appearance is the starting point for the account of how appearances give rise to deception. But as we shall see, this account is not exclusively concerned with works of art; it has a bearing on other cases as well. This is not to say that there is any uniformity in Plato's use of terms for 'image;' at least there is not much of a difference between how the terms εἰκών and εἴδωλον are employed in the dialogues. But in the *Sophist* Plato develops a theory of images and puts these terms to separate uses. And it is in this context that we find Plato's most articulate account of what kind of image a φάντασμα is.

The art of making appearance images

In the *Sophist* the stranger from Elea sets out to catch the sophist by giving a definition of sophistry. In this attempt the stranger uses the method of division. He first pins down sophistry as an art, and, by a division of arts into different branches, as a productive art. He then proceeds by making two further divisions; the relevant productive art is qualified as an image making productive art (εἰδωλοποιικὴ τέχνη). This art is divided further into two subbranches: the art of making likenesses (εἰκαστικὴ τέχνη) and the art of making appearance images (φανταστικὴ τέχνη). In other words, εἴδωλον is used as the generic term for both likeness (εἰκών) and appearance (φάντασμα); both likenesses and appearances are images. This first set of divisions, which is carried out at 233d3-236c8, is interrupted by a long discussion of problems generated in the divisions so far. The question whether the sophist is to be sorted under the art of making likenesses or the art of making appearance images is not resumed until 264b11.

In characterising the sophist as an image maker the stranger has a relatively loose-knit notion of image in mind. For the stranger makes a connection between the art of image making and the art of imitating (τὸ μιμητικόν) and gives examples which range over a heterogeneous set of cases. Not only pictorial representations like sculptures and paintings are at issue; as we can see from 234c2-7, speech is sorted under the art of making imitations. What is more, even mimicry enters into the discussion;

in conveying the impression that he is a wise man the sophist imitates the wise man.

It is important to see that in speaking about image and imitation Plato has in mind the different ways in which a thing may present itself or be presented by someone. In particular, the images are not to be identified with mental images; Plato's point in regard to image making here in the *Sophist* is not that there is a thing in the world, on the one hand, and a representation of the thing in the head, on the other. For instance, when the painter fools someone into believing that his paintings are the real things, the images are as external to the perceiver as can be. By the same token, when the poet pictures something in words, it is not a mental image that the poet brings about, but an image of that something in the external medium of language. Of course, it should not be denied that Plato occasionally touches upon something like mental images, but by and large the term φάνταση is not put to such uses.[5] And as far as the account of image making and the notion appearance image in the *Sophist* are concerned, the gist of the characterisation of the sophist as an image maker is that he brings about an image which presents the thing in a particular way.

At 235b8-236c8 the stranger sets out to distinguish between the two different arts of image making: the art of making likenesses and the art of making appearance images. In view of the fact that the kinds of image making and imitation are so heterogeneous, we should not expect a general account of likenesses and appearance images respectively. For an account of how paintings or sculptures work as images of a thing does not explain how speaking about a thing conveys a picture of it. Nevertheless, even that which is conveyed in speech is called 'appearance image,' as we can see from the wording at 234e1: τὰ ἐν τοῖς λόγοις φαντάσματα. So when the stranger expands on examples like sculpting and painting, we need to consider the general idea behind these examples which can be brought to bear on other cases as well, such as speech and mimicry.

The contrast between likenesses and appearance images is drawn in the following way: we have images which are likenesses of something, on the one hand, and images which merely appear to be likenesses of something, on the other. The latter, which is the closest Plato comes to defining appearance image, amounts to the idea that there are images which somehow purport to be, or appear to be, likenesses of things, but without really being that. In order to see the contrast between likeness and appearance image in more detail, let us turn to one side of the contrast. To begin with, what is it for an image (εἴδωλον) to be a likeness (εἰκών)? At 235d6-e2,

answering Theaetetus' question what kinds of imitation there are, the stranger explains:

> One kind that I see in it [the art of imitating] is the art of making likenesses. It is at its greatest when someone brings about an imitation according to the proportions of the original both in length, width and depth, and giving, in addition, each part its appropriate colour.
>
> Μίαν μὲν τὴν εἰκαστικὴν ὁρῶν ἐν αὐτῇ τέχνην. ἔστι δ' αὖτη μάλιστα ὁπόταν κατὰ τὰς τοῦ παραδείγματος συμμετρίας τις ἐν μήκει καὶ πλάτει καὶ βάθει, καὶ πρὸς τούτοις ἔτι χρώματα ἀποδιδοὺς τὰ προσήκοντα ἑκάστοις, τὴν τοῦ μιμήματος γένεσιν ἀπεργάζηται.

The stranger's answer is what we would expect from imitation: to make an image which is like the original by imitating its shape, proportions and other features. And as far as discourse is concerned, the point seems to be that analogously to making likenesses the speaker tries to give a faithful picture of the thing. In other words, to be a likeness is a matter of being like the original. But that is hardly surprising. In order to grasp the essence of the art of making likenesses, we need to see the contrast that the stranger has in mind. For as Theaetetus wonders whether not all imitators go about in the way described, the stranger at 235e5-236a2 retorts:

> Not as far as those which make some of the very big sculptures and paintings are concerned. If they produced the real proportions of the beautiful things, you know that the upper parts would appear smaller, the lower bigger than appropriate because the former would be seen by us from a longer distance, the latter from a closer distance.
>
> Οὔκουν ὅσοι γε τῶν μεγάλων πού τι πλάττουσιν ἔργων ἢ γράφουσιν. εἰ γὰρ ἀποδιδοῖεν τὴν τῶν καλῶν[6] ἀληθινὴν συμμετρίαν, οἶσθ' ὅτι σμικρότερα μὲν τοῦ δέοντος τὰ ἄνω, μείζω δὲ τὰ κάτω φαίνοιτ' ἂν διὰ τὸ τὰ μὲν πόρρωθεν, τὰ δ' ἐγγύθεν ὑφ' ἡμῶν ὁρᾶσθαι.

So some image makers produce imitations which are not like the originals. For an imitation which has the same proportions as the original might nevertheless appear disproportionate to a perceiver. Therefore, there is an

art of imitation which takes this phenomenon into account. The way to deal with it is to make an imitation which in fact has not the same proportions as the original, but which appears perfectly proportionate and, hence, which appears to be like the original. It is this latter kind of imitations that are called 'appearance images.' As the stranger puts it at 236b4-7:

> What should we call that which appears to be like the beautiful thing because it is not seen from an appropriate point of view, but which, if someone had the power to see objects as big as that in a satisfactory way, is not like that which it claims to be like? But since it appears, but is not like, may we not call it 'appearance image'?
>
> τὸ φαινόμενον μὲν διὰ τὴν οὐκ ἐκ καλοῦ θέαν ἐοικέναι τῷ καλῷ, δύναμιν δὲ εἴ τις λάβοι τὰ τηλικαῦτα ἱκανῶς ὁρᾶν, μηδ' εἰκὸς ᾧ φησιν ἐοικέναι, τί καλοῦμεν; ἆρ' οὐκ, ἐπείπερ φαίνεται μέν, ἔοικε δὲ οὔ, φάντασμα;

There are two ways to construe the stranger's account of appearance image. On the first alternative, the stranger envisages a case in which not only the sculpture is of colossal size, but so also is the original; hence, the imitation and the original are supposed to be of the same size. In that case the point must be that the appearance image does not look like what the real beautiful thing would look like. For if we perceived the real beautiful thing, a god, say, the upper parts of his body would indeed look smaller than the lower parts. On the second alternative, the stranger is thinking of the sculpture as an enlarged imitation of the original. In that case the point must be that although the sculpture appears to have the same proportions as the original it does not really have the same proportions.

It should be noticed that the two alternatives do not pull apart in regard to what the sculpture's appearing amounts to: even on the first alternative the sculpture appears to have the same beautiful proportions as the original; on the second alternative the sculpture appears to be like the original in the sense that is has the same proportions as it. But the two alternatives pinpoint different aspects of the sculpture's appearing: the first alternative stresses the likeness relation between the imitation and the original–the imitation appears to be like the original, the second alternative brings forth the point that the imitation itself appears to be beautiful in virtue of having the same proportions as the original. Since I cannot see what those orig-

inals of colossal size are supposed to be that the first alternative would presuppose, I am inclined to think that the stranger has the second alternative in mind.

The contrast between appearance images and likenesses is that an appearance image appears to be like the original without being that, whereas a likeness is like the original regardless of how it appears to be. But the appearance image is crucially dependent on the point of view from which it is perceived. For it is only in so far as it is seen "not from an appropriate point of view" (οὐκ ἐκ καλοῦ) that the appearance image appears to be like the beautiful original and, hence, to be beautiful. By contrast, the likeness, which actually is like the original, appears to be like the original only in so far as it is perceived from an appropriate point of view.[7] The notion of approporiate point of view is important and should not be restricted to perceptual point of view. For instance, when the question is raised whether something is like the beautiful original or not, there are good and bad ways to address it; philosophy represents the good way, sophistry the bad way. So for those who know how to go about determining whether something is like the beautiful original, the likeness will appear to be like it, whereas the appearance image will not appear to be like it.

In so far as a likeness really is like the original whereas the appearance image merely lays claim to being like the original, it is fair to say that the appearance image appears not only to be like the original, but also to be a likeness. This tenet is important in regard to the final characterisation of sophistry as an art of making appearance images. For at 267e10-268a4 the stranger draws attention to the fact that the sophist is aware of his own ignorance. So in so far as the sophist makes images which are not like the original, it is not because he is not aware of his own ignorance about the original. If that were the case, then it would have sufficed to characterise the art of making appearance images as an art of ignorance. But in addition to being ignorant about the original and making images which are not like the originals, the sophist is skilful at making images in such a way that it is tempting to take them to be likenesses and, hence, to really be like the original. So the art of making appearance images, as it is put at 240d1-4, is an art of deception (ἀπατητική).

The stranger's account of imitation suggests that in making appearance images the sophist is even more successful among the laymen than the philosopher. Let us assume that a layman was presented with two sculptures of colossal size, the one a likeness of the beautiful thing, the other an

appearance image of the beautiful thing. Which one of the two would he be inclined to take to be more like the beautiful thing and, hence, to be more beautiful? The stranger's account of the distinction between the two kinds of sculptures suggests that he would be inclined to take the appearance image to be more like the beautiful thing. And the reason for the sophist's success is that he takes the layman's ignorant point of view into account; it is tempting for the layman, who does not accommodate the effect of the size of the sculpture, to take the appearance image to be more like the beautiful thing. So the distinction between likenesses and appearance images is not only a matter of the former's being like the original and the latter's merely appearing to be like the original, but also of the appearance image even appearing to be more like the original than the likeness is.

Likeness and being

The sophist does not only make images that appear to be like the original, he also takes a stand on the status of images and image making which makes it harder to dispute his claim to being a wise man. The background is the following: at 239c9-d4 the stranger remarks that if someone was to sort the sophist under the art of making appearance images and, thus, to characterise him as an image maker, then the sophist would insist on asking what an image is in the first place. Theaetetus suggests at 239d7-9 that we just have to mention mirrors and paintings in order to bring home the point to the sophist. But the stranger remarks that the sophist would deny any acquaintance with things like mirrors and paintings. The stranger's remark is surprising. However, the point is hardly that the sophist denies the existence of such things as mirrors and paintings, but rather that examples will not do as an answer. Instead, the sophist urges us to spell out what an image is.

The account at 240a4-c5 of what it is to be an image (εἴδωλον) amounts to pretty much the same as the account of likeness (εἰκών); indeed, at 240b11 Theaetetus speaks about εἰκών rather than εἴδωλον. The stranger's and Theaetetus' enquiry makes it clear that an image is another thing (ἕτερον) of the same kind (τοιοῦτον) as the original. And being of the same kind as the original the image is like (ἐοικός) it. But being another thing which is like the original is not a matter of really (ὄντως) being the original. Of course, the point is not that the image is not identical to the original, which is a rather trivial point, but that the being of the image differs from the being of the original. For the likeness is not a duplicate of

the original: the sculpture of a man, say, is not a man, although it is like a man.

It should be noticed that the sophist makes the request for an account of what an image is with a view to raising an eristic puzzle. For in giving the account the stranger and Theaetetus have been forced to admit that the image both is and is not, as it is pointed out at 240c1-2. But since the sophist adheres to Parmenides' principle that not-being is not possible, the stranger must lay to rest the attempt to sort the sophist under the art of making images. So the account of image is the starting point and motivation for the stranger's inquiry into not-being.

But although the sophist's denial of any acquaintance with things like mirrors and paintings is an eristic move, the denial is also suggestive of a certain attitude towards image making. Considering the fact that the stranger emphasises the ontological difference between the image and the original, the account seems to be directed against the view that there is no difference in being between the image and the original.[8] The stranger seems to target the sophist in so far as he denies that there is any difference between the image and the original; the view under attack is that the image is a perfect copy or duplicate of the original. It makes good sense that the sophist takes such a stand on images–if not in earnest, then at least for dialectical purposes. [9] For on the assumption that the image is a duplicate of the original, the sophist can lay claim to providing the whole truth about the original.

This characterisation of the ontological status of images has an important bearing on the distinction between the two different kinds of image making. The maker of likenesses imitates the original in a faithful way by giving it the same proportions as the original, and so forth. But the maker of likenesses does not deny or try to hide one important aspect of what it is to be an image or imitation. For the maker of likenesses does not deny that the image is no more than an image and, hence, that it is only like the original. And the image's being merely like the original puts limits to what we can learn from it about the original. For although the image is like the original in some respects, it cannot be like the original in all respects. Think of the sculpture of the beautiful thing again. Even though the sculpture imitates the correct proportions and the correct colours of the real beautiful thing, it is not like the real beautiful thing, a god, say, in so far as it is made of marble, is immobile, is not alive in the first place, and so forth.[10] The image can be a perfectly correct imitation as far as the imitated aspects are concerned, and yet fail to be like the original in regard to other

aspects, namely, in regard to those aspects that are not imitated. Hence, the maker of likenesses leaves the audience in no doubt that there is more to the original than what can be found in the image.

