

PLATO'S THEAETETUS AND SOPHIST:
WHAT FALSE SENTENCES ARE NOT

A thesis submitted to the Graduate School of the
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the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

by

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PREFACE

I thank Professor William H. Hay, Professor Jon N. Moline, and my teacher, Professor Terrence M. Penner; also Hope Lindsay and David C. Ring for reading with care and talking about earlier drafts of this work with me.

CONTENTS

Preface	111
Introduction	1
Chapter one	3
Chapter two	21
Chapter three	30
Chapter four	77
Chapter five	97
Chapter six	120
Bibliography	148

INTRODUCTION

To interpreters, Plato's Theaetetus and Sophist is a jigsaw puzzle, where the loose pieces are the many separate arguments given in those two works which need to be put together so that they fit. There has been some difficulty, over the years, in getting all the pieces to fit together right. For this reason, we may think of this puzzle in one of two ways. One way is to suppose that the defect is in the puzzle: it was poorly made by Plato in the first place, or, more charitably, the puzzle is now unworkable not because it was poorly made, but merely because the rules of puzzle-construction which Plato used are different from the ones we now have (as if language were a game subject, like fashion, to the style of the day). The other way is to suppose that the defect is in us, the interpreters, as if we puzzle-workers had distorted sight and numb fingers, so that it may not be apparent how two pieces do or do not fit together, even after much squinting and straining. I have kept to this way, despite my own soon-to-be-evident lack of success in trying to put these pieces together.

My own work at putting together the Theaetetus and Sophist is as follows. First, in chapter one, I set out some of the larger arguments: within the overall framework of the

Theaetetus, the five failures at explaining false belief at 188-200; within the frame of the Sophist, the denial of there being a piece of language referring to what does not exist at 237-240, the greatest kinds section of 254-259, and the definition of false speech at 261-3. Next, in chapter two, I describe a fundamental postulate of speaking and thinking and suggest that Plato accepts this postulate in the Cratylus. In chapter three I argue that in the Theaetetus Plato must come to reject this postulate. In chapter four I examine the aim of the Stranger in the Sophist to give a definition of false speech and reluctantly decide that the pieces of the Sophist do not fit together with each other or the Theaetetus in any obvious way. In chapter five I motivate an embarrassingly subtle reading of the Sophist which will let it fit together with itself and the Theaetetus, and in chapter six I defend this subtle reading against some of the more obvious objections.

In this chapter I will set out the pieces of the Theaetetus and Sophist I am concerned with, putting them into the overall framework of those two dialogues. All of the Sophist (as well as the Statesman) and most of the Theaetetus are part of one story, a long talk in which Theaetetus is addressed first by Socrates and then, on the next day, by a visitor from Elea.

Why the long story is told. At the beginning of the Theaetetus, Eucleides meets Terpsion and tells him that he has just seen Theaetetus being carried to Athens, barely alive from a recent battle. The reports which Eucleides has just heard of Theaetetus' bravery remind Eucleides of Socrates' prediction that Theaetetus would become notable (ἐλλόγιμος), a prediction made when Socrates first related to Eucleides his two-day conversation with Theaetetus. Since Eucleides managed to write down this conversation, he has it read to Terpsion.

The first part of the story: Theaetetus' talk with Socrates. The story begins with Socrates asking to hear about a fitting (ἐπικεῖς) young men, men worthy of speech (ἀξιοῦ λόγου); he is introduced to Theaetetus, whom Socrates persuades to answer some questions. They agree that knowledge and wisdom (ἐπιστήμη καὶ σοφία) are the same thing; then Socrates says he

is unable to grasp what knowledge is. The remainder of that day is spent in attempts to say what knowledge is, all of which fail.

First Theaetetus tries to answer the question by listing various kinds of knowledge (146c-d); Socrates argues that this is no answer to his question (146d-147c). Next Theaetetus suggests that knowledge is perception ($\alphaἴσθησις$, 151e). Socrates argues that this is also Protagoras' view (152a-155d), and that this view—that man is the measure of all things—rests upon Heracliteanism, the doctrine that all is in flux ($\tauὸ πάν κίνησις ἔστιν$, 155e-161a). In a lengthy argument, Socrates rejects all three of these doctrines together (161a-186e).¹

Thereupon Theaetetus remarks, "To say that all belief ($\deltaόξα$) is knowledge is impossible, since there is false belief; but it may be that true belief is knowledge" (187b). This

¹ In examining the doctrine that all is flux, Socrates refers to the opposed doctrine of Parmenides that everything is motionless (180e). Socrates says that they must take refuge with who ever has the truest doctrines. This leads Theaetetus and us to expect that both doctrines will be discussed (cf. 181b). But, apparently, Socrates only examines the doctrine that all is in flux; when it is Parmenides' turn to be examined, (Continued next page.)

remark troubles Socrates, because he is "not able to say what this is, this experience we have, and in what way it comes to be," namely, "that someone thinks something false" ($\tauὸ δοξάζειν τινὰ ψευδῆ$, 187d).²

Socrates makes clear what the trouble is by setting out five models of false thinking and arguing that each model fails.

The five models of false belief. My view of the five attempts to explain false belief follows. The details of this view will be argued for in chapter three. Socrates first considers explaining false belief as thinking one thing is

(Continued from previous page.)

Socrates declines, saying that he is afraid they will not understand Parmenides' words and will understand even less the thought behind those words (183e-184a). Apparently turning aside from an investigation of Parmenides, Socrates next—after reaching an agreement with Theaetetus that the soul looks upon some things by and through itself ($\alphaὐτῇ δι' αὐτῆς$) and upon other things through the bodily faculties—takes up the question of false belief. My interpretation of the false-belief passage (ch.3) makes Socrates out to hold a position perfectly amenable to Parmenides'.

² Cf. Theaetetus 187e: καὶ τινὰ ἡμῶν δοξάζειν ψευδῆ.

another, for example, as thinking that Socrates is Theaetetus. He rejects this explanation, though, on the grounds that either we know both Socrates and Theaetetus, in which case we would not, knowing them, falsely think that one is another; or we know neither, in which case we would not be able to think of them at all, falsely or truly; or we know one and not the other, which also seems impossible because of both the problem of thinking falsely about what one knows and the problem of thinking at all about what one does not know (188b-c).