The maker of appearance images, by contrast, denies that there is any difference in being between the image and the original. The image, according to the maker of appearance images, is a duplicate of the original. So when we know all there is to know about the image, we also know everything there is to know about the original; there is nothing more to the original than there is to the image. This attitude on the part of the sophist explains his request for an account of image. For as the stranger and Theaetetus give the account, the sophist is supposed to attack the claim that the image has not-being as well as being. And the sophist's denial that the image has not-being makes good sense from the point of view of the assumption that the image is a duplicate of the original; there is no respect in which the image is not like the original. And in virtue of making images that appear to convey everything there is to know about the original, the sophist can lay claim to being a wise man.

Appearance image and sense perception

The account of appearance images in the *Sophist* is primarily motivated by the attempt to pin down the art of image making under which the sophist is to be sorted. Hence, the stranger focuses on the production of man-made images of things and uses works of art as the paradigmatic example. But it must be borne in mind that the class of appearance image is not restricted to works of art such as sculptures and paintings. This is clear from the fact that the sophist's art of making appearance images is a matter of uttering sayings which appear to be true and of presenting himself as if he were a wise man. So even in the context of giving an account of image making in the *Sophist* the term φάνταομα has a broad field of application. But now it should be noticed that the stranger puts the term to still further uses, thus broadening the field of application even more.

In resuming the division towards the end of the dialogue the stranger introduces two further distinctions that separate between different kinds of products of the image making productive art. At 265e3-6 he distinguishes between divine and human production, and at 266a8-10 between the production of originals and the production of images. The point of introducing divine production is to distinguish between artefacts, such as buildings, and natural things, such as stones. So divine production boils down to nature's production. We hence get four different kinds of produc-

tion: nature's production of originals and nature's production of images, human production of originals and human production of images. So there are images both of nature's making and of human making. It is clear more or less from the outset that the sophist is to be sorted under the heading of human production of images. The question we were faced with earlier, recall, concerned a further division, namely whether the sophist is engaged in the art of making likenesses or the art of making appearance images. But since the stranger makes use of the term appearance image in his characterisation of nature's production of images, it is clear that appearance images do not only comprise man-made images. What, then, are these images and why do they enter into the discussion?

To begin with, the distinction between natural and human production of originals is clear: the products of nature's craftmanship are natural things such as animals, plants, stones and the elements of which these things consist, whereas the originals which human craftmanship accomplishes are artefacts such as buildings. As far as the distinction between nature's production of images and human production of images is concerned, it is important to see that it is not parallel to another Platonic distinction familiar from *Republic* 10. There we are introduced to the distinction between the way in which the sensible particulars are imitations of forms and the way in which works of art are imitations of sensible particulars, and, thus, imitations of imitations. But in the *Sophist* nature's production of images is not a matter of imitating forms. For these images are imitations of sensible particulars. By the same token, nature's production of originals stands for the production of sensible particulars, not forms. And as we know from the *Timaeus*, the forms are eternal and, thus, not generated or produced at all. Instead, Timaeus' demiurge produces sensible particulars using the forms as paradigms. So there is no reason to think that in the *Sophist* the nature's production of images is a matter of producing sensible particulars.

The introduction of natural images suggests that the stranger has in mind a parallel between natural images and man-made images. In regard to nature's production of images, the stranger points out at 266b7-8: "images, not the things themselves, attend each of these things [the natural objects], and also these [the images] have been generated through divine contrivance" (Τούτων δέ γε ἑκάστων εἴδωλα ἀλλ' οὐκ αὐτὰ παρέπεται, δαιμονίᾳ καὶ ταῦτα μηχανῇ γεγονότα). Now it raises no difficulties to think of human production of images of natural things, whether in painting or in discourse. But why should there be images of

nature's own making and how is the natural production of images to be distinguished from the production of sensible particulars? At 266b10-c4 the stranger answers Theaetetus' question what these images are.

> Those images which occur in dreams and natural appearances in daylight: a shadow when darkness appears in the fire, a duplicate whenever the internal light and the external light meeting and coming together on a bright and smooth surface accomplish a form bringing about a perception which is opposite to the ordinary direct look.
>
> Τά τε ἐν τοῖς ὕπνοις καὶ ὅσα μεθ' ἡμέραν φαντάσματα αὐτοφυῆ λέγεται, σκιὰ μὲν ὅταν ἐν τῷ πυρὶ σκότος ἐγγίγνηται, διπλοῦν δὲ ἡνίκ' ἂν φῶς οἰκεῖόν τε καὶ ἀλλότριον περὶ τὰ λαμπρὰ καὶ λεῖα εἰς ἓν συνελθὸν τῆς ἔμπροσθεν εἰωθυίας ὄψεως ἐναντίαν αἴσθησιν παρέχον εἶδος ἀπεργάζηται.

So the natural images are reflections of things and are natural (αὐτοφυῆ) in the sense that they come about as a result of how the world is designed, rather than as a result of someone's decision to make them and to use them for certain purposes. But what is noticeable, the stranger uses the term φάντασμα in characterising things falling under the class of natural images. Is this mere coincidence? It is clear that the natural images are not on a par with the sophist's appearance images in so far as the sophist accommodates effects of perspective and produces them with a view to making people have certain views about the original. So it seems that the natural images and the sophist's appearance images are on a par only in so far as they both are images and that those conditions that hold for images generically hold for the natural images.

But it should be noticed that the stranger gives rather odd examples of natural images. In the first place, he even mentions dream images, that is, things that appear to be real without being that. What is more, he makes the point that if we perceive a reflection of a thing in a mirror rather than the thing directly, then we perceive a reversed image of the thing. He thus seems to have in mind natural images that present the original in a distorted way. This tenet suggests that in using the term φάντασμα in the characterisation of natural images the stranger envisages a connection between natural images and the sophist's appearance images. For they both have in common the property that they present the original in a dis-

torted way. So the stranger seems to have in mind natural appearance images, as it were.

It is a striking tenet that the stranger conceives of natural images as appearance images rather than as likenesses or simply images. For in so far as natural images give indirect access to the thing and provide only a limited view of it, they just share what likenesses and all images have in common. But the connection of natural images to appearance images suggests that the stranger conceives of natural images as intrinsically deceptive; although natural images provide a distorted and limited view of the thing, they appear to present the thing in a faithful and exhaustive way. On the face of it, this is an implausible way to conceive of reflections and shadows in the sensible world. But the point, as we shall see, is that although the natural images differ from the sophist's appearance images in so far as they are not made with a view to deception, they can give rise to deception. In fact, the stranger's characterisation of natural images in terms of appearance images suggests that an image's being a likeness (εἰκών) is the exceptional case–which is not implausible in view of the fact that it takes the philosopher's skill to make a likeness.

In so far as the natural images are sorted under the heading of appearance images because they provide only a limited view of the original, even direct perception of a thing should be sorted under the same heading. For even when a thing is perceived directly and not through an image, it is only some aspects of the thing that we are presented with. A good example of this phenomenon is that sensible particulars are always perceived from a particular point of view. For instance, when a bed is perceived directly, there still is a difference between how the bed appears and how it is in itself; there is more to the bed in itself than is conveyed through its appearance. And as I have pointed out, although the word φάνταομα is not used in this way in the *Sophist*, there is a clear case of such a use at *Republic* 10, 598a7-10. But it seems to me that there is a simple explanation why the stranger mentions only shadows and reflections, but not things perceived directly, as he extends the class of appearance images to natural images. Shadows and reflections are mentioned so as to provide a straightforward parallel to such man-made images as sculptures and paintings. But since even the sophist's appearance of being a wise man is a matter of human making of appearance images, it is easy to see that the point about natural appearance images can be extended to other cases too, such as the appearance of things perceived directly. For the crucial point about appearance images is that they provide only a partial view of the

original; and the same point goes for the appearance of a thing perceived directly. In the light of these considerations I am inclined to think that φαντάσματα are involved in all sense perception.

Still, the characterisation of appearance images and appearances of things does not yet explain how we come to be deceived by them. Even when the sophist tries to fool us into believing that he is a wise man, it is not necessary that we are taken in by the appearance. It is simply evident that we can resist the appearance and avoid deception. What is more, even if it is in the nature of the sensible world that sensible particulars are perceived from a particular point of view, it does not go without saying that we do not recognise that there is more to the thing than what the limited perspective conveys. On the contrary, for the most part we do assume that there is more to the thing. This is a crucial tenet in so far as we want to understand the formula of appearing (φαντασία) as a judgement occurring through sense perception (δι 'αἰσθήσεως).

2. *Appearing and deception*

The notion φαντασία in the *Sophist* is best understood against the background of the attempt to pin down the sophist as a deceiver. The stranger sets out to sort the sophist under the art of making appearance images and suggests that it is an art of deception. But deceiving seems to be a matter of making people have false beliefs, as the stranger points out at 240d1-4:

> When we say that he [the sophist] deceives by means of an appearance image and that his art is an art of deception of some kind, shall we say then that our soul believes what is false because of that man's art, or what shall we say?
>
> Ὅταν περὶ τὸ φάντασμα αὐτὸν ἀπατᾶν φῶμεν καὶ τὴν τέχνην εἶναί τινα ἀπατητικὴν αὐτοῦ, τότε πότερον ψευδῆ δοξάζειν τὴν ψυχὴν ἡμῶν φήσομεν ὑπὸ τῆς ἐκείνου τέχνης, ἢ τί ποτ 'ἐροῦμεν;

The problem now is that the sophist denies the possibility of false belief on the grounds that to have a false belief is to believe what is not (τὰ μὴ ὄντα), which he claims to be impossible. So the stranger is forced to give an account of falsity by laying bare what not-being amounts to. For before it can be suggested that the sophist is to be sorted under the art of

deception it must be evident that there is such a thing as false belief. Otherwise the very notion of deception makes no sense. So the attempt to define the sophist gets interrupted precisely because the stranger's question proves hard to answer.

The paradoxical claim that false belief is not possible is based on Parmenides' contention that it is not possible to express what is not, and on lines of argument to the effect that neither false statements nor false beliefs are possible; we get glimpses of these arguments in Plato's writings.[11] We need not go into the assumptions which give rise to the paradox,[12] but it should be noted that there are two sides of the problem of falsity; it is one thing to explain how a statement (λόγος) can be false, another thing to explain how it is possible to arrive at a false belief. And it is precisely against the background of the latter aspect that the stranger's account of appearing makes best sense. For the account goes some way towards explaining how the soul may come to have false beliefs.

The solution to the worry over not-being is to show that there is a sense in which we can say what is not, namely, by attributing a property to a thing which is different (ἕτερον) from the properties it actually has. And against this background the stranger gives the solution to the problem how a statement can be false: a statement consists of two parts, a noun (ὄνομα) which picks out the subject of the statement, and a verb (ῥῆμα) which picks out the action (πρᾶξις) attributed to the subject–and a statement is false if either part fails to pick out the right thing. The point of the stranger's analysis is to show that saying what is not is not a matter of speaking about something that does not exist. For instance, when we say "Theaetetus flies," the subject matter of the statement is not some non-existent 'the flying Theaetetus' fact, but simply Theaetetus. In other words, there is something, or rather someone, namely Theaetetus, of whom it is said that he flies. The falsity consists in attributing to Theaetetus a property which is different from the properties he really has. So once we realise that a statement is a "putting together of verbs and nouns" (σύνθεσις ἐκ ῥημάτων καὶ ὀνομάτων), as the stranger has it at 263d3, we come to realise that false statements are possible.

Needless to say, the above sketch of Plato's analysis is not satisfactory as a general account of falsity. But it is not crucial for my purposes here to go into the details of Plato's analysis, let alone to evaluate it. Rather, it should be noted that the stranger's account of false statements is based on the analysis of what not-being amounts to. And what is important now, as the stranger resumes the sorting of the sophist under the art of image

making at 264b11 a connection is envisaged between the solution to the problem of falsity based on the analysis of the form of statements and the question concerning the phenomenon of coming to entertain false beliefs. For the account of not-being has a bearing not only on the possibility of false statements, but also on the definition of image. And it was suggested that the sophist could escape the stranger's attempt to sort him under the art of making images by taking exception to the stranger's definition of image as something that both is and is not. And now that the stranger has shown that not-being is possible, one of the sophist's refuges is closed. As the stranger puts it at 264d4-7:

> But now that it has been made evident that there are false statements and false beliefs, it is also possible that there are imitations of things and that an art of deception arises from this condition.
>
> Νῦν δέ γ ἐπειδὴ πέφανται μὲν λόγος, πέφανται δ' οὖσα δόξα ψευδής, ἐγχωρεῖ δὴ μιμήματα τῶν ὄντων εἶναι καὶ τέχνην ἐκ ταύτης γίγνεσθαι τῆς διαθέσεως ἀπατητικήν.

The stranger makes two suggestions. First, by realising the possibility of falsity a crucial condition of deception is established. The connection between the possibility of false beliefs and deception is close; the notion of deception hardly makes sense without the notion of false belief. Indeed, the condition (διάθεσις) mentioned must refer to the condition of entertaining false beliefs, which is to say that unless we could have false beliefs, we could not come to be deceived.

Second, the stranger also envisages a step between the possibility of falsity and the possibility of deception, namely the possibility of imitation. It is not immediately clear what connection the stranger envisages between the possibility of falsity and imitation: why should the possibility of falsity entail that imitation is possible? But considering the sophist's attitude towards image making and imitating, the connection between the possibility of falsity and imitation is likely to be this. The stranger's account of not-being has shown that there is a sense in which not-being can be expressed in discourse, namely, when we ascribe properties to a thing that are different from those which the thing actually has. And once the stranger has shown that not-being can be expressed in discourse, he can make a parallel point about images. For even the image has a share of not-being in so far as it is different from the original, that is, is not like the

original. Indeed, without the possibility of not-being it would not make much sense to distinguish between imitation and original. So by showing that the image is not in virtue of being different from the original the stranger targets the sophist's assumption that there is no difference in being between the image and the original and, hence, that whatever we can learn about the original through the image cannot be false.

We can now see that the stranger's account of not-being and falsity establishes the conditions for an image's giving rise to deception and false beliefs: it is not like the original in every respect and can give a misleading impression of it. This, as we shall see, is the crucial background to the notion appearing in the *Sophist*. It should also be borne in mind that an image can give rise to deception even though no one has designed it with a view to deception. Natural images, such as reflections, are cases in point. And the reason why natural images can give rise to deception is that they leave out information about the original and, hence, fail to convey all there is to know about it, or what information they convey is distorted in some way. So we need to distinguish between images which convey limited information about the original without anyone's having designed them with a view to deception, and images which are incorrect and designed so as to represent the original in a deceptive way. Since the stranger sets out to catch the sophist, the latter kind of image gets the main attention; the sophist's questioning of the ontological status of images is primarily to be seen as an attempt to escape the stranger's move to sort him under the art of making appearance images, that is, an art of consciously making deceptive images. But it is easy to see that the point about the difference between the image and the original applies to other cases as well. For instance, a reflection of a thing might display the same colours and even the same shape as the original, but yet leave out a great deal of the other aspects of it.

What is more, the point about not-being and falsity has an application even in the case of things perceived directly. For when we perceive an object, it is perceived from a particular point of view and the appearance of it is not all there is to it. For instance, if we see a tomato from a certain distance and it has the appearance of being fresh, we might jump to the conclusion that it is fresh. But as we come closer and squeeze it we realise that it was not so fresh after all and that we were deceived by the first appearance of the tomato. In this case it is fair to say that the mere look of the tomato leaves out some information about it. But it need not be the case that there is anyone trying to deceive us; it is rather that if we take

the limited information conveyed by the first look as evidence for the state of the tomato, then we might end up with a false belief about it. Yet again, if not-being and falsity were not possible, then we would have to refrain from saying that we came to have a false belief about the tomato. And even here we can see the point of the sophist's denial that there is any difference in being between the image and original: if beliefs based on how the tomato appears cannot be false, then there seems to be a rationale for holding that there is no difference between how the tomato appears and how it is.

But although the appearance image presents the original in a guise, or in a reflection, or from a particular point of view, the soul need not be taken in by the appearance. The very dialogue under consideration, the *Sophist*, stages such a case. For through the stranger's and Theaetetus' investigations the sophist, who presents himself as, and to many people appears to be, a wise man, is discovered to be a cheat and engaged in the art of deception. Merely presenting oneself through the appearance of being something that one is not does not guarantee that the attempted deception is going to be successful. What is more, if a thing is perceived from a particular point of view, the soul might still be able to accommodate the effects of the perspective in order not to be deceived by the appearance of the thing. So it is only in so far as the appearance image is taken to give accurate information about the thing that deception may occur.

The definition of appearing

Let us now turn to the stranger's account of appearing (φαντασία). Since there are textual problems in regard to the formula of appearing at *Sophist* 264a4-6, I give the relevant context as well, starting from 263e10.

> STR: And we are also aware of a thing present in speech.
> THT: What thing?
> STR: Assertion and denial.
> THT: Indeed.
> STR: And when this [assertion and denial] occurs silently in the soul by means of thinking, could you call it anything but 'belief'?
> THT: No.
> STR: And what, then, when it [assertion and denial] occurs not by itself, but through sense perception? What else but 'appearing' could we rightly call such a state?

ΞΕ. Καὶ μὴν ἐν λόγοις γε αὐτὸ ἴσμεν ὄν.

ΘΕΑΙ. Τὸ ποῖον;
ΞΕ. Φάσιν τε καὶ ἀπόφασιν.
ΘΕΑΙ. Ἴσμεν.
ΞΕ. Ὅταν οὖν τοῦτο ἐν ψυχῇ κατὰ διάνοιαν ἐγγίγνηται μετὰ σιγῆς, πλὴν δόξης ἔχεις ὅτι προσείπῃς αὐτό;
ΘΕΑΙ. Καὶ πῶς;
ΞΕ. Τί δ' ὅταν μὴ καθ' αὐτὸ ἀλλὰ δι' αἰσθήσεως παρῇ τινι, τὸ τοιοῦτον αὖ πάθος ἆρ' οἷόν τε ὀρθῶς εἰπεῖν ἕτερόν τι πλὴν φαντασίαν;

I follow the manuscript tradition, and in particular B, D and T, with one exception: at 264a4 I accept the alternative text preserved in Stobaeus which has καθ' αὐτό instead of καθ' αὐτήν.[13] But I do not follow Stobaeus and the *Oxford Classical Texts* editions at 263e10 (Καὶ μὴν ἐν λόγοις γε αὖ ἴσμεν ἑνόν). Assertion and denial are brought into the discussion in order to make the point that both belief and appearing are judgements. This point becomes clearer if we keep αὐτό at 263e10 and assume that together with τοῦτο at 264a1 and καθ' αὐτό at 264a4 it refers to the same thing, namely assertion and denial. But we should resist the temptation to take καθ' αὐτό as referring forward to τὸ τοιοῦτον πάθος. Saying that an appearing is a certain kind of state or condition misses the more precise point that an appearing is a judgement, that is, that by having an appearing we are committed to views about the world. Indeed, we could even be entirely faithful to the manuscripts. For if we follow the manuscripts also at 264a4, thus keeping καθ' αὐτήν, an appearing would be characterised as a judgement which occurs through sense perception. What I have in mind is that the feminine form could be taken to refer back to φάσις or ἀπόφασις. At any rate, this option does not affect the drift of my reading, for a judgement just is either an assertion or a denial. But the alternative text in Stobaeus on this point makes the passage neater and the parallel between the stranger's accounts of belief and appearing more straightforward.

The formula of appearing, a judgement occurring not by itself, but through sense perception, makes it abundantly clear that Plato does not have the non-committal 'it appears' in mind when giving the formula. What is more, we can now see the point of my suggestion that Plato uses the term δόξα in two different ways. The stranger is envisaging a contrast between judgements occurring by means of thinking (κατὰ διάνοιαν) and judgements occurring through sense perception (δι' αἰσθήσεως).

And in characterising appearing as "a blend of sense perception and judgement" (σύμμειξις αἰσθήσεως καὶ δόξης) the stranger must be using the term δόξα in the generic sense. For if we assume that the term δόξα is used in the same sense throughout the passage, then the conclusion is that an appearing is a judgement occurring in the soul by means of thinking *and* through sense perception. But in pointing out that the φαντασία does not occur by itself the stranger is driving at the point that one kind of δόξα, namely the φαντασία, does not occur by means of thinking, but through sense perception. By contrast, in characterising δόξα as an assertion or denial occurring by means of thinking, the term δόξα is used in the specific sense: it is a belief proper.

The definition of appearing makes evident the relevance of the elaborations on the art of imitation and image making in general, and on the art of making appearance images in particular. Plato's idea is that an appearing is a judgement based on what the soul grasps about the thing through sense perception alone; it is based on the appearance of the thing. And since an appearing is based on the appearance alone, it is to be characterised as a judgement not based on reasoning and, hence, as a non-rational judgement. But here it must be kept firmly in mind that what matters is the grasp of the being of the thing at issue. For instance, if we are taken in by the appearance of the sophist and form the false belief that he is wise, the deception arises because we have not grasped what it is to be wise. The point is that we need to exercise reason so as to grasp what it is to be wise and that we need to go beyond the appearance in order to do that. For if we judge the sophist to be a wise man simply on the grounds that he appears to be wise and do not take into account what it is to be wise, then we have not exercised reason in arriving at the judgement. And as I have shown in chapter 3, Plato has it that attaining the being requires a great deal of cognitive activity, and even effort on the part of the soul; that is why a belief proper is characterised as "the result of thinking" (διανοίας ἀποτελεύτησις) at 264b1.

The definition of appearing as an assertion or denial occurring through sense perception does not restrict appearings to judgements about proper sensibles or containing predicates which pick out proper sensibles. For even though it seems odd that Plato's notion of sense perception would comprise perception of traits such as being wise, good, and so forth, the point is that there are different ways of gaining knowledge of sensible particulars. So although the judgement "This man is wise" is not a perceptual judgement on a par with a judgement like "This wine tastes sweet,"

the point about judgements based on sense perception holds good. That is to say, the sophist's appearing to be wise is to be seen in parallel with what the soul grasps through sense perception.

This account of appearing has a bearing on perceptual cognition more generally; it is not only deliberate deception such as the sophist's pretending to be a wise man that is at issue. For even in the case of ordinary sense perception the thing perceived is presented from a particular point of view. So here too it is up to the soul how this appearance of the thing is dealt with. In particular, it is up to the soul to figure out whether there is more to the thing than what is conveyed by the appearance. For instance, if a tomato looks fresh without being that, then it is up to the soul to exercise reason so as not to be taken in by the tomato's appearance of being fresh. This exercise of reason requires that we consider what it takes for a tomato to be fresh; that the tomato's look is not all there is to its being fresh; that we may need to take into account what the tomato feels like if we squeeze it–and so forth. In short, the distinction between appearing and belief proper has an applicability even in cases when no deliberate deception is at issue.

The stranger's account of appearing makes better sense if it also covers cases in which no deliberate deception is at issue. For as the stranger makes clear at 263d6-8, an appearing may be true or false. Now if appearing comes about only in cases in which deliberate deception is at issue, then it seems that appearings are always false. For instance, in so far as the soul is taken in by the sophist's appearance of being wise, it is bound to form a false belief in view of the fact that the sophist aims at deception. But in so far as an appearance which is not made with a view to deception is at issue, the judgement based on it may be true; even if the judgement that the tomato is fresh was arrived at merely on the basis of how it looks, it may still happen to be true. Nevertheless, there is still a distinction to be made between the appearing that the tomato is fresh and the belief proper that it is fresh. For it is a belief proper only in so far as the judgement is based on a proper grasp of what freshness of tomatoes amounts to.

It should also be borne in mind that Plato distinguishes not only between appearing and belief proper, but also between appearing and sense perception. So despite the fact that an appearing is based on sense perception, appearing and sense perception do not amount to the same thing. For although appearing and sense perception share the property that they do not attain the being of things, appearing still differs from sense perception in so far as it has a propositional content. I shall have more to

say about this property in the next section, but it should be borne in mind that Plato hardly ascribes propositional attitudes to beasts; hence, he cannot ascribe appearings to beasts. And as we shall see, it matters a great deal that appearings have a propositional content.

Appearing and proper sensibles

As has been mentioned, Plato's distinction between appearing and belief proper is applicable even in regard to judgements about proper sensibles or containing predicates picking out proper sensibles. The distinction is crucial in view of the tenet considered in chapter 3, namely, that the soul arrives at beliefs about proper sensibles through itself, and not through sense perception. And in so far as a belief like "X is black" is not arrived at through sense perception, it is a belief proper that Plato has in mind. It should be admitted that the characterisation of appearing as a judgement occurring through sense perception seems to be a more natural way of characterising a judgement like "X is black." But as I have pointed out from the outset, I hold that the distinction between appearing and belief proper does not turn on the content of the judgement. What we need, rather, is to understand the formula of appearing in such a way that we can distinguish between appearing and belief proper even as far as a judgement about the proper sensibles or containing predicates picking out proper sensibles is concerned. In short, we need to consider the question what the having of the φαντασία "X is black" amounts to as in contrast to the belief proper "X is black."

In order to consider this question, let us return to the discussion of the relation between images and originals at *Sophist* 240a4-c6. The image was characterised as a blend of being and not-being. The idea is that although the image has being in the sense that it has some features and characteristics in common with the original, in other respects it does not have being, namely, to the extent that it is not like the original, that is, in regard to other features and characteristics of the original that are wanting in the image. The principle is obvious in the case of works of art and objects perceived from a particular point of view: there is more to the original than the work of art manages to convey; since the appearance of the object perceived from a particular point of view presents the thing from a limited perspective, there is more to the thing than what we attain through sense perception. In order to get at the other aspects of the thing not given through sense perception, an exercise of reason which goes beyond sense perception is required.

What, then, about a judgement like "X is black"? Here a distinction can be made between what it is to be black and what we are able to grasp about blackness through sense perception alone. For getting at what it is to be black, that is, the being of the colour black, requires thinking on the part of the soul. It requires that the soul comes to recognise the kind of thing the colour black is. And in order to achieve that, the soul must recognise what the colour black is different from, what it is identical to, what it cannot be like. And on the basis of grasping these aspects of what it is to be black further aspects can be grasped: being black entails being a colour and being something perceptible; the colour black is such that it features on surfaces, and such that if a surface is black all over, then that surface cannot at the same time have another colour. The claim now is that these aspects of what it is to be black cannot be grasped through sense perception; the being of the colour black is not to be found in the sensory impression of it. Hence, it is only through processes other than sense perception that the soul can attain the being of the colour black.

But even though the distinction between appearing and belief proper can be made in regard to the judgement "X is black," this is not to say that the judgement "X is black" actually occurs both as an appearing and as a belief proper. In so far as the belief proper "X is black" requires that we grasp what it is to be black–that blackness belongs to the genus colour; that it features on surfaces; that if a surface is black all over, then it cannot at the same time be white or any other colour–it is fair to say that in most cases, if not in all, the judgement "X is black" is a belief proper. In other words, as far as some of the most basic kinds such as sensory qualities like colours are concerned, we actually have a grip on the being of them which goes beyond what we attain through sense perception. It should be borne in mind that the lesson of *Theaetetus* 184b4-187a8 is that even these judgements which we have arrived at seemingly effortlessly turn out on closer scrutiny to be such that they require a great deal of reasoning on the part of the soul. So although it might be that there actually are no appearings like "X is black," this fact does not entail that the distinction between beliefs proper and appearings is not applicable in regard to judgements about the proper sensibles or containing predicates picking out proper sensibles.