Second, he considers explaining false belief as thinking what is not. This explanation he rules out by an argument from analogy: if one sees at all, one sees something that is; if one hears at all, one hears something that is; if one touches at all, one touches what is; so, then, one who thinks at all must think what is, and he who thinks what is not is not thinking at all (188e-189a).

Third, he considers explaining false belief not, as in the first explanation, as mistaking one thing for another but as mistaking one thought or mental description of a thing for another. But, as in the first explanation, Socrates claims that either we are having both thoughts or mental descriptions together, in which case we could not falsely think one was the other; or we are having only one of the thoughts, in which case

we could not have the other thought, much less could we mistake the one for the other (190b-c).

Fourth, he considers explaining false belief using two types of objects, perceptions and imprints. For instance, we falsely believe that Theaetetus is Socrates if, seeing someone coming, we match up this perception, which in fact is of Socrates, with our memory imprint of Theaetetus. But Socrates rejects this explanation, too, because, although it seems to explain mismatching between these two types of objects, perceptions and imprints, it will not explain how mismatching can take place within a type. Such within-a-type mismatchings do occur, he claims; for example, when we mismatch our memory imprint of 7+5 with that of 11 (196a-b).

Fifth, Socrates considers explaining false belief using an analogy to a bird cage full of birds. Each bird, he says, represents a bit of knowledge of a thing. Here false belief takes place when we catch one kind of bird instead of another; for example, in trying to find a match for the bird "7+5", we mistake the bird "11" for the bird "12". But Socrates dismisses this model, too, as absurd, on the grounds that, if we do have a bit of knowledge, thus knowing it, it would be impossible for us to think that this bit of knowledge is something else, which we must do if we are ever to mistake one bird for another (199d).

Knowledge as true belief plus an account. After these five failures, Theaetetus admits that he does not know what to say. Socrates, replying that this failure shows (ἐνδείκνυται) that we were not right to hunt for false belief before we had taken hold of what knowledge is (200c), asks Theaetetus to say what knowledge is. Theaetetus says that he has nothing to offer but what he said before, that knowledge is true belief. Socrates answers that this attempt will show (δείξειν) itself (as being successful or not), and that trying, even if unsuccessful, is better than not doing anything, for just by moving around the thing they are looking for may turn up, under their feet or perhaps as an obstacle to their movement (ταχ' ἂν ἐμπόδιον γεινόμενον αὐτὸ φήναιεν τὸ ζητούμενον, μένουσι δὲ δῆλον οὐδέν).³

Socrates argues that true belief all by itself is not knowledge (201a-c), but this leads to the suggestion that knowledge is true belief plus an account (μετὰ λόγου). After arguing against the view that an account is an interweaving of names of "simples", i.e. things for which no further account

³ I interpret this "obstacle under their feet" to be the Parmenides-inspired theory which rules out false belief, described in chapter three.

can be given (τὰ ὀνόματα αὐτῶν συμπλακέντα λόγον γεγονέναι, 202b), Socrates considers three different ways to define knowledge as true belief plus an account.

Socrates rejects all three ways, but of particular interest will be his reasons for rejecting the third way. The third way takes an account of a thing to be the ability to say what marks the thing in question off from everything else. Socrates rejects this third attempt to explain what an account is by arguing that such an account must already be held by anyone who has a belief about the object in the first place, so that a true belief plus this sort of account is nothing more than a true belief all by itself. His argument is that if we have a belief about Theaetetus, yet we do not have a hold on the things which mark Theaetetus off from all others, then we must be thinking of the things which Theaetetus has in common with others, things which Theaetetus has no more than anyone else. Such a belief, he says, "could not be about Theaetetus any more than about anyone else (209a-b).

The result of Theaetetus' talk with Socrates. The first day of conversation ends with the two in agreement that all these attempts to say what knowledge is have failed; these definitions of knowledge as perception or as true belief or as true belief plus an account are not worth further consideration (210b). In any case, Socrates concludes, Theaetetus will be better off: if

he ever again tries to conceive of other things (ἄλλων) and succeeds, he will be pregnant with something better because of the present result; and if he remains without conceptions he will be less oppressive and gentler to those about him, since he will not suppose that he knows what has not been understood (οὐκ οἶόμενος εἰδέναι ἢ μὴ οἶσθα).

The second part of the story: Theaetetus' talk with the Stranger. The next day a visitor from Elea is introduced, one who has been a student of Parmenides. This visitor, the Stranger, is persuaded to explain what the Sophist, Statesman, and Philosopher are by questioning Theaetetus. The Stranger first tries to make clear what the Sophist is and show that he does not practice the art of either the Philosopher or the Statesman.

To begin with, the Stranger and Theaetetus need to decide if sophists practice some art, and if so, what sort of art. They come to agree that the art of sophistry must give the power to argue--about anything and everything (232e). But they think it is certain that sophists do not have knowledge about all these things.

Because sophists can argue about anything, they seem to know everything, yet they cannot really know everything (233c). Thus Theaetetus and the Stranger decide that sophists by their art must be able to say what seems to be true, for they are able

to make others think falsely that they themselves are in all matters the wisest of men (234c). In this way, by trying to say what the art of sophistry is, Theaetetus and the Stranger find themselves forced to say that there is such a thing as false thought and speech.

This result of their attempt to say what the art of sophistry is worries the Stranger. For, he says, it is hard--every bit of the way--(ὅπως γὰρ . . . παντάσῃν . . . χαλεπὸν) not to put together a contradiction when we say that false things, whether spoken or thought (ψεῦδη λέγειν ἢ δοξάζειν) ought really to exist and indeed utter this [that they really exist]. The problem, he says, is that such a claim assumes that what-is-not exists, but the Stranger's teacher, Parmenides, testified against this assumption all his life (236e-237a).

The Stranger himself then examines the claim that what is not exists in order to make Parmenides' point clear. He argues that the words "what is not" cannot refer to anything, since any thing is in some way. For instance, any thing is either one, two, or many. As a result, we can never say what is not; to do such a thing, we would have to speak of what is not without in any way attaching any being to it, but any words we chose would either be plural or singular, implying that not-being is (238b-c). And, the Stranger points out, even to argue that what

is not does not exist, or to say that it cannot be named, tries to attach some sort of being to it. Thus, the Stranger says, even his own refutations of what is not are defeated; we cannot look to him for correct speech about what is not (239a-b).

In this way the Sophist has "escaped" any rational definition. The Stranger says that the Sophist has made his way into a place without entrance (*εἰς ἄπορον ὁ σοφιστῆς τόπον καταδέδουκεν*, 239c).