We can now see that in regard to a judgement about the proper sensibles or containing predicates picking out proper sensibles the distinction between appearing and belief proper turns on how the appearance of the proper sensible is dealt with. In the one case the judgement is based on

sense perception, in the other case reasoning which goes beyond sense perception is required. But the latter case is not a matter of paying more attention to the appearance. Instead, in so far as the soul gets at the being of the thing, the soul goes beyond the appearance. The appearance simply does not convey the being of the thing, which can be attained only through the soul's own cognitive activities. This is why at *Theaetetus* 184b4-187a8Plato embraces the seemingly odd view that the soul attains the being even of sensory qualities like colour and sound through itself without recourse to the sense organs.

It should be clear by now how false beliefs and deception can be brought about by appearances in general, and by the art of making appearance images in particular. In putting forward the principle "as things appear, so also they are" Protagoras fails to recognise, or refrains from admitting, that there is more to the thing than the appearance conveys and that the appearance might be totally misleading. So if we judge by appearances, then we run the risk of overlooking aspects of what it is to be a particular kind of thing that can be grasped through reasoning only. Hence, we might come to make a false judgement.

What, then, about a judgement like "X is black"? Can it be mistaken? Plato does not speak up on this point, but if we assume that he is committed to the view put forward at *Theaetetus* 161d2-3 and 179c1-d1 that some judgements are unassailable, namely, judgements involving proper sensibles, then the following is what the account of appearings and beliefs proper suggests. For the sake of argument, let us assume that the view put forward in the *Theaetetus* turns on the assumption that we cannot err as to what sensory quality we happen to perceive. This leaves open the possibility that the grasp of the sensory quality at issue is superficial. For grasping the being of the colour black involves knowing what it is different from, what it is identical to, that if a surface is black all over, then it cannot at the same time be white, and so forth. In other words, our grasp of the predicate '... is black' could, at least in principle, be superficial and the inferences we are prepared to make from the judgement that something is black be incorrect. So even if we cannot be mistaken as to what sensory quality we happen to perceive, the grasp we have of the being of the sensory quality might still be wanting. Hence, quite regardless of the claim, if indeed this is Plato's view, that we cannot err as to what sensory quality we perceive, the distinction between appearing and belief proper is applicable even in this case and does not turn on the content of the judgement.

3. *Aristotle's criticism*

In contrast to the rare occurrence of the term appearing (φαντασία) in Plato's work it is frequent in Aristotle's, and especially in his psychological writings. Aristotle's notion of appearing shares some of the characteristics of Plato's notion. Aristotle points out at *De Anima* 3.3, 427b14-16 that appearing, although different from sense perception (αἴσθησις), is not to be found apart from sense perception. That is to say, appearing arises from and is closely tied to sense perception. In addition, at 428a18-24 we are told that appearing differs from belief (δόξα) in that it is not attended by conviction (πίστις). And since conviction requires that we can be persuaded, and persuasion (πειθώ) requires reason (λόγος), beasts cannot have beliefs, although many of them have appearings. This distinction between appearing and belief which turns on the tenet that the former requires no reason, whereas the latter requires reason, seems to be parallel to Plato's distinction between appearing and belief proper. It seems, thus, that the origin of Aristotle's notion of appearing is the Platonic notion considered in the last section.

But in the *De Anima* 3.3 Aristotle considers Plato's account of appearing in the *Sophist*, and takes exception to it. At 428a24-26 Aristotle spells out his disagreement with Plato over the notion of appearing in the following way:

> It is evident, then, that appearing is not a belief together with sense perception, nor through sense perception, nor a combination of belief and sense perception,...
>
> φανερὸν τοίνυν ὅτι οὐδὲ δόξα μετ 'αἰσθήσεως, οὐδὲ δι ' αἰσθήσεως, οὐδὲ συμπλοκὴ δόξης καὶ αἰσθήσεως φαντασία ἂν εἴη,...

Plato is obviously the target here. For all of the three formulae of appearing are paraphrases of Plato's own words. In particular, the two latter formulae refer to Plato's account of appearing in the *Sophist*, and are paraphrases of μὴ καθ 'αὐτὸ ἀλλὰ δι 'αἰσθήσεως at 264a4, and σύμμειξις αἰσθήσεως καὶ δόξης at 264b2.[14]

Aristotle takes exception to the view that appearings are judgements. For appearing, as he puts it at *De Anima* 3.8, 432a10-11,"is different from assertion and denial" (ἔστι δ ' ἡ φαντασία ἕτερον φάσεως καὶ

ἀποφάσεως). Having an appearing, according to Aristotle, does not necessarily commit us to any views about the world. For although something appears to us to be in a certain way, we might still believe it to be in an entirely different way; we are not always taken in by the appearance.

Aristotle provides several arguments against Plato's account. If appearing is characterised as a belief and belief requires reason, Aristotle argues at *De Anima* 3.3, 428a17-24,then creatures without reason will have to be denied appearings. But Aristotle is not prepared to allow this conclusion, simply because he thinks that many beasts have appearings. This argument shows that Aristotle gets basic tenets of Plato's position wrong. Aristotle obviously takes Plato's use of the term δόξα in saying that appearing is a kind of belief or has a belief as a constituent to suggest that just as beliefs come about through an exercise of reason, so appearings do. But at 264a4 and 264b2 in the *Sophist* δόξα is used in the generic sense merely to signal that both things under discussion, namely appearing and belief proper, are judgements and such that they commit the soul to views about the world. So this use of the term does not entail that judgements are always arrived at through reasoning and, hence, that appearings require an exercise of reason.

What is more, if Aristotle's argument is to hit its target, he must assume Plato's agreement that beasts have appearings. But it is unlikely that Plato would allow that. For since Plato thinks that both appearings and beliefs proper are propositional, we would have to make the daring assumption that Plato thinks that beasts adopt propositional attitudes. It is more likely that in making the distinction between appearing and belief proper Plato is concerned solely with human cognition. But there is one aspect of the argument which is developed further so as to form the gist of Aristotle's criticism of Plato's conception of appearing. Aristotle sets out to show that Plato is mistaken in so far as he characterises appearings as judgements and as committing the soul to views about the world. And at 428b2-4 Aristotle retorts that we can easily envisage cases where we are being appeared to in a certain way, but where we are not the least inclined to be taken in by the appearance. For instance, although the sun may appear to be the size of a foot, we may, and for the most part do stick to the view that the sun is larger than the inhabited world. In other words, the mere appearing that the sun is the size of a foot does not entail the judgement that the sun is the size of a foot.

The argument

Aristotle has two unacceptable consequences in mind of Plato's view that appearings are judgements. First, as he points out at 428b4-7, if the sun appears to us to be the size of a foot and this appearing entails that we believe the sun to be the size of a foot, then we must have abandoned the belief that the sun is larger than the inhabited world although there has been no change in the object, and we have not forgotten the belief, let alone been persuaded to give it up. On this account whenever we are appeared to in a way which goes against other beliefs we have, these beliefs will be given up for no other reason than the appearance. But since this consequence seems absurd, Aristotle suggests that we had better amend our views on appearing in the first instance.

Second, at 428b7-8 Aristotle suggests another way to deal with the problem which is equally unacceptable. If the appearing that the sun is the size of a foot does not lead to the abandonment of the belief that the sun is larger than the inhabited world, then "it is necessary that the same [belief] is both true and false" (ἀνάγκη τὴν αὐτὴν ἀληθῆ εἶναι καὶ ψευδῆ). Aristotle does not make his point clear here, and there are different ways of interpreting the claim. One option is that he draws the conclusion in question from Plato's definition of appearing as a combination of sense perception and belief. If the appearing consists of a belief component, "The sun is larger than the inhabited world," which is true, and a perception component, "The sun is the size of a foot," which is false, then the appearing, considered as a single belief, is both true and false in so far as each component contributes its own truth value to the one belief.[15] There are obvious difficulties with this option. It should in the first place be noted that the significance of 'combination' in the formula is not clear. On the interpretation according to which the combination consists of one true and one false component, it seems that it is a conjunction of two thoughts that is at issue. But if one of the two components of the appearing contributes with a falsity, then the conjunction of one true and one false component is false. Hence, it would be more to the point to say that the one belief, namely the appearing, is false, rather than that it is both true and false. This option is not particularly convincing in so far as we must assume that the very notion of the same belief's being true and false at the same time makes sense to Aristotle, who goes to great length to defend the law of non-contradiction.

Another option is to think that there are two conflicting standards of truth involved. On the one hand, truth is determined by how things ac-

tually are. In this case the truth is that the sun is larger than the inhabited world. On the other hand, truth is determined by how things appear. If that standard is employed, then it is true that the sun is the size of a foot. And if these two standards of truth are in force at the same time, then the belief that the sun is larger than the inhabited world is true according to the former standard, but false according to the latter, and hence both true and false. However, if this is the argument that Aristotle has in mind, we would have to commit him to the view that there is a standard of truth which is determined by how things appear. And that seems to be an unlikely hypothesis. [16]

A third option, finally, is that Aristotle intends to say that if someone is taken in by the appearance that the sun is the size of a foot, but still holds on to the belief that the sun is larger than the inhabited world, then the person in question *holds* the same belief to be both true and false.[17] On this interpretation, the person in question comes to believe that the sun is the size of a foot and that the sun is larger than the inhabited world, which is a contradiction. For the belief that the sun is the size of a foot entails that the belief that the sun is larger than the inhabited world is false. So if we hold the belief that the sun is the size of a foot to be true, then we hold the belief that the sun is larger than the inhabited world to be false. But if at the same time we also hold the belief that the sun is larger than the inhabited world to be true, then we hold the same belief, namely, that the sun is larger than the inhabited world, to be both true and false. And the same goes for the belief that the sun is the size of a foot. Admittedly, the problem of this option is that Aristotle does not say that it is the holding of the same belief to be true and false that is at issue–it takes a fair amount of conjecturing to arrive at this reading.

The trouble is that Aristotle claims the same belief to become both true and false when we are being appeared to contrary to what we believe. It would have been neater to state the case in terms of two beliefs. In other words, there is one belief, namely the appearing that the sun is the size of a foot, which is false, and another belief, namely that the sun is larger than the inhabited world, which is true. On the other hand, if Aristotle sets out to show that Plato's position leads to absurdity, then it is not obvious that the claim that people come to have contradictory beliefs will do the job. For it is possible to have contradictory beliefs. But presumably Aristole is driving at the point that it is a strange thing to have contradictory beliefs; to believe p and not-p simply is an odd thing to do. But however Aristotle intended the argument to work in detail, the main contention is that the

best way to avoid these intolerable consequences is to hold that appearings are not beliefs. It is simply the case that the sun may appear to us to be the size of a foot without our believing that it is the size of a foot.

Despite the fact that important tenets of Plato's position in regard to appearing escape Aristotle, there still seems to be something to the criticism. Indeed, should we not agree with Aristotle that in so far as we are being appeared to, it is not necessary that we believe it to be the way it appears? Or is the dispute between Plato and Aristotle merely a matter of putting the term 'appearing' to different uses? For at any rate, Aristotle overlooks the fact that Plato himself leaves the possibility open that we may have an appearance contrary to the facts, and still not be the least inclined to endorse that it is the way it appears. For Plato makes a distinction between the appearance or appearance image (φάνταση) and the appearing (φαντασία), and an appearance's being presented to us does not come to the same thing as appearing. For instance, although the sophist appears to be a wise man, we can still resist the appearance and uncover his real nature. In other words, the sophist's presenting himself to us as a wise man does not entail that we will believe that he is a wise man. But if we resist the appearance, Plato is not willing to speak about the appearance's being presented to us in terms of appearing any longer. He reserves the latter term for a particular kind of judgement, namely those which are not based on reason, but on the appearance alone. So might it not be that Aristotle needs the term for a different purpose? I think Aristotle's procedure in the *De Anima* 3.3 speaks against the suggestion that only terminology is at issue. Aristotle goes to great length to repudiate Plato's view, and although the arguments are unclear, they are put forward with a view to disclosing weaknesses in Plato's position. Considering the fact that Aristotle overlooks important aspects of Plato's notion of appearing, it may well be that the disagreement between Plato and Aristotle turns on a misunderstanding on Aristotle's part. But even if we assume that Aristotle's criticism fails to hit its target and that he has not managed to come to grips with Plato's position in the first place, the reason for Aristotle's misunderstanding might still be a symptom of a disagreement which goes deeper. So we shall not rest content only with acknowledging the fact that the term is put to different uses by Plato and Aristotle respectively; in addition, we shall give some thought to the possible motives behind the diverging uses of the term.

Aristotle's mistake

There is one line of reasoning in the *De Anima* 3.3 which is suggestive of the origin of Aristotle's misunderstanding of Plato's position. Aristotle seems to think that the reference to sense perception in the formulae of appearing amounts to Plato's holding appearings to be beliefs about proper sensibles such as colour and sound. He also seems to think that these beliefs or, perhaps better, 'graspings' of the proper sensibles do not amount to predications. For at 428a27-28 Aristotle points out that on Plato's account of appearing "it is also clear that the belief is about nothing else but the object of the sense perception" (καὶ δῆλον ὅτι οὐκ ἄλλου τινὸς ἐστιν ἡ δόξα ἀλλ ' ἐκείνου ἐστὶν οὗ καὶ ἡ αἴσθησις).[18] Aristotle's example of an object of sense perception, namely white, shows that in this context he has in mind the perception of sensory qualities which are proper to each sense.[19] As a consequence, at 428b1-2 Aristotle expands Plato's account to the view that "to be appeared to is to believe what one perceives, and non-incidentally so" (τὸ οὖν φαίνεσθαι ἔσται τὸ δοξάζειν ὅπερ αἰσθάνεται, μὴ κατὰ συμβεβηκός). So Aristotle commits Plato to the view that appearings amount to beliefs about or the grasping of the sensory qualities one happens to perceive; the belief is not about anything that is incidental to the sense perception.

The fact that Aristotle speaks about beliefs which amount to the grasping of single objects should not surprise us in view of the fact that at *De Anima* 3.6, 430b29-30 a connection is envisaged between the perception of single objects such as the proper sensibles and thought's apprehension of undivided objects (ἀδιαίρετα). In perceiving proper sensibles the soul is not engaged in predication, just as thought's (νοῦς) apprehension of a thing's essential nature (τὸ τί ἦν εἶναι) is not a matter of asserting "something of something" (τι κατά τινος). This tenet explains Aristotle's emphasis at 428b2 that there actually are false appearings, such as the sun's appearing to be the size of a foot. For this remark makes best sense if we keep in mind that Aristotle holds the apprehension of single objects to be always true and on the assumption that he commits Plato to the view that appearings are always true in virtue of being an apprehension of a single object and not involving predication.

Aristotle's line of reasoning is peculiar. Plato goes to great length in the *Sophist* to show that in virtue of being predicative appearings–just as statements, thoughts and beliefs–can be true or false. Why has this tenet escaped Aristotle? And why does Aristotle think that Plato conceives of appearing as the apprehension of proper sensibles only? I think

Aristotle's mistake can be tied to a misunderstanding of the *Theaetetus*. At *Theaetetus* 156a2-157c3 Socrates constructs a theory according to which reality is in a state of flux. And this Heraclitean ontology is brought to bear on the suggestion that sense perception is knowledge. The rationale behind the theory has been considered in chapter 1. To recapitulate it briefly, on the basis of this ontology Socrates suggests that the objects of sense perception are dependent on the perceptual encounter for their existence. And since the object of sense perception is so dependent, there is no objective standard of truth. Hence, we cannot be mistaken as to what object we happen to perceive. Now if Socrates commits Protagoras to the view that sense perception and appearing amount to the same thing and it can be shown that sense perception is unerring, then he must hold that appearing is unerring. So on the assumption that he endorses the Heraclitean theory of sense perception and equates sense perception and appearing, Protagoras seems to have a rationale for his 'man the measure' thesis. In other words, the Heraclitean theory of sense perception in the *Theaetetus* is developed in such a way as to rule out error and to make sense of Protagoras' thesis that as things appear, so also are they. Aristotle's mistake is that he commits Plato himself to this view of appearing.

The point can be confirmed if we turn to *Metaphysics* 4.5. In this chapter Aristotle considers the background to Protagoras' 'man the measure' thesis, and it is clear that the account is heavily indebted to the first part of the *Theaetetus*; there are references to *Theaetetus* 152c and 171e at 1010b1-3 and 1010b11-14. And at 1010a1-3 Aristotle suggests that the background to the 'man the measure' thesis is that Protagoras and the thinkers on which his idea is based "assumed that the only things there are are the sensibles" (τὰ δ 'ὄντα ὑπέλαβον εἶναι τὰ αἰσθητὰ μόνον). It is clear from the context that the sensibles Aristotle has in mind here are the proper sensibles. He seems to think that Plato's criticism of Protagoras is directed at the assumption that every object of knowledge is a proper sensible, and that the task is to show that there is more to reality than the proper sensibles. As he puts it at 1010a33-35, we must convince Protagoras and his allies that there is a stable nature behind the sensory qualities. For if we can convince them of that, then it will be easier to refute the 'man the measure' thesis. This construal of Plato's criticism leaves the possibility open that in regard to appearing Plato agrees with Protagoras that appearings amount to the grasping of proper sensibles and that they are always true. But this way of reading Plato's criticism misses the drift of

the investigations in the *Theaetetus*. There is no reason to assume that Plato endorses the theory of sense perception which he puts forward only to lay bare the assumptions behind Protagoras' 'man the measure' thesis. In particular, there is no reason to assume that Plato endorses the tenets that appearings amount to the grasping of proper sensibles and that they are always true. The fact of the matter is that Aristotle mistakes Plato's position for the position Plato develops in the *Theaetetus* on behalf of Protagoras.

Presumably Aristotle had some difficulty in accommodating Plato's claim that appearings are committal with what seemed to him to be obvious counterexamples. So he came to the conclusion that Plato conceived of appearing in terms of the perception of the proper sensibles. And since he himself holds that the perception of proper sensibles is unerring, he assumed that Plato conceived of appearings as committal.[20] For in so far as what we perceive is always true, there is no reason not to believe it. Consequently, Aristotle concludes that if only Plato had realised that there are more things than the proper sensibles that can appear, then he would most likely not have jumped to the conclusion that appearings are always true. And if Plato had realised that, then he would not have come to the conclusion that appearings are always committal. But as we have seen, Aristotle is mistaken in taking Plato's formulae of appearing to suggest that appearing is a matter of merely grasping proper sensibles. Even on Plato's view appearings have a propositional content–there is something which appears to be in one way or another–and do not amount to the grasping of single objects.

Propositionality, reason and openness to persuasion

The disagreement between Plato and Aristotle over appearing is not just a matter of Aristotle's getting Plato's notion of appearing wrong. It runs deeper. Just to complicate the picture a little, it should be noticed that on Aristotle's account in *De Anima* 3.10 even mere appearings can be committal. For a mere appearing can prompt beasts, and under some circumstances even people, to action. What is more, at *De Anima* 3.10, 433a10 Aristotle even characterises appearing "as a thought of sorts" (ὡς νόησίν τινα). Of course, since Aristotle does not allow thought to beasts, the point is not that appearing is a species of thought, but that it is something like thought and that there is something about appearing which makes it have a cognitive function of the same kind as thought. In particular, even creatures without reason or creatures not presently exercising

reason may, merely in virtue of the appearing, be inclined to act in a particular way so as to fulfil their desires. Strictly speaking, it is the desire (ὄρεξις) that moves to action in every case. But desire can move to action either in accordance with reason or against reason. Cases when the creature is moved to action by desire without reason are to be characterised as non-rational; in these cases the creatures are triggered by the desire and the appearance alone. So however adamant Aristotle is that appearing should be distinguished from belief, he still conceives of appearing as being committal in some cases. It begins to look as though Aristotle's conception of appearing and belief comes close to Plato's distinction between appearing and belief proper; both appearing and belief are judgements, but whereas the former judgement is based on the mere appearance, the latter is based on reasoning.

In order to see the contrast between Plato and Aristotle more clearly, we must not think that Aristotle criticises Plato's notion of appearing on the grounds that appearings cannot be committal. Aristotle merely tries to show that we can be appeared to without believing it to be the way it appears. In other words, Aristotle's argument against Plato is not a matter of showing that appearings cannot be committal; it suffices that it shows that they need not be. And what is important now, in order for us not to believe that things are the way they appear, there need to be other lines of thought which persuade us that things are not the way they appear. But only in so far as we are endowed with reason are we open to these other lines of thought. By contrast, for beasts, which are not endowed with reason, appearings are always committal; they cannot reject the appearance through the exercise of reason. Hence, Aristotle is not contradicting himself when he makes the claim that appearings need not be committal and puts forward a theory of animal locomotion according to which appearings are committal.

Aristotle's quarrel with Plato over appearing seems to boil down to a wavering over how the commitment involved in appearing should be conceived of. To begin with, it could be objected that the fact that an appearance of something together with the desire for something good moves a creature to action does not show that the creature is thereby committed to any particular views about the world. It is also possible that the triggering is a causal process; no commitments whatever need be involved. But although it is fair to say that Aristotle characterises αἴσθησις in causal terms, in introducing φαντασία into his account of animal locomotion he seems precisely to have in mind the point that appearing is a matter of

interpreting the deliverances of the senses in such a way that the creature comes to perceive things as being in this way or that.[21] So he seems to conceive of the appearing as committing the creature to views about the world. The question now is what kind of commitment is at issue when the creature is moved to action in a non-rational way. For even if Aristotle thinks that appearings are committal in these cases, it could still be that he differs from Plato as to the nature of the commitment involved in appearing.

In view of my suggestion that Plato does not admit appearings to beasts, because appearings are propositional and he does not admit propositional attitudes to beasts, I am inclined to think that the fact that appearings are propositional leads him to the conclusion that the commitment involved in appearings can be questioned. That is to say, since appearings are propositional, it takes a certain kind of capacity to have them. And with that capacity goes the ability to reason about whatever view the appearing commits us to. For instance, the capacity to frame one's experience propositionally entails the ability to consider what consequences follow from a particular view and to question whether that view is consistent with other views we have. In short, the capacity to frame one's experience propositionally entails the ability to reason, and since man is endowed with that ability, it is possible for him to question his commitments.

Aristotle is basically in agreement with the view that if a creature endowed with the ability to reason is committed to a certain view, then that creature can question that view; a creature with such an ability is open to persuasion. For instance, even though a man is committed to a particular course of action being in his own best interest, he can be made to realise that he is mistaken and that he had better avoid that particular course of action. In fact, he may come to realise this all by himself by exercise of reason.[22] By contrast, a beast cannot be talked into taking a different course of action, let alone exercise reason so as to refrain from performing the action. Instead, we must keep it from taking that course of action by brute force. And the reason why we cannot convince the beast is that it is not endowed with the ability to reason in the first place; beasts are not open to persuasion.[23] So when a man has an appearing, he can, in virtue of his ability to reason, counteract the appearing and avoid being committed to things being the way they appear, whereas a beast does not have the resources to counteract it.[24]

Although Plato and Aristotle are in agreement on the view that in so far

as appearings are committal, they commit the subject to views about the world in a non-rational way, their views diverge as far as the human condition is concerned. The root of the disagreement is likely to be this. Aristotle thinks that by and large appearings do not commit rational beings to views about the world, although they do commit non-rational beings to such views. In particular, according to Aristotle man is normally not inclined to entertain beliefs in a non-rational way. Aristotle is concerned with describing certain cognitive phenomena, and appearing is an important cognitive phenomenon which may explain many aspects of animal behaviour. Hence, the distinction between appearing and belief plays an explanatory part in Aristotle's biological enquiries. When an animal, either a beast or a man, is taken in by an appearance and is committed to a mistaken view about something, Aristotle is not keen to point out that it could have resisted the appearance and arrived at the correct view instead. Rather, the fact that animals sometimes go about in a way not to their own benefit needs explaining. As far as beasts are concerned, it is not particularly surprising that they are taken in by appearances; they simply lack the resources to go about it differently. But as far as human beings are concerned, it is symptomatic that Aristotle has rather special cases in mind in which they are taken in by appearances. For as he puts it at *De Anima* 3.3, 429a7-8, a human being is inclined to be taken in by the appearance "because the thought is sometimes obscured by passion or disease or sleep."[25] In other words, he thinks of man's being taken in by appearances as the exception, and embraces the optimistic view that in virue of being endowed with reason, by and large men are not taken in by appearances.

Plato, for his part, has a more austere view of man's condition. Insufficient exercise of reason is widespread and not the exception. We are taken in by appearances although there is nothing to prevent us from exercising reason. But the exercise of reason requires an effort on our part. It is symptomatic of Plato's treatment of appearing that he never considers animal cognition in general. As I have mentioned, since he conceives of appearings as propositional, the thought that there may be other ways of being appeared to presumably never crossed his mind. And his account has little applicability beyond human cognition. Indeed, in contrast to Aristotle, he does not shed much light on the cognitive processes of other animals, and of the three cognitive phenomena considered in this book, Plato ascribes only sense perception to beasts. But if Plato allows mere sense perception a content which is not propositional but yet entails a recognitional capacity, as I have suggested in chapter 2, section 3, it is

conceivable that he thought of the cognitive capacity of beasts in terms of such a recognitional capacity. This goes some way towards explaining why he did not feel the need to expand appearing to non-propositional modes of cognition.

The above discussion suggests that the disagreement between Plato and Aristotle as to the nature of appearing has its origin in their respective views on how we should conceive of the commitment involved in appearing. Aristotle has it that the difference between the commitment involved in appearing and the commitment involved in belief turns on the latter's being open to persuasion. And since those appearings that are committal according to Aristotle are to be found primarily in beasts, it is reasonable to assume that he conceives of them as non-propositional. And the non-propositional nature of these appearings explains why they are not open to persuasion: since beasts lack the ability to reason, we cannot talk a beast into adopting a different view, nor can the beast reason about its commitments by itself. Plato, for his part, is concerned with human cognition specifically and is keen to draw a moral. Appearings are not only committal, but also propositional and, hence, open to reasoning. And he does not rest content with merely acknowledging the fact that appearings are judgements not based on reason. On the contrary, since appearings commit us to views in a non-rational way, on the one hand, and we are able to arrive at views rationally, on the other, we have the responsibility to question the appearing. So Plato and Aristotle may be in agreement on the fact that unless we are open to other lines of thought, we will be taken in by the appearance. But whereas Aristotle thinks that being endowed with reason and being in a proper frame of mind suffices in order not be taken in by appearances, Plato emphasises that reason is a power which must be put to work.

The notion of appearing (φαντασία) in the *Sophist* has an important bearing on how we understand Plato's conception of perceptual cognition in the later dialogues. For now that it has been shown that Plato operates with a particular notion of judgements which are arrived at in a non-rational way and which are closely tied to sense perception, it becomes all the more clear that a δόξα in the specific sense, that is, a belief proper, is not a matter of judging by mere appearances. But since the distinguishing mark for a belief proper turns on the way in which the judgement was arrived at rather than the content of the judgement, beliefs proper can be concerned with the sensible world. And since beliefs proper are based on

an exercise of reason, judgements concerning the sensible world need not be confused or ill-founded. Consequently, reason can play a part even in the realm of the sensible world, and perceptual cognition can be rational.