Faced with this problem, and the related problem of saying what an image is, the Stranger considers giving up the search, but Theaetetus urges him to keep trying:

S: But I think it is high time to consider what ought to be done about the Sophist; for you see that the objections and perplexities will be obvious, and that there will be lots of them, if we place him within the art of fakemakers and those who howl out enchantments and search through these for him. (*τὰς γὰρ ἀντιλήψεις καὶ ἀπορίας, εἴαν αὐτὸν διερευνῶμεν ἐν τῇ τῶν ψευδουργῶν καὶ γοήτων τέχνῃ τιθέντες, ὄρας ὡς εὐποροὶ καὶ πολλαί.*)

T: Very true.

S: Yes, we have gone through only a small part of these objections and perplexities, which are, in a word, unlimited (*οὐσῶν ὡς ἔπος εἰπεῖν ἀπεράντων*).

T: It would, apparently, be impossible to catch the Sophist, if that is the case.

S: Well, then, are we now going to give in [to the unlimited number of perplexities] and stay away [from searching for him in that art]? (*ἀποστησόμεθα νῦν μαλθακισθέντες;*)

T: No, I say; we must not do that if we can in any way get the slightest hold of the fellow (241b).

After a bit of obscure talk by the Stranger about being faint-hearted (242a), but neither mad (242a) nor a parricide (241d),⁴ he suggests what their problem is. They have been perplexed by the term "what is not" or "not-being"—perhaps, without being aware of it, all along they have been just as

⁴ Later in this paper I make a guess at what the Stranger is hinting, pp.

mixed-up about the word "being" as they are about "not-being" (243c).

Thus before they try to solve the problems of "not-being" they will try to figure out "being." To do this, they consider those before them who have talked about being.

Apparently, these were people who tried to answer the question "What is there?" with something more than unlimited lists of every feeling, sight, sound, noise, taste, and scent, as if there is some world or all ($\tau\acute{o}$ $\pi\acute{\alpha}\nu$) which stands behind these appearances. Some of these people thought that behind the sights I see, the sounds I hear, and all the other feelings I have stands just Hot and Cold; that these two "stand-behinds" or "substances" are what is there, are what the world really is. Others agreed that there are two substances or beings, but thought these were Wet and Dry or (according to others) some other two beings. Then there were yet others who thought that there were more than two beings, and still others who thought that there was just one being.

But, whether they try to say that being is two or only one, the Stranger argues that they will run into countless perplexities. Briefly, the perplexity for those who believe that there are exactly two beings (say, Hot and Cold) seems to be that, as soon as they say "Hot and Cold are," they (on certain unstated assumptions shared by the Stranger and

Theaetetus) must immediately allow that there is also, besides Hot and Cold, a third substance, Being. On the other hand, the perplexity for those who believe that there is only one being is that (again because of certain unstated, shared assumptions) in saying "Being is one" they must use two names; besides this, they must allow that Being and its name together are two, not one. In any case, they are driven to a denial of their attempted monism.

The Stranger concludes:

Countless other problems, each one involving infinite difficulties, will confront him who says that Being is, whether it be two or only one (245d-e).

There are others who speak of Being—those who say that that alone exists which can be touched and handled, who say Being and matter are the same thing (246a-b), and against these there are yet others who take Being to be immaterial forms perceptible to the mind (246b-c). But the Stranger finds reasons to deny both of these, which leads him to say that Being, that is, the whole universe, is both forms and matter. But by saying the universe is these two they are brought back to the same perplexity they ran into earlier when they said Being

is two. They now admit that they have run into no less of a dead-end with Being as they had run into earlier with Not-being:

Well, then, are we now in any less perplexity about Being?

—It seems to me, Stranger, that we are, if possible, in even greater.

Tireless on Theaetetus' behalf, the Stranger now tries to force a way, the "best-looking" way he is capable of, right through the reasoning of both perplexities at once (τὸν γούν λόγον ὅτι περ' ἂν οἰοί τε ὦμεν εὐπρεπέστατα διωσόμεθα οὕτως ἀμφοῖν ἅμα, 251a). That reasoning took for granted that it was impossible for one to be many or many to be one, but the Stranger, while allowing that this objection is not hard to make (εὐθὺς γὰρ ἀντιλαβέσθαι παντὶ πρόχειρον, 251b), forces a way past it by showing how in our talk we must assume (ἐν τοῖς παρ' ἡμῖν λόγοις τιθώμεν, 251d) exactly one of the following: (i) that nothing mixes with anything else, (ii) that each thing is able to mix with everything else, or (iii) that some are able to mix with each other, and some are not. Then they conclusively rule out the first two choices, which forces a way past the perplexity of how one thing can be many (or, what they take to be the same problem, how many names can belong to one thing),

for by ruling out choices (i) and (ii) they are forced to choice (iii).

The Stranger spells out how choice (iii) is to be understood by taking as examples some very great kinds (μέγιστα τῶν γενῶν), in what is called "the greatest kinds section."

The aim of this section, the Stranger says, is to see if somehow it might be allowable for them to say that what is not really is what is not (254c-d). The Stranger argues that there is an allowable way. First he postulates the Forms or Kinds Being, Rest, and Motion. Since each of these is other than the remaining two and the same as itself, he postulates two more Forms, Same and Other, and argues that each of these is also other than the rest and the same as itself (255a-d).

Thus we may say:

(1) Motion is other than Rest; so Motion is not Rest; yet Motion nonetheless is, since it mixes with being (255e).

(2) Motion is other than Same; so it is not Same; yet it is Same, since all five Forms mix with Same.

We have to admit that Motion is and is not the Same and not put

up a fuss, the Stranger says, for when we say it is and is not Same, we are not speaking in the same way: It is Same because it mixes with Same (with respect to itself); it is not Same because it mixes with Other (with respect to Same, 256a-b). Indeed, he continues,

(3) Motion is other than Being, so Motion really is not, yet it also is, since it mixes with Being (256d).

And (3) shows that what is not is in relation to Motion and likewise is in relation to every other Form.

To be clear, the Stranger states that this non-being is not the opposite of Being, but only other than Being (257b). They are not saying that what is not (= what is opposite of Being) exists; they long ago gave up speaking of any opposite of Being. He only has shown that what is not (= what is other than) exists (258e-259a).

At the end of the greatest kinds section, the Stranger has one more thing to say against anyone who still might be tempted to object that the Stranger has been mixing up things that must be held apart. He says that if everything were separated from everything else, all speech would be destroyed. For, he says,

it is because the Forms weave together with each other that we have speech. And, he says, false speech and false belief will exist only if what is not mixes with speech and belief.

Right after this puzzling section the Stranger and Theaetetus finally set out to explain what a false sentence is. First they say why strings of words such as "walks, runs, sleeps" and "lion, stag, horse" are not sentences (262a-c). Then they say why the word string "a man learns" is a sentence:

When one says "A man learns," do you agree that this is a statement of the simplest and shortest kind possible?

--Yes.

--Because now it points [something] out about facts or events in the present or past or future; it does not merely name something but completes something by weaving together verbs with names. Hence we say it states something, not merely names something, and in fact it is this complex that we mean by the word "statement" (262c-d).

Next the Stranger claims that every sentence must be about something; if it is not about something it is impossible for it to be a sentence (λόγον ἀναγκαῖον, ὅταν περ ἦ, τινὸς εἶναι λόγον, μὴ δὲ τινος ἀδύνατον, 262e). And, after testing out their claims with an example of a true sentence, "Theaetetus sits,"

and an example of a false sentence, "Theaetetus flies," they reach a definition.

What is stated about you, but so that what is different is stated as the same or what is not as what is—a combination of verbs and names answering to that description finally seems to be really and truly a false statement.

Once false sentences have been explained, false belief is accounted for as a case of someone uttering a false sentence silently to himself.

Then since speech, as we found, is true and false, and we saw that thought is conversation of the soul with itself, and opinion is the final result of thought, and what we call "it seems" ("φαίνεται" δὲ ὃ λέγομεν) is a mixture of sensation and opinion, it is inevitable that, since these are all akin to speech, some of them must sometimes be false (264a-b).

To finish their talk, the Stranger and Theaetetus need only to pin down the Sophist's place by considering the various divisions of the art of fakemaking, which is accomplished with no further trouble.

In this chapter I will describe what I call the Match-up Postulate. This is best done by considering Plato's discussion in an earlier dialogue, the Cratylus, of true and false assignments of portraits to people.¹ Cratylus has denied the possibility of falsehood, claiming that false speech is not speech at all, but merely "vain noises." Socrates gives an explanation of how names can be true or false which carries over to sentence truth and falsity.

Cratylus' position. Cratylus has claimed that there is no way at all to speak false things (ψευδῆ λέγειν τὸ παράπαν οὐκ ἔστιν). For him, to say false things is to say things that are not. (ἢ οὐ τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ ψευδῆ λέγειν, τὸ μὴ τὰ ὄντα λέγειν;) Thus he asks, How could someone, when he says this thing which he says, not say what is? (πῶς γὰρ ἂν . . . , λέγων γέ τις τοῦτο ὃ λέγει, μὴ τὸ ὄν λέγοι; 429d).² Evidently, for Cratylus "false

¹ Wolfgang Detel (p.51) and Gail Fine (1977, pp.299f.) have given the same sort of interpretation of this discussion, namely, one which recognizes that this discussion concerns true and false assignments of names, not true and false names.

speech is not speech at all, but--like a case of calling someone by the wrong name--it is merely sounds being uttered (ταῦτα φθέγγασθαι). The behavior is mere noise-making (φοφείν); in vain does the person behave this way, just as if his behavior had been to clang something metal (ὡσπερ ἄν εἶ τι χαλκίου κινῆσαι κρούσας, 430a).

Socrates' reply. Socrates declares that Cratylus' argument is more clever than he, at his young age. But he gets Cratylus to agree to the following. Names are like paintings in that both are representations (μιμήματα) of objects, though each represents its object in a different way (430b).

Though not in so much detail, Socrates suggests the following story. Suppose that I visit a fair with two friends, a man and a woman, and they each have their portrait drawn. When the artist finishes his work, he gives both portraits to me to hand over (ἀποδιδόναι) to my friends. It is possible that I might carry (προσφέρειν) the portrait of the man to the man, and that of the woman to the woman. This distribution (διανομή) is like the case of a person giving (ἀποδιδόναι) the name "Hermogenes" in greeting to Hermogenes. It is likewise possible that in giving (ἀποδιδόναι) the portraits to my friends I carry (προσφέρειν) them to the opposite people; the portrait of the woman to the man, and that of the man to the woman. This

distribution is like the case of a person giving the name "Hermogenes" in greeting not to Hermogenes but to Cratylus.

Of course, not both of these distributions (διανομαί) of the two paintings are right (ὀρθαί), but only the one in which I give (ἀποδιδόναι) each painting to the person it has come from and is like (τὸ προσήκόν τε καὶ τὸ ὅμοιον, 430c).

This story, accepted by Cratylus, is all Socrates needs for his explanation of true and false names. Such a distribution or assignment (διανομήν), whether with paintings, as when I hand the painting of the man over to the man, or with names, as when I give the sound "Hello, Hermogenes" in greeting to Hermogenes, Socrates calls right (ὀρθήν). And in the case of names, he not only calls the assignment (διανομήν) right but also true (ἀληθῆ). But the other sort of distribution (of the man's portrait to the woman or of the name "Hermogenes" to Cratylus), which carries the unlike towards someone and hands it over (τὴν τοῦ ἀνομοίου δόσιν τε καὶ ἐπιφορᾶν), is not right (οὐκ ὀρθήν) and, in the case of names, Socrates also calls this assignment (διανομήν) false (ψευδῆ, 430d).

Socrates' assumption. We can sum up Socrates' argument in three steps:

(1) There are right and wrong distributions ($\delta\iota\alpha\nu\omicron\mu\alpha\acute{\iota}$) of paintings to people.

(2) Names, like paintings, are representations.

(3) Thus, there are right and wrong assignments ($\delta\iota\alpha\nu\omicron\mu\alpha\acute{\iota}$) of names to objects, which we may call true and false assignments.

Plainly there is an unstated assumption in this argument: the postulate of a two-place relation which can exist between representations and objects irregardless of whether or not the representation is of the object. This 'dianomic' relation, as I shall call it, exists whether it is right or wrong, that is, whether or not the representation is of the object. We may write this 'postulate of dianome' as follows.

For any x and y , if y is a representation, then there can be an assignment (a 'dianome'), whether it is right or wrong, of y to x .²

² I take Plato with this postulate to be claiming that with
(Continued next page.)