In order to see that the distinction between appearing and belief proper as two different kinds of judgements did not dawn on Plato all of a sudden, let me show that there is a background to the distinction between appearing and belief proper in Plato's earlier writings. In the *Republic*, to begin with, Plato operates with the idea that different parts of the soul can pass judgements on their own, independently of the other parts. In book 10, at 602c10-603a9, Socrates argues in the following way: if there is a straight stick which appears bent when immersed halfway into water, we may come to entertain two contradictory beliefs. For going by the appearance we believe that the stick is bent, whereas measuring the stick we come to the conclusion that it is not bent. In order to explain how two contradictory beliefs come about, Plato suggests that there are different, independent parts of the soul which come to different conclusions. The distinguishing mark of the part which uses measurements in order to come to a decision is that it is rational (τὸ λογιστικόν), whereas the part which judges by appearances is led by desire (τὸ ἐπιθυμητικόν) and is deprived of reason. So the scheme here in the *Republic* is a predecessor to the distinction between appearing and belief proper in the *Sophist*. But there is a shift of emphasis in Plato's conception in so far as he seems to operate with a more unified notion of the soul in the later dialogues. For one thing, the idea of contradictory beliefs does not feature in the discussion in the later dialogues. The main point about appearings is that they are non-rational judgements, not that they are judgements of a non-rational part of the soul. There is one thing, the soul, which has the power of reason, but which is not always exercising that power.

If we move on to the *Timaeus*, which I take to be later than the *Republic*, but earlier than the *Sophist*, we can see that the idea of a divided soul still looms in the foreground. But now Plato is not prepared to allow belief to the non-rational part at all. For as Timaeus points out at 77b3-6, the part of the soul which is situated between the midriffand the navel does not have a share of belief (δόξα), reasoning (λογισμός), and understanding (νοῦς) at all. Still, this part, although deaf to reason, may take on cognitive attitudes. But in that case, it is not a δόξα that it comes to entertain, it is just led by appearances (φαντάσματα), as Timaeus puts it at 71a5-7. These remarks strongly suggest that in the *Timaeus* δόξα is used in a narrow sense: without reasoning, no δόξα. Φαντασία is still not

introduced as a technical term for what it is to be led by appearances, that is, to believe in a non-rational way, but a first step towards introducing it and narrowing down the notion δόξα is taken. So it is not at all surprising that in the end Plato comes to the conclusion that there are two different kinds of beliefs, or judgements, of which one is based on reason, while the other is not.

Finally, the question whether or not Aristotle's criticism of Plato's account of appearing hits its target cannot be answered straightforwardly. In so far as Aristotle shows that we can be appeared to without believing things to be the way they appear, it is not evident that he has produced a counterexample to Plato's construal of the notion of appearing. For Plato might just agree with Aristotle, and yet refuse to admit that having an appearance in a non-committal way amounts to what he intends by the term φαντασία . So there clearly is a disagreement over terminology. But the dispute over terminology is suggestive of a disagreement which goes deeper. Aristotle takes his task to be to pin down different cognitive phenomena and finds it practicable to distinguish between appearing and belief in such a way as to leave the possibility open that we may have an appearing and a belief at the same time even though the appearing goes against the belief. Plato has another point in mind. There are two different ways of being committed to views about the world and it is up to us which one we end up following.

Conclusion

Bruno Snell once suggested that the emergence of verbs in the imperative mood urging someone to make an effort of thought marks a new kind of awareness in Greek mentality; from this point onwards the idea that man is endowed with a power of reason the exercise of which requires an effort on the part of the subject becomes part of the conception of what it is to be a human being.[1] However, it is doubtful that linguistic usage alone suffices to establish Snell's point; at least it seems that the notion of intellectual effort must be of older origin. The phenomenon of intellectual effort just seems to be such a basic characteristic of human life that the notion of such effort must have been with us time out of mind.

But although the notion of intellectual effort is of distant origin, it may well be that reflection on man's intellectual capacities is of relative late date. And it is likely that reflection on the nature of man's intellectual capacities has had an impact on the very notion of reason. In particular, reflection on man's intellectual capacities may well have given rise to the question what reason amounts to, and what kind of operation of thought is to count as an exercise of reason in the first place. This attempt to spell out the notion of reason must have had some rather critical consequences for the notion of reason in so far as it turned an everyday notion into a problematic and debatable notion.[2]

Seen from a modern point of view the importance of these early reflections on man's intellectual capacities can hardly be overestimated. For as a result of these reflections, the notion of reason tended to get tied down to a fairly special kind of activity. What I have in mind is the tendency to make inferential reasoning the paradigm of what it is to exercise reason. This tendency can be seen in Aristotle's syllogistics and in the development of the axiomatic treatment of particular sciences. Indeed, even as far as practical reasoning is concerned, it was typically conceived of as a matter of moving from premisses to a conclusion. This notion of reason has become so influential that reasoning and inferential reasoning seem to amount to pretty much the same thing: to reason is to make valid moves from premisses to conclusions. It is fair to say that reason conceived of as

inferential thinking has had a profound impact on the notion of what it is to be rational and of man as a rational animal; the effects are still detectable in modern philosophy of language and mind. But it must be borne in mind that although we are at home with this notion of reason, it presumably emerged as the result of philosophical reflection.

As far as the ancient notion of reason is concerned, things are more complicated. For in addition to inferential reasoning some of the ancients– Plato and Aristotle in particular–were operating with yet another notion of reason. However Plato's and Aristotle's notions of νοῦς and νόησις, that is, intuitive thought, are to be conceived, they are contrasted with inferential, or discursive, reasoning. And in view of the fact that this kind of reason was held in higher esteem than discursive reason it is misleading to say that the ancients conceived of reason primarily, let alone exclusively in terms of inferential thinking. But although Plato's and Aristotle's notion of intuitive thought is contrasted with discursive thought, it is important to keep in mind that there is a close relation between the two. The paradigm case of intuitive thought, the grasping of forms in Plato and the grasping of real essences in Aristotle, may well be dependent on discursive reasoning; the grasping of forms or real essences requires a dialectical procedure which is discursive through and through.[3] What is more, the aim of such activity is to get a grasp of concepts in virtue of which we can make safe inferences. For instance, Aristotle does not rest content with laying down the rules of valid inferences; if such formal rules are to contribute to knowledge, then the employment of them must be coupled with a grasp of the concepts involved.

Plato's account of perceptual cognition is important in so far as it gives reason a fairly broad field to operate within. For comparison, think of Parmenides' insistence on the choice between the two ways, the way of opinion or the way of truth[4], or, for that matter, Plato's own emphasis on the distinction between the two realms of reality in the middle dialogues. In these contexts reason seems to be confined to a narrow field: reason is, or at least should be, concerned with the eternal truths which reside in the intelligible realm. But as I have mentioned in the Introduction and elsewhere, despite strong Eleatic repercussions in the middle dialogues, Plato leaves room for reason in cognition of the sensible world, and in the later dialogues he spells out this idea in more detail.

However, this broadening of the field of application does not necessarily broaden the notion of reason. On the contrary, the consequence of the broadening of the field of application is not only that reason can play a

part in ordinary perceptual cognition, but also that the conception of what perceptual cognition can be is coloured by a particular notion of reason. To begin with, it should be borne in mind that two aspects of inferential reasoning play a part in Plato's account of perceptual cognition. First, in virtue of being propositional, beliefs about the sensible world make inferences possible; having the belief that the strawberry is red the soul may infer that the strawberry is sweet. Second, what is characteristic about Plato's view of what part reason can play in perceptual cognition is that in order to have a rational belief about the sensible world, the soul must attain the being of the thing perceived. And attaining the being amounts to establishing conceptual relations, to seeing how the thing in question hangs together with other things, to realising the valid inferential relations between different concepts. And what makes a belief rational is not that the soul can infer other beliefs from it. For even if the belief is an appearing, the soul may make inferences. For instance, having the appearing that a certain sophist is a wise man the soul may infer that he would make a good statesman. But making such inferences is not a mark of rationality. For it is only in so far as the belief is based on the grasp of what it is to be wise that the belief is rational. This is the background to Plato's distinction between two different kinds of beliefs, namely appearings and beliefs proper. Both beliefs make inferences possible, but only the latter in a rational way. This characteristic is important in so far as it pinpoints a particular condition of rationality: it is the grasp of the concepts that are involved in the inferences that is decisive, not the making of valid inferences.

It should be noted that this distinction between two different kinds of belief has a bearing not only on the notion of reason, but also on the notion of the soul. For the above view of how reason can play a part in perceptual cognition is in sharp contrast to the Protagorean view of cognition, at least as conceived of by Plato. In particular, on the Protagorean view no responsibility goes with forming beliefs about the world; our beliefs are just a matter of how things happen to strike us. I suggested that Plato's and Aristotle's concern with cognition is best seen against the background of the mechanistic view of cognition detectable among their predecessors. If cognition is conceived of merely in causal terms as brought about by corporeal processes, then no room seems to be left for reason. And if sense is to be made of the idea that we are responsible for the beliefs we have, then freedom of reason seems to be required. But the notion of responsibility, in turn, requires a particular notion of the soul in

terms of personhood or the self. So the implications of the freedom of reason gives rise to a new kind of awareness of what it is to be a morally responsible agent: it is up to each of us to form rational beliefs about the world and to act in accordance with them.

The characterisation of belief proper as the result of thinking and as requiring a grasp of being has an important bearing on Plato's conception of knowledge (ἐπιστήμη). It was suggested that in the first part of the *Theaetetus* Plato sets out to show how Protagoras' 'man the measure' thesis is based on the conflation of sense perception, appearing, belief and knowledge. I have pinned down the difference between sense perception, appearing and belief. What, then, about knowledge? The requirement that a rational belief is based on the grasp of the being of things might even seem to suggest that a belief proper amounts to knowledge. But this is not my suggestion. In fact, I have refrained from attempting to spell out what Plato's notion of knowledge amounts to, because I do not think that it is relevant as far as Plato's views on perceptual cognition are concerned. Even though this is not the place to enter into this issue at length, a few remarks are called for.

If belief proper does not amount to knowledge, then there must be some further requirements that belief proper does not meet. The crucial difference between belief proper and knowledge is that knowledge requires a different kind of foundation. That is to say, in order to have knowledge we need to tie down the piece of knowledge to an unhypothetical starting point. This is the famous condition of knowledge put forward in the *Republic*.[5] To put it briefly, in particular branches of knowledge, such as mathematics, the starting points are hypotheses that are not justified. But if we are to turn this kind of 'knowledge' into real knowledge, then these hypotheses need to be justified in dialectic. Such justification consists in a backwards procedure the aim of which is to reach an unhypothetical starting point from which the hypotheses can be derived. And once the starting point is established, and the inferential relations are realised, the hypotheses, and everything that can be derived from them, cease to be hypotheses, but become pieces of knowledge. The unhypothetical starting point, as is well known, is the form of the good.

A lot of effort has gone into spelling out Plato's idea in more detail. But rather than entering into that debate, I shall rest content with the above differentiating mark between belief proper and knowledge. The point is that Plato takes a foundationalist view of knowledge; if we are to obtain knowledge, then we must grasp the unhypothetical starting point so as to

get rid of all hypotheses. [6] This condition of knowledge may seem to be too strong, and to give rise to skepticism, but my concern here is not with defending Plato's position. Rather, what matters is that my account of belief proper does not cover this condition of knowledge. For although a belief proper requires that we have a grasp of how different concepts are interrelated, it does not require that we are in possession of the unhypothetical starting point.

This differentiating mark goes well together with a further difference between belief proper and knowledge, namely unerringness. For although beliefs proper are well thought-out views, they are not unerring. And presumably, the reason why beliefs proper are not unerring is precisely the fact that they are not based on an unhypothetical starting point.

Finally, let me say a few words about why I do not think that Plato's notion of knowledge is relevant as far as perceptual cognition is concerned. To begin with, it is fair to say that in spelling out what it is to attain the being of things in arriving at a belief proper Plato seems to have it that it is the grasp of forms that is required. In particular, since the being of the thing perceived is attained without recourse to the sense, but through thinking, it seems that he has the grasp of forms in mind. And if that is the case, why not say that knowledge, which also amounts to a grasp of forms, has a bearing on perceptual cognition? Here it must be borne in mind that Plato's view of the relation between forms and sensible particulars is hampered by problems of which he himself is perfectly aware. Although I think it is correct to say that attaining the being of the thing perceived amounts to a grasp of forms, I still think that a distinction can be made between the grasp of forms in belief proper and the grasp of forms in knowledge. Sensible particulars, it should be kept in mind, are what they are in virtue of having a share of the form, whereas forms are what they are in virtue of themselves. Now attaining the being of a sensible particular is a matter of grasping the form, or forms, in virtue of which the sensible particular is what it is. But I take it that there is a certain difference between the grasping of forms directly and the grasping of them in their presence in sensible particulars. This at least seems to be the point of the remark at *Republic* 6, 511b3-c2 that once the unhypothetical starting point is reached, reason (λόγος) does not use sensible particulars at all in moving downwards from the unhypothetical starting point.

Notes

Introduction

[1] *De Anima* 3.3, 427a21-22, οἵ γε ἀρχαῖοι τὸ φρονεῖν καὶ τὸ αἰσθάνεσθαι ταὐτὸν εἶναί φασιν.
[2] *De* Anima 3.3, 427a26-27, πάντες γὰρ οὗτοι τὸ νοεῖν σωματικὸν ὥσπερ τὸ αἰσθάνεσθαι ὑπολαμβάνουσιν. Compare also *Metaphysics* 4.5, 1009b12-17.
[3] For a classic survey of this field, see Beare, *Greek Theories of Elementary Cognition.*
[4] *De Anima* 3.3, 427a29-b7.
[5] There is a striking parallel between these ancient worries over the phenomena of deception and false belief, and contemporary concerns with accommodating these phenomena within a naturalistic framework. See Dretske, "Misrepresentation."
[6] See Davidson, "Rational Animals," p. 326.
[7] Theophrastus, "Fragmentum de sensibus," p. 506, lines 19-23.
[8] My discussion is in agreement with a recent treatment of the topic in Laks, "Soul, sensation and thought."
[9] For three important papers, see Cooper, "Plato on Sense-Perception and Knowledge (Theaetetus 184-186)," Burnyeat, "Plato on the Grammar of Perceiving" and Frede, "Observations on Perception in Plato's Later Dialogues." For two recent book length studies of Aristotle's theory of perception, see Everson, *Aristotle on perception* and Johansen, *Aristotle on the sense-organs.*
[10] *Republic* 5, 477d7-478b2.
[11] *Republic* 6, 507b9-c4; 509d1-4.
[12] Needless to say, this characterisation of the relation between knowledge and thinking is grossly simplified. In particular, in the simile of the divided line Plato distinguishes between διάνοια and νόησις; see *Republic* 6, 511d2-e4. But the distinction is introduced in order to set dialectics apart from the procedure within particular sciences. Νόησις is a matter of moving from a hypothesis upwards until an unhypothetical starting point is reached, whereas διάνοια is a matter of moving downwards from hypotheses that are simply taken for granted; see *Phaedo* 101d1-e3, *Republic* 6, 511b3-c2, *Republic* 7, 533c7-e2. However, these specific uses of the terms διάνοια and νόησις do not seem to determine the sense of these terms in other contexts. So we should not expect a systematic use of them on Plato's part; rather, each occurrence must be judged on its own merits.
[13] *Phaedo* 79a1-d7.
[14] *Republic* 7, 523a10-524d1.
[15] *Republic* 10, 602c10-603a6.
[16] *Sophist* 264b1, δόξα δὲ διανοίας ἀποτελεύτησις. See also *Theaetetus* 187a3-8.
[17] Whether beliefs can be about anything other than the sensible world is an open question. Gail Fine, for instance, suggests that this is the case; see "Knowledge and belief in *Republic* V-VII," p. 102. However, the question is not important for my purposes here; I do not aim at covering every instance of the term δόξα in the corpus. What is important is the particular notion of δόξα put forward in the *Theaetetus* and the *Sophist.*
[18] Cooper ("Plato on Sense-Perception and Knowledge (Theaetetus 184-186)," p. 145) and Burnyeat ("Plato on the Grammar of Perceiving," pp. 34 f) speak about Plato's view in the middle dialogues in terms of the senses reaching verdicts on their own. It is not clear to me whether they take this tenet to suggest that it is the sense organs or the body without the soul that reach the verdict. In any case, both Cooper and Burnyeat think that there is a decisive shift in the later dialogues in that the sense organs are conceived of as mere tools, rather than as agents of sorts. I agree that the sense organs are conceived of as mere tools in the later dialogues, but despite the wording at *Republic* 7, 524a1-4 to the effect that the senses (αἰσθήσεις) inform the soul of this

and that, I am not convinced that Plato took another view in the middle dialogues. I thus agree with Ostenfeld, *Ancient Greek Psychology*, p. 76, note 58.

[19] It should be borne in mind that the three-partition of the soul at *Republic* 4, 439d4-e5 is introduced with a view to sorting out different sources of motivation. As far as the rational part (τὸ λογιστικόν) is concerned, it is mentioned also at *Republic* 10, 602e1. But the identification of the desiderative part (τὸ ἐπιθυμητικόν) in *Republic* 4 with the part which does not judge by measurement in *Republic* 10 does not go without saying; indeed, we are not even unambiguously told that the desiderative part makes any judgements. In any case, suffice it to say that in *Republic* 10 Plato makes a distinction between one part of the soul which judges with recourse to reason and another part which judges without recourse to reason.

[20] See the famous debate between Owen, "The Place of the *Timaeus* in Plato's Dialogues" and Cherniss, "The Relation of the *Timaeus* to Plato's Later Dialogues."

[21] For the evidence, see Brandwood, "Stylometry and chronology."

Chapter 1

[1] See also Burnyeat, *The* Theaetetus *of Plato*, pp. 10 f.

[2] For a recent survey of early Greek usage of the terms, see Schirren, *Aisthesis vor Platon.*

[3] See Frede, "Observations on Perception in Plato's Later Dialogues," pp. 3 f and Schirren, *Aisthesis vor Platon*, pp. xv ff.

[4] I thus agree with Denyer, *Language, thought and falsehood in ancient Greek philosophy*, pp. 86 f.

[5] In the *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* (1, 217-18) Sextus Empiricus claims that Protagoras adhered to something like the theory of perception presented in the *Theaetetus*. Of course, we do not know whether Sextus was drawing on Protagoras' writings or Plato's and Aristotle's testimonies of Protagoras.

[6] There seems to be overwhelming agreement on this point nowadays, much due to lectures held by Bernard Williams in the 60's (Burnyeat, *The Theaetetus of Plato*, p. xiii). For the details of this reading, see Burnyeat, "Idealism and Greek Philosophy," pp. 6 f, note 2, and Burnyeat, *The* Theaetetus *of Plato*, pp. 7-10. See also Fine, "Plato on Perception: A Reply to Professor Turnbull, 'Becoming and Intelligibility,'" pp. 18-20 and Day, "The Theory of Perception in the *Theaetetus* 152-183." But Williams was by no means first to advance such an interpretation. See Geyser, "Das Verhältnis von αἴσθησις und δόξα in dem Abschnitt 151e-187a von Platons Theaitet," pp. 9 f.

[7] For this view, see Matthen, "Perception, Relativism, and Truth: Reflections on Plato's *Theaetetus* 152-160."

[8] For further uses of δοκεῖ τινι and δόξα see 161c2-3, 162c8-9, 170a3-171c3, 177c6-d2, 178b9-179d5.

[9] For the contrary view, see Barnes, *The Presocratic Philosophers*, volume 2, pp. 240 f.

[10] See Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 4. 5, 1009a7-8 and Sextus Empiricus, *Against the Mathematicians* 7, 60. See also Gomperz, *Sophistik und Rhetorik*, pp. 205 f.

[11] Compare Frede, "Observations on Perception in Plato's Later Dialogues," p. 5 and "An empiricist view of knowledge: memorism," pp. 236 f.

[12] There is a further aspect of φαίνεται worth mentioning. Φαίνεται enters into two different constructions: either with an infinitive or with a participle. In the first construction it means '... appears to ...', in the second '... obviously is ...'. In fact, Plato makes fairly frequent use of the second construction in answers: the one word reply "Φαίνεται" is often equivalent to "Obviously so." So what I have to say about δοκεῖ τινι applies only to φαίνεται in the former construction. From what I can figure out, Plato is not making use of this ambiguity of φαίνεται in the present context. But perhaps we are expected to have a sense of it.

[13] See Frede, "Observations on Perception in Plato's Later Dialogues," p. 5.

Chapter 2

[1] *Timaeus* 43c4-7, ...διὰ τοῦ σώματος αἱ κινήσεις ἐπὶ τὴν ψυχὴν φερόμεναι προσπίπτοιεν· αἳ δὴ καὶ ἔπειτα διὰ ταῦτα ἐκλήθησάν τε καὶ νῦν ἔτι αἰσθήσεις

συνάπασαι κέκληνται. Plato is probably alluding to ἀίσσειν (to dart) for the etymology of αἴσθησις. See Taylor, *A Commentary to Plato's* Timaeus, p. 269.

[2] *Philebus* 34a4-5, ...ταύτην δ 'αὖ τὴν κίνησιν ὀνομάζων αἴσθησιν οὐκ ἀπὸ τρόπου φθέγγοι 'ἄν.

[3] The question whether the soul becomes aware of sensory qualities as sensory qualities by merely perceiving through the sense organs was raised, and answered positively by Cooper in his "Plato on Sense-Perception and Knowledge (Theaetetus 184-186)." In an unpublished paper presented at the Princeton Colloquium in 1973, a condensed version of which is now published as "Observations on Perception in Plato's Later Dialogues," Frede repudiated Cooper's suggestion. Modrak in "Perception and Judgement in the Theaetetus" and Kanayama in "Perceiving, Considering, and Attaining Being (*Theaetetus* 184-186)," in their respective ways, defended and developed Cooper's account. Burnyeat in "Plato on the Grammar of Perceiving" (pp. 42 f) and *The* Theaetetus *of Plato* (pp. 62-64), and D. Frede in "The soul's silent dialogue" (pp. 21 f) take a more cautious stand on the issue.

[4] For a treatment of the distinction see Hamlyn, *Sensation and Perception*; particularly chapter 11, pp. 186-197.

[5] Compare Burnyeat, *The* Theaetetus *of Plato*, p. 63.

[6] Compare Sorabji, *Animal Minds and Human Morals*, pp. 9-12 and Dierauer, "Raison ou instinct?", pp. 9 f.

[7] *Theaetetus* 161c6, ... τῶν ἐχόντων αἴσθησιν, ...

[8] See Sorabji, *Animal Minds and Human Morals*, pp. 9-12.

[9] The most important differences between the two accounts of vision are as follows: (i) the story in the *Theaetetus* does not mention daylight which is crucial in the account of vision in the *Timaeus*; (ii) the background ontologies in the two accounts of vision are different–the motions introduced in the *Theaetetus* allow of no further characterisation than that they are motions, whereas in the *Timaeus* the sensible world is characterised in terms of the four primary bodies with their respective geometrical shapes; (iii) the sensory qualities are assumed to feature in-between the slow motions in the *Theaetetus*, whereas there is no suggestion in the *Timaeus* that the visual current takes on colour; (iv) the very point of the story in the *Theaetetus* is to rule out the possibility of mistakes, whereas the story in the *Timaeus* is not even committed to the view that sense perception amounts to believing; (v) finally, there is no mention of the part played by the soul in the account of vision in the *Theaetetus*, whereas in the *Timaeus* it is pointed out that the affection of the sense organ is passed on to the soul.

[10] See Theophrastus, "Fragmentum de sensibus" and Beare, *Greek Theories of Elementary Cognition.*

[11] Theophrastus, "Fragmentum de sensibus," p. 500, lines 12-13.

[12] Theophrastus, "Fragmentum de sensibus," p. 499, lines 1-2.

[13] Theophrastus, "Fragmentum de sensibus," p. 499, lines 7-10.

[14] *Timaeus* 61c8-d2, τυγχάνει δὲ οὔτε ταῦτα χωρὶς τῶν περὶ τὰ παθήματα ὅσα αἰσθητικὰ οὔτ 'ἐκεῖνα ἄνευ τούτων δυνατὰ ἱκανῶς λεχθῆναι, τὸ δὲ ἅμα σχεδὸν οὐ δυνατόν.

[15] See Taylor, *A Commentary to Plato's* Timaeus, pp. 410 f.

[16] See Taylor, *A Commentary to Plato's* Timaeus, pp. 277 f.

[17] I owe this suggestion to Eyjólfur Kjalar Emilsson.

[18] See further *Timaeus* 70d7-72b5 and Taylor, *A Commentary on Plato's* Timaeus, pp. 505-514.

[19] I do not think that McDowell's suggestion that τείνει is transitive, ὅσα the subject and παθήματα the object is correct, although McDowell's rendering "all the things which direct the affections to the soul through the body" is interesting in so far as it makes Socrates say that it is the objects causing the affections that are perceived rather than the affections themselves (*Plato:* Theaetetus, p. 111). But that would be to press the language too far. So I agree with Burnyeat, "Plato on the Grammar of Perceiving," pp. 42 f and Bostock, *Plato's* Theaetetus, pp. 116-118.

[20] Compare Burnyeat, *The* Theaetetus *of Plato*, pp. 56-58.

[21] Compare Bostock, *Plato's* Theaetetus, p. 112.

[22] *De Anima* 2.6, 418a17-18; 3.1, 425a14-20; *De Sensu* 1, 437a8-9.

[23] See *Theaetetus* 185c10-d1.

[24] This is Cornford's view, *Plato's Cosmology*, p. 259. Typically enough, Cornford supports his point by referring to *Theaetetus* 156a2-157c3. But as I have mentioned, the account of vision in

the *Theaetetus* and the account of sense perception in the *Timaeus* do not amount to the same thing.

[25] I thus agree with Beare, *Greek Theories of Elementary Cognition*, p. 54, Taylor, *A Commentary to Plato's* Timaeus, p. 430 and Fine, "Plato on Perception: A Reply to Professor Turnbull, 'Becoming and Intelligibility,'" p. 21.

[26] For Aristotle's distinction between the proper sensibles (ἴδια αἰσθητά) and the common sensibles (κοινὰ αἰσθητά), see *De Anima* 2.6, 418a8-20. I do not claim that even Aristotle was concerned with the question how material objects come to be perceived. But his account of the different objects of perception seems to give a fairly good explanation of how perception of material objects comes about.

[27] For this view see Cooper, "Plato on Sense-Perception and Knowledge (Theaetetus 184-186)," p. 127.

[28] There is no basis for deciding whether Plato had in mind other propositional forms than predications, such as conditionals, but it seems to me not to be necessary to narrow down the kind of items at issue to predications. So I characterise these items as propositional rather than predicative, although Plato's analysis of statements lays down only that they are predicative.

[29] The distinction between recall memory and recognition memory is discussed in Evans, *The Varieties of Reference*, pp. 285-287.

[30] For a balanced discussion of the issue, see D. Frede, *Platon* Philebos, pp. 242-260.