The dianomic relation holds between a representation and an object. Presumably, since it is a person who hands over the paintings to his friends or gives the name "Hermogenes" in greeting to someone, the dianomic relation depends upon a giver or distributor. Thus it is perhaps implicit in the postulate of the two-place dianomic relation that a third party is involved--the giver. We can spell this out in the 'apodonic' postulate:

For any giver G , and any x and y , if y is a representation, then G can give or assign ($\acute{\alpha}\nu\omicron\delta\iota\delta\omicron\nu\alpha\iota$) y to x , whether or not y is a representation of x .

(Continued from previous page.)
regard to a dianome's being a dianome it makes no difference whether the dianome is true or false (though of course a true dianome and a false dianome are unlike each other; indeed we might say they are opposite each other). Likewise at Philebus 12df, Socrates claims that there is no incompatibility in holding both that all pleasure is pleasure and that true pleasure is unlike or opposite false pleasure, just as one may hold both that all color is color and that the color black is the opposite of the color white. Ontologically, then, Socrates is here committing himself to the kind dianome and the two sub-kinds right dianome and wrong dianome.

How Socrates' assumption establishes true and false speech.

With this anti-Cratylus argument, it seems to me that Plato has developed a theory of falsity which in an obvious way carries beyond the assignment of names over to speech in general. The carry-over is done by generalizing the relation of representing (between painting and object or between name and object) to any or nearly any sort of relation between two objects.

Because certain objects represent other objects, we know that as representations of the other objects they "come from" or "belong to" (προσῆκειν) those other objects. Once he has established that there is this sort of belonging (προσῆκειν), Plato can use the dianomic postulate plausibly to insist that the distribution (διανομή) of an object to where it belongs is right, but that the distribution of an object to where it does not belong is not right. And when we put the objects together in words (that is, when we put words together), the right distribution we may call true, and the wrong distribution false.

Plato's argument in the Cratylus requires that certain objects be representations of other objects. Being-a-representation-of or being-represented-by are two particular ways in which one object may "belong" (προσῆκειν) to another. But the argument does not seem to require that the general relation of belonging (τὸ προσῆκειν) be the particular relation of representing or being represented by (τὸ μιμεῖσθαι); rather, as

we have seen in the preceding paragraph, the argument seems to require that the representing (τὸ μιμεῖσθαι) be belonging (τὸ προσῆκειν). Thus if there is any sort of belonging between two objects, then there would seem to be right and wrong distributions of these objects. When this distributing is done in thought or words, we may call it true and false belief (δόξα) and speech (λόγος). For example, if Theaetetus belongs to the Form Sitting in this way: he partakes of Sitting, then the distribution of words "Theaetetus sits" is right and true. Again, if Theaetetus does not belong to the Form Flying by partaking of Flying, then the distribution "Theaetetus flies" is not right and false. And, to take a more complicated case, we might infer from the greatest kinds section that if Theaetetus belongs to the Form Other in that he partakes of Other with regard to Flying, then "Theaetetus is other than flying" is true.

Now the inference in the paragraph just before this from "There is some sort of belonging between objects" to "There are right and wrong distributions of these objects" is made by using a generalized form of the dianomic postulate. That postulate required that one of the two objects be a representation; the generalized postulate leaves out that requirement:

For any \underline{x} and \underline{y} , there can be a distribution or assignment of \underline{y} to \underline{x} , whether or not \underline{y} belongs to \underline{x} .

If the assignment is made in thought, it is a $\delta\acute{o}\xi\alpha$ or belief (true or false); in words, a $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ or sentence (true or false).

It is again perhaps implicit in the postulate that besides \underline{x} and \underline{y} a third party is involved, the thing which matches up (whether rightly or wrongly) \underline{x} and \underline{y} in words or thought. This third party is explicit in the Match-up Postulate:

For any matchmaker \underline{M} , and any \underline{y} and \underline{x} , \underline{M} can match up \underline{x} and \underline{y} whether or not \underline{x} and \underline{y} belong together.

Conclusion. To give his argument, Socrates chose two distinct types of objects, representations and objects of representations. The advantage of this choice is that the relation of representing is a particularly striking kind of belonging. But the same argument could be made, though perhaps not so strikingly, with any relation of belonging. Thus Socrates' account uses but does not depend on there being two distinct types of objects, representations and objects of representations. Rather, it depends on there being certain "belongings" between objects, so that when we put things where

they belong the distribution is right, and when we put things where they do not belong the distribution is wrong. Likewise, of course, the reason Socrates' account can easily be generalized to explain all falsity in thought and speech is not that his generalized account postulates two types of objects in any true or false belief or thought (e.g. the types subject and predicate or Ryle's names and live verbs), but because in general there are certain belongings between objects: the particular belonging in any given case may be representing, partaking, being the same, being other, being greater, or any other kind of belonging.³

³ Whether or not the match-up-postulate account of falsity actually requires that certain objects in fact do belong to others will be considered in chapter four, pp. 93f.

THREE

In this chapter I will argue that in the Theaetetus Plato must reject the Match-up Postulate. It is commonplace among some interpreters¹ that in the Theaetetus Plato takes knowledge to be an all-or-nothing affair; one either knows everything about an object or nothing at all about it. My argument makes Plato out to be even stranger: the consequence for Plato of rejecting the Match-up Postulate is that belief and speech become all or nothing, too, in that one either speaks or thinks true things or else, much like for Cratylus, one does not succeed in speaking or thinking at all but produces only the semblance of speech, phony speech.

Why Plato rejects the Match-up Postulate. My argument will be in two steps. First I will argue that the failure of all five attempts to explain false belief at 188-200 requires a rejection of the Match-up Postulate. Second, I will argue that Socrates' rejection of the Match-up Postulate (by rejecting all

¹ E.g. W. G. Runciman; G. E. L. Owen, esp. pp.245, 262-5; and J. MacDowell.

five attempts to explain false belief) is "canonical". That is, I will argue that when Socrates rejects the five explanations he is speaking in his own person; he is not merely engaged in reducing a position to absurdity. He is not just coming to conclusions which he himself does not hold, conclusions which he intends to be so unacceptable that the position rather than the conclusions which he intends to be so unacceptable that the position entailing it must be rejected. Instead, I take him to be pointing out how hard it is to explain what false belief is as a belief, so that his own conclusion is that false beliefs are not really beliefs at all.

STEP ONE: WHY 188-200 REJECTS THE MATCH-UP POSTULATE

First-glance evidence that 188-200 accepts the Match-up Postulate. Certainly the Match-up Postulate is so much a part of common sense that it is reasonable to begin by assuming that Plato accepted it throughout 188-200, even if there were no indications one way or another, and even if he had not clearly accepted it earlier in the Cratylus argument considered in chapter two.

In addition to common sense, there is evidence available at first glance in the fourth, the wax-block model of false belief which indicates that Plato does accept the Match-up Postulate.² In that model Socrates supposes that the mind is like a block of wax, in which we store imprints of people as if they were signet rings. He says that, having an imprint of both Theaetetus and Theodorus and seeing both at a great distance and not well enough, I might wrongly match up the imprint of Theaetetus with the perception of Theodorus. This mismatch we may call the false judgment that Theaetetus is the one coming (who is really Theodorus). Socrates suggests that this mismatch is just like a case where someone puts his shoes on the wrong feet (ὡς περ οἱ ἔμπαλιν ὑποδοῦμενοι) and like the sight of something in a mirror when right changes to left (οἷα τὰ ἐν τοῖς κατόπτροις τῆς ὀφθαλμοῦ κἀθῆ, δεξιὰ εἰς ἀριστερὰ μεταρρεούσης). This seems at first

² Detel has argued that Plato not only incidentally accepts the Match-up Postulate at 188-200 but consciously argues in favor of the Match-up Postulate there as a preliminary task to the definition of false speech at *Sophist* 261-3 (1972, pp.41-51). His view is implicitly considered and rejected in what follows. Briefly, he argues that the generalization of the bird-cage model upon the wax-block model is not a good analogy; I will disagree.

glance to be evidence as strong as that in the *Cratylus* that Socrates accepts some form at least of the Match-up Postulate: there are objects which in some way or other belong to certain other objects—imprints and perceptions, feet and shoes, right and left and its mirror image—and I am postulated as a matchmaker able to create match-ups between the objects whether or not they in fact belong with each other.

Moreover, when Plato eventually does abandon this wax-block model of false belief, he does so because this model predicts that false belief does not exist in the combination (ἐν τῇ συνᾶσει) of perception with perception, nor in the combination of thought (διάνοια) with thought, but only in the combination of perception with thought (195c-d). The failure does not seem to have anything to do with Socrates' rejection of the Match-up Postulate; rather, the problem seems to be that the wax-block model does not assume a form of the Match-up Postulate general enough to account for all the mismatchings we do make.

Why the first-glance evidence may not be conclusive.
Plato's own theory of false belief is different from the wax-block model; after all, he does reject that model. This explicit rejection sets this talk of wax imprints, shoes, and mirrors apart from the talk in the *Cratylus* of portraits and names, which is not rejected in that dialogue.

Since Plato is relating with the wax-block model a theory which he himself does not hold, it follows that neither the presuppositions he brings out behind that explanation (by means of commonplace events with shoes and mirrors) nor the consequences he derives from that explanation (for instance, that mismatchings cannot take place between two imprints) deserve to be taken for granted as part of Plato's own explanation. Sentences of a theory rejected by Plato are unreliable witnesses to Plato's own beliefs about a proper theory.

An example might make this sort of unreliability more clear. Plato shows throughout the Theaetetus his skill at motivating or giving the thought behind theories he does not himself accept. This skillful motivation makes it seem as if Plato accepts presuppositions or consequences he in fact rejects. For instance, at 152d-f he motivates the doctrine that all things are in flux. Plato seems to accept this doctrine's presuppositions (Fowler's translations follow):

The doctrine is amply proved by this, namely, that motion is the cause of that which passes for existence, that is, of becoming, whereas rest is the cause of non-existence and destruction (153a).

He supports this presupposition with commonplace events:

Warmth or fire, which you know, is the parent and preserver of all other things, is itself the offspring of movement and friction, and these two are forms of motion (153a).

The animal kingdom is sprung from these same sources [i.e. from movement and friction] (153b).

Is not the bodily habit destroyed by rest and idleness, and preserved, generally speaking, by gymnastic exercises and motions (153b)?

Is not [the soul] preserved and made better through learning and practice, which are motions, whereas through rest, which is want of practice and of study, it learns nothing and forgets what it has learned (153b-c)?

But it would be a mistake to conclude from these passages alone, which are taken from within the context of a theory he rejects (cf. 182c-183c), that Plato's own theory is the claim Socrates makes at 153c:

The good, both for the soul and for the body, is motion, and rest is the opposite;

or the claim that motion causes being and rest non-being; or that he has no better explanation of the origin or preservation of the commonplaces fire, animals, body, and soul than motion without rest. Therefore, to come to a conclusion about Plato's own presuppositions, about his own explanations of these commonplaces, it is not safe to consider the claims he makes in rejected theories. We will need to look for claims inside of theories which Plato does not eventually reject, even if the only unrejected theory we can find amounts to nothing more than the assumptions behind Socrates' reasons for rejecting other theories.³

Moreover, the fact that Plato does not announce that he is rejecting the Match-up Postulate when he rejects the wax-block model may not be a safe reason to deny that one of Plato's deeper reasons for rejecting this model is in fact a denial of the Match-up Postulate. If Plato does in the end reject the Match-up Postulate, which is the claim of this chapter, then

³ Such an unrejected theory, itself used for rejecting other theories, is considered later in this chapter, pp.68-9.

that rejection would be a deeper reason for rejecting the wax-block model. Such a pattern of initially dismissing a theory for one reason while later dismissing it for a deeper reason occurs earlier in the Theaetetus: both the position that knowledge is perception and the position that as things appear to a man, so they really are for him are dismissed several times (at 157e-158a, 161c-162a, 163b-c, 163c-164b, 170e, 171a-c, and 177e-179b) before the ultimate argument against both is presented as an argument against the view that all is in flux (182c-183c).⁴ Thus this chapter will argue that Plato has a deeper argument against the wax-block model than its lack of generality: an argument that it fails to explain not only non-perceptual cases but also perceptual cases, such as mistaking Theaetetus to be the one coming.