[31] There is a parallel to this content in the modern debate on concepts: in addition to the conceptual level of thought another, non-conceptual level of thought is introduced to explain the fact that the application of perceptual concepts seems to require a basis in the perceptual experience which cannot itself be conceptual lest the account of concept possession becomes circular. Yet again, the debate on the non-conceptual content bears witness of a certain wavering over what the possession of concepts requires. For instance, McDowell characterises the minimal condition on concept possession in terms of a recognitional capacity (*Mind and World*, pp. 56-60), and opposes Evans who conceived of non-conceptual recognitional capacities (*The Varieties of Reference*, pp. 267-277). In addition, it is curious to notice that in his commentary on the *Theaetetus*, McDowell touches upon the possibility of conceiving of the possession of an imprint in the simile of the block of wax as the possession of a concept, although he is not prepared to suggest this as an overall interpretation of the simile (*Plato:* Theaetetus, pp. 214 f). Recognition, it should be borne in mind, was one capacity provided by the imprint. For the question of non-conceptual content, see Evans, *The Varieties of Reference*, pp. 122-129, 227, and elsewhere; Peacocke, *A Study of Concepts*, pp. 74-90; McDowell, *Mind and World*, lecture 3.

Chapter 3

[1] For references see Sprute, "Der Begriff der DOXA in der platonischen Philosophie," pp. 9-13.

[2] Compare Sprute, "Der Begriff der DOXA in der platonischen Philosophie," pp. 16-33.

[3] For an account of the debate, see Bostock, *Plato's* Theaetetus, pp. 128-145.

[4] It might be argued that my interpretation has forerunners in Xenakis' "Essence, Being and Fact in Plato" and in McDowell's *Plato:* Theaetetus, pp. 187-193. But these treatments of the issue leave a lot to be desired. So I think my account of the issue makes a contribution to the debate.

[5] Cooper, "Plato on Sense-Perception and Knowledge," p. 124 and elsewhere.

[6] This point is well put by Burnyeat, "Plato on the Grammar of Perceiving," pp. 44-45. However, 185c4-7 hardly proves that the existential reading is impossible; Socrates might be driving at the point that existence and non-existence are applicable to everything, not that we can apply both of them to each thing at the same time.

[7] The idea that the being under discussion amounts to the 'is' involved in all predications is put forward in slightly different ways. To give one example, Burnyeat suggests that "The inability of perception to grasp being stems from an inability to frame even the simplest proposition of the form 'x is F'. That knowledge presupposes a true judgement involving predication, and with it an explicit or implicit use of the verb 'to be', is obvious enough not to need separate defence, and, as we have noticed, it has in any case been a guiding principle of the discussion all along." ("Plato on the Grammar of Perceiving," p. 45).

[8] The interpretation turns on whether the περί-clause is to be supplied in mind at 185c7-8, 185d2-3 and 185e6-7. For a convincing treatment as far as the two former passages are concerned, see

Cooper, *Plato's* Theaetetus, pp. 128-130. Notice that in these passages Socrates works by analogy; Socrates asks through what sense organ the soul would *perceive* those things which apply to things of different senses. But obviously, this is just a manner of speaking. For the soul does not perceive these things at all. Besides, 185e6-7 seems to be the crucial passage as far as the question is concerned whether we are to understand the common things (τὰ κοινά) as things applied to proper sensibles. However, Cooper does not say whether the περί-clause is to be supplied in mind also in this passage. See also Cooper, "Plato on Sense-Perception and Knowledge," pp. 135-137.

[9] Meinwald, *Plato's* Parmenides, particularly chapter 3.

[10] It might be objected that 'Justice is virtuous' is an ungrammatical sentence, but Plato in fact makes such use of language; see for instance *Protagoras* 330c2-e2.

[11] Compare McDowell, *Plato:* Theaetetus, p. 187.

[12] See Denniston, *The Greek Particles*, p. 434. It is also worth while to quote Kühner & Gerth, 2, § 507., 5., e, α, p. 163: "Οὐκοῦν wird zuerst und ursprünglich in der Frage gebraucht und bedeutet *nonne igitur, nonne ergo.* In einer solchen Frage liegt das ganze Gewicht des Gedankens auf dem syllogistischen οὖν; aus der Folge selbst ergiebt es sich schon an sich, dass der fragweise ausgesprochene Gedanke zu bejahen sei; die Negation ist bloss deshalb hinzugefügt, damit die bejahende Antwort des anderen unzweifelhaft gesetzt und als von selbst folgend bezeichnet werde."

[13] See also McDowell, *Plato:* Theaetetus, p 187.

[14] For the same point, see D. Frede, "The soul's silent dialogue," p. 28.

[15] See *Gorgias* 479c5; *Gorgias* 498e10; *Republic* 2, 365a8; *Republic* 7, 516b9; *Philebus* 41c9.

[16] For an excellent summary of the debate, and references, see Brown, "Being in the *Sophist*: A Syntactical Enquiry." What is more, I find Brown's own suggestion that Plato is operating with a syntactically complete use of 'being' without committing him to the existential reading interesting and in the right direction.

[17] I thus agree with Kanayama, "Perceiving, Considering, and Attaining Being," pp. 54-57.

[18] I know of no satsifactory account of the argument at *Theaetetus* 178b2-179d9; for some interesting remarks, see Burnyeat, *The* Theaetetus *of Plato*, pp. 39-42.

[19] See for instance *Meno* 77b2-7.

[20] Of course, in view of the characterisation of the content of sense perception in 2.3 Plato himself conceives of the perceptual content as temporally richer than what the Heraclitean theory of sense perception allows. But here in the *Theaetetus* Plato targets the Protagorean-Heraclitean conception of belief; hence it suffices that he shows that belief does not have the same temporal character as sense perception as conceived of by Protagoras.

Chapter 4

[1] *Sophist* 263d10-e1, αὐτὰ τί ποτ' ἔστιν καὶ τί διαφέρουσιν ἕκαστα ἀλλήλων.

[2] *Republic* 2, 382e10; *Theaetetus* 152c1, 161e8; *Sophist* 260c9, 260e4, 263d6. It should be noted that the only occurrence of φαντασία before the *Theaetetus* and the *Sophist*, namely at *Republic* 2, 382e10, is lacking in some of the manuscripts. Hence, it may well be that the occurrence of φαντασία at *Theaetetus* 152c1 is the first one in the Platonic corpus; and it would make good sense if Plato actually coined the term in this context. At *Timaeus* 72b3 the rare cognate φάντασις occurs, but its meaning is close to φάντασμα.

[3] I thus follow the MS tradition; it should be noticed that the new OCT edition has αἰσθάνεται following Ast's conjecture confirmed by the Berlin papyrus. It would give the translation "This '... appears ...,' then, amounts to 'he perceives...'." However, nothing in my account turns on the choice between these two versions.

[4] This ground is also covered by Bundy in *The Theory of Imagination in Classical and Mediaeval Thought*, pp. 20-33 and Schofield in "Aristotle on Imagination," pp. 116 f.

[5] Here some qualifications are called for. *Philebus* 40a9 is a clear exception to the principle. Moreover, at *Theaetetus* 155a2 there is a mention of ταῦτα τὰ φάσματα ἐν ἡμῖν and at *Cratylus* 386e3 we hear of our φαντάσματα dragging things here and there. But this is not enough to call into question the view that the term φάντασμα is by and large not used by Plato to pick out mental items, and particularly not in the *Sophist*. See also Schofield, "Aristotle on Imagination," pp. 116 f.

[6] I here follow the MS tradition. Badham emended τῶν κωλῶν for τῶν καλῶν, and his emendation is followed in the new OCT edition. But the emendation seems to me not to be

needed; Plato's point is well put by speaking of the proportion of beautiful things. If a sculpture gives the impression of some parts of the body being out of proportion with the rest of the body, it would be deemed ugly on a classical conception of beauty.

[7] See Notomi, *The Unity of Plato's 'Sophist,'* p. 149.

[8] See Cherniss, "The Relation of the *Timaeus* to Plato's Later Dialogues," p. 263, for the idea that there were arguments to the effect that images do not differ from the originals.

[9] In fact, I do not think that the eristic nature of the sophist's denial of the possibility of falsehood need entail that Plato does not take seriously the question concerning the ontological status of images. I thus agree with Notomi's contention in his recent study, *The Unity of Plato's 'Sophist,'* pp. 156, 189-192 and elsewhere.

[10] Compare *Cratylus* 432a8-d3.

[11] See *Euthydemus* 283e7-284c6, *Cratylus* 385b2-c17, 429c6-430a5 and elsewhere, *Theaetetus* 187d1-189b9.

[12] For these assumptions, see Denyer, *Language, Thought and Falsehood in Ancient Greek Philosophy.*

[13] See *Ioannis Stobaei Anthologium* (ed. Wachsmut), book 1, p. 498. Note that Wachsmut has altered the version given in F and P, and actually gives αὐτήν in the edition.

[14] The first formula, δόξα μετ 'αἰσθήσεως, is a paraphrase of *Timaeus* 52a7. But it should be kept in mind that there is no mention of φαντασία in the *Timaeus*. Aristotle apparently takes Timaeus' account of what it is to apprehend the sensible world to amount to the same thing as the stranger's account of appearing. But the conjecture is not warranted.

[15] This interpretation was put forward by Simplicius (213, 5-9), and has been followed by Ross (*Aristotle* De Anima, pp. 287 f) and Lycos ("Aristotle and Plato on 'appearing,'" pp. 501 f).

[16] This option is of my own making. According to Hamlyn (*Aristotle's* De Anima, pp. 132-134) Aristotle finds unacceptable the consequence that we are taken in by the appearance that the sun is the size of a foot, but still hold on to the view that the sun is larger than the inhabited world, "because on that view the belief will be true *and* false - true because of the facts and false *ex hypothesi* as the belief involved in the appearance, i.e. p and $\neg p$ will be the same, hence both true and false." (p. 133) I take it that, according to Hamlyn, the belief which is true because of the facts is the belief that the sun is larger than the inhabited world. But what, then, is the point of saying that the same belief is false as the belief involved in the appearance? And how can we even make sense of the claim that p and $\neg p$ will be the same? I do not claim that Hamlyn's option comes to the same as the one I have put forward; it escapes me what Hamlyn's option amounts to.

[17] I am indebted to Dugald Murdoch for this option.

[18] I thus agree with Hicks in keeping δῆλον ὅτι and following E, L and U in omitting εἴπερ.

[19] It might be objected that τὸ λευκόν (or ὁ λευκός) at 428a29 and 428b1 refers to an object which is white and that, therefore, Aristotle is not thinking of an apprehension of the sensory quality white, but of the belief that something is white. But as my argument in this section will show, it makes good sense to assume that he has in mind the apprehension of proper sensibles. In particular, Aristotle's insistence that appearings can be false is best explained on the assumption that he commits Plato to the view that appearings are true in virtue of being apprehensions of proper sensibles. For Aristotle himself holds that apprehension of proper sensibles admits the least possible amount of falsehood.

[20] Aristotle's view that we cannot err as to what sensory qualities we perceive should not be confused with the view that we cannot err as to what mental items, sense-data or immediate objects of sense perception, we happen to be acquainted with. Rather, the view is based on a certain conception of the causal process through which the senses are affected. I cannot enter into the details of this conception here, but it should be noted that Aristotle is not making a modal claim. For as he makes clear at *De Anima* 3.3, 428b18-29, perception of proper sensibles is true *for the most part*, that is, admits the least possible amount of falsehood. See also Everson, *Aristotle on Perception*, pp. 17-30 and elsewhere.

[21] See Nussbaum, *Aristotle's* De Motu Animalium, pp. 255-261.

[22] Thus I agree with Sorabji (*Animal Minds and Human Morals*, 36 f) that the point about persuasion is not a requirement of the ability to communicate. The discursive ability is also exercised in the soul's discourse with itself.

[23] For the view that beasts cannot take on propositional attitudes, see D. Frede, "The Cognitive Role of *Phantasia* in Aristotle," p. 283.

[24] Aristotle's view as to the difference between the cognitive processes of man and beast is a complicated and much debated issue indeed. As Aristotle points out at *De Motu Animalium* 7, 701a17-33, a beast is never involved in questioning or reflexion, but arrives at the decision to act through the desire alone. If the beast has a desire for drink, say, and a perception of drink, then it will be moved to action. By contrast, man has the ability to arrive at his decision to act through reasoning. For instance, he first sees that he must do something that is good for him, then sees that building a house, say, is good for him, and only then arrives at the decision to build a house. Part of what differentiates between the human and the animal case is that man arrives at his decision to act in a discursive way. I do not find Sorabji's suggestion (*Animal Minds and Human Morals*, p. 20) convincing that even beasts according to Aristotle take on propositional attitudes. It is fair to say that although the beast is committed to certain views about the world, it arrives at the decision to act more or less mechanically and has no ability to reason about its actions. Consequently, the beast is not open to persuasion. See Labarrière, "Imagination humain et imagination animale chez Aristote," pp. 26-34.

[25] *De Anima*, 3.3, 429a7-8, διὰ τὸ ἐπικαλύπτεσθαι τὸν νοῦν ἐνίοτε πάθει ἢ νόσοις ἢ ὕπνῳ,...

Conclusion

[1] See for instance Snell, "'Verstehe, was ich dir sage' (Pindar fr. 105)."

[2] For a sketch of how the notion of reason was conceptualised in philosophy in antiquity, see Frede, "Introduction."

[3] See Berti, "The Intellection of Indivisibles According to Aristotle, *De Anima* III 6."

[4] B 1, 28-38.

[5] See *Republic* 6, 511b3-c2 and *Republic* 7, 533c7-e2.

[6] I thus disagree with Fine's suggestion that Plato is committed to coherentism only; see "Knowledge and belief in *Republic* V-VII," pp. 109 ff.

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