The importance of Socrates' rejection of the bird cage model. Of course, nothing that has been said yet makes it in the least bit likely that Socrates rejects the Match-up Postulate in the Theaetetus; so far I have only been trying to argue that the

⁴ Penner (1977) presents this sort of interpretation of Plato's arguments in the Theaetetus against Protagoras and Heraclitus.

first-glance evidence of the wax-block model need not be conclusive evidence that he accepts the Match-up Postulate. But in fact it is easy to show that Socrates could not have accepted the Match-up Postulate in the wax-block model. The proof is by contradiction: if he had accepted the Match-up Postulate in the wax-block model, then he would have accepted the bird-cage model. But he rejects the bird-cage model.

Why anyone who accepts the Match-up Postulate will accept the bird-cage model. This model supposes that the mind is like a bird-cage, and that the birds we put into the cage are bits of knowledge. The model makes a distinction between having a bird at hand, whenever it is in our cage, and having a bird in hand, whenever we reach into the cage and seize it. In this way we could "know" two birds, that is, have them at hand in our cage, but--by the Match-up Postulate--match them up wrongly, thus explaining any false belief. For instance, we could "know" the bird "7+5" and the bird "11" but wrongly match them up when we say "7 + 5 = 11." In the wax-block model Socrates had used the analogy of putting one's foot into the wrong shoe as a way of establishing the possibility of error in that model. Here in the bird-cage model--if he accepted the Match-up Postulate--he ought to have used the analogy of putting on one red sandal and one blue sandal: we have both sandals at hand under the bed, but on account of the darkness of the room or the sleepiness in our

eyes we wrongly take in hand and match up these sandals on our feet (by the Match-up Postulate) even though they do not really belong together.

If Plato had accepted the Match-up Postulate throughout 188-200, making plain use of it in the wax-block model and justifying it there with the foot-in-the-shoe analogy, then surely he would have accepted the bird-cage model by means of the Match-up Postulate, justifying it (if he had really thought it needed any more justification after its success in the wax-block model) with something like the sandal-under-the-bed analogy.

We may conclude that any interpretation which takes the limited success of the wax-block model (at apparently explaining how false belief can arise from the mismatching of imprint to perception) to show that Plato is committed to the Match-up Postulate must fail to explain why he rejected the bird-cage model.

Two alleged weak spots in the bird-cage model. It might be argued⁵ that the bird-cage model has weak spots of its own which have nothing to do with the Match-up Postulate, and that it is

⁵ E.g. Detel, pp.60-61, suggests that both of the following weak spots are part of the bird-cage model.

these peculiar weak spots which cause Socrates to reject it. In that case we could assert that Plato maintained the Match-up Postulate throughout 188-200 and rejected the bird-cage model without rejecting either it or the partial success of the wax-block model.

Two weak spots have been suggested.⁶ The first is that the bird-cage model does not allow for any distinction between the

⁶ I suppose that a third weak spot might be suggested: that, while the wax-block model gets a distinction between the two candidates for a match-up by the distinction between perceptions of objects and memories of objects, the bird-cage model allows no way to distinguish two candidates for a match-up. But this weak spot has already been shown not to be part of the bird-cage model by the sandal-under-the-bed analogy. Just as we can distinguish two candidate sandals--the red one which I put on one foot and the blue I put on the other--so we can distinguish two candidate birds--the bird '11' which I seize in one hand and the bird '7+5' which I seize in the other.

objects of the belief and the representations of objects which make up a belief.⁷ According to this suggestion, in this model there is, for example, no such object as the number twelve apart from the various birds representing the number twelve (the bird '7+5', the bird '12', etc.).

The second suggested weak spot (which perhaps is a consequence of the first) is that the bird-cage model does not allow for any distinction between the match-ups which we make (whether right or wrong) and the match-ups which really belong together.

Why these weak spots are not in the bird-cage model. To begin with, it would be surprising if Socrates had suggested a model which did not make these two distinctions, for it is agreed by everyone that these distinctions are made in the wax-block model. Why would Plato offer a model with such weak spots after already avoiding those weaknesses in the earlier model?

⁷ In Fregean terms, it does not distinguish 'reference' (Bedeutung) from 'meaning' (Sinn).

I will show with an example how these two distinctions are made in the wax-block model, then I will show how they are likewise made in the bird-cage model. By making the two distinctions, the bird-cage model shows itself innocent of the two weak spots it was accused of having.

The wax-block model distinguishes between the objects of a belief and the representations of objects which make up that belief. For instance, a company of eleven men is distinct from the imprints of those eleven in my mental wax block. And the wax-block model distinguishes between the match-ups I might make (whether right or wrong) and the match-ups which really belong together. For instance, suppose that I have in store a supply of wax imprints of the twelve apostles, and that after the Last Supper I come and see them all sitting together, except Judas. I am given a perception of eleven apostles, but, because the room is too dark for me to see clearly or because of my low-grade wax, I match up my wax imprint of twelve apostles to my perception of eleven apostles. Of course, this is the wrong match-up; my imprint of the eleven apostles is what in fact belongs with my perception. In this way the wax-block model makes a distinction between the match-ups we make and the match-ups which belong together.

The bird-cage model just as clearly makes these two distinctions. The first distinction is between the objects of a belief and the representations of objects which make up that belief. In introducing the bird-cage model, Socrates says:

Whatever bit of knowledge ($\epsilon\pi\iota\sigma\tau\eta\mu\eta\nu$) someone acquires and shuts up in their cage, we say he has learned or discovered the thing of which this is the knowledge ($\tau\omicron$ πρᾶγμα οὗ ἦν αὐτῆ ἡ ἐπιστήμη), and that just this is knowing ($\tau\omicron$ ἐπίστασθαι τοῦτ' εἶναι, 197e).

Clearly the object of a belief, for example, the number twelve itself, is here distinguished from the representations of that object, that is, from the bits of knowledge of twelve, e.g. the bird "12", the bird "7+5", etc.

The second distinction is between the match-ups I might make (whether right or wrong) and the match-ups which really belong together. For instance, suppose that I have taken in hand the bird "7+5", and that I am hunting for a bird this matches up with. Mistaking the bird "11" for the bird "12", I match up the bird "11" with the bird "7+5", saying "7 + 5 = 12." Socrates says:

It is possible not to have the bit of knowledge of this thing [i.e. not to have the bird '12'], but some other bit of knowledge instead, when in hunting for some bit of knowledge, as the various kinds fly about, he makes a mistake and catches one instead of another; so in one example he thought twelve was eleven, because he caught the bird '11', which was within him, instead of the bird '12', caught a ringdove, as it were, instead of a pigeon.

μη γὰρ ἔχειν τὴν ἐπιστήμην τούτου οἷόν τε,
ἀλλ' ἑτέραν ἀντ' ἐκείνης, ὅταν θηρεύων τινὰ
ποῦ ποτ' ἐπιστήμην διαπετομένων ἀνθ' ἑτέρας
ἑτέραν ἀμαρτῶν λάβῃ, τότε ἄρα τὰ ἑνδεκά
δωδεκά ᾤθη εἶναι, τὴν τῶν ἑνδεκά ἐπιστήμην
ἀντὶ τῆς τῶν δωδεκά λαβῶν τὴν ἐν ἑαυτῷ οἷον
φάτταν ἀντὶ περιστέρως, 199b.

Here the match-up which really belongs together, of the birds '7+5' and '12', is clearly distinguished from the match-up we wrongly make when we mistakenly come up with the bird '11' in hand as a result of our hunt. Thus both distinctions are made; the bird-cage model does not have the alleged weak spots.

It is wrong, then, to see Socrates as completely rejecting the bird-cage model but still seeing part, at least, of the wax-block model as unrefuted in some way. And after all, when Socrates does reject the bird-cage model, he plainly does wish to say that the wax-block model is just as absurd: he says that a refuter (ελεγκτικός) will deride both the bird cages and the wax blocks (περιστέρωνες . . . κηρίνοι πλάσματα) as ridiculous (γελοίοι, 200a-c). The weak-spots-in-the-bird-cage-model hypothesis, in contradiction with this passage, should predict that when Socrates rejects the bird-cage model he will not equally scorn the wax-block model, for that model, according to those who put forward this hypothesis, does achieve a measure of success and is not the total failure which the bird-cage model is.

A general theory of 188-200. On the other hand, the interpretation I am arguing for—that Plato rejects the Match-up Postulate throughout 188-200—can account for the complete failures of both models, while still allowing for the fact that the wax-block model is initially dismissed for a more superficial reason (its lack of generality). As I have said, the pattern of initially dismissing a theory for one reason while later dismissing it for a deeper reason occurs elsewhere in the Theaetetus. Indeed, if we suppose that Plato rejects the Match-up Postulate throughout 188-200, we can explain why he

rejects all four of the explanations of false belief which are in terms of knowing and not knowing (the second explanation is in terms of being and not-being). Each of the four is rejected because each fails to explain how anyone could ever mistake anything for another thing and come up with a false belief (the wax-block model, of course, is not initially rejected for this reason, but, sharing the common defect, it ultimately is rejected for this reason). Indeed, I claim that Socrates is not just ignoring the Match-up Postulate in these failed explanations or purposely leaving it out (as if it were the real solution to all or part of the cases of error, a solution to which he was tacitly drawing attention), but that he is taking aim against it, making it the principal enemy of his attack against the four explanations in terms of knowing and not knowing. This claim can be supported by a look at the four explanations and why Socrates thinks they fail.

Socrates' rejection of the first explanation: mismatched objects. Now the Match-up Postulate asserts that even if two objects, say Socrates and Theaetetus, do not really belong together (in this particular way of belonging, let us say: being the same), I nonetheless can match them up with each other. If I make this match-up in thought, I will be (falsely) thinking that Theaetetus is Socrates.

Consider Socrates' argument against such an explanation: In this argument, Socrates leaves out learning and forgetting and claims that in that case we then either know something or do not know it. On these lines, when someone makes a judgment, they must judge either about a thing they know or do not know. And of course (καὶ μὴν) both to know and not know the same thing (τὸ αὐτὸ) is impossible (ἀδύνατον, 188a-b).

Socrates points out that (a) it is impossible for someone to think that one thing which he knows is not itself (ταῦτα οἶεται οὐ ταῦτα) but another thing which he also knows. The impossibility is that he would know both and not know both (ἀμφοτέρω εἶδὼς ἀγνοεῖ ἀμφοτέρω, 188b).

And, he says, (b) it is impossible for him to think that one thing which he does not know is another thing which he does not know. The impossibility in this case is that someone who knows neither, say, the man-Socrates nor the man Theaetetus could take it into his head (εἰς τὴν διάνοιαν λαβεῖν) that the man Socrates is the man Theaetetus or that the man Theaetetus is the man-Socrates (188b).

Again, he says, (c) it is impossible for him to think that one thing he knows is another thing he does not know, or that one thing he does not know is another thing he knows (188c). It seems that both of the above impossibilities apply here: it is impossible that the man would know and not know one of the

things, like the impossibility of case (a), and it is impossible that he would take into his head the thing he did not know, like the impossibility of case (b). In any case, (a), (b), or (c), it is impossible to find a way to think falsely that one thing is another.

The point of Socrates' argument seems to be that it is not enough of an explanation of false belief merely to assert that we can in thought mismatch Theaetetus and Socrates in a way in which they do not belong.⁸ For to mismatch the two this way surely requires that we mistake one of the men for the other. But how could we do this, given (a), (b), and (c)?

The point of the last three explanations of false belief. Nearly everyone makes the same complaint against Socrates' argument against a mismatched-objects explanation.⁹ Socrates did not overlook this complaint; rather, his remaining three arguments against explanations of false belief in terms of knowing and not knowing are designed to take into account and finally reject that complaint. First I will set out that complaint; then I will go on with Socrates' arguments.

⁸ Contrary to Penner's theory of partial knowledge; see note 11.

The universal complaint. It is clear that if I knew everything about an object (it would have to be a very simple object), I could never think falsely about it. And it is clear that if I knew nothing about an object, not even a way to refer to it, I could not think falsely about it, either. But there appears to be a giant hole in this argument for the impossibility of false judgment. It seems obvious that we never do know everything about an object (for instance, how many times it was discussed in the fifth century B.C.), and it also seems that we always know something about an object (at least, that it exists—or, to be really sure, that it either exists or does not exist). In other words, for the argument to work, at 188a Socrates needs to claim that we either know something completely or not at all, but this is a "faulty dichotomy;"¹⁰ we can "partially" know an object. There is a sense in which I do know

⁹ E.g. Cornford, p.113; Runciman, pp.29-30; MacDowell, pp.196-7.

¹⁰ Fine's phrase (1979).

Theaetetus, and a sense in which I do not know the same man, for we can have a bit of knowledge about something without knowing everything about it.

Apparent consequences of the universal complaint. I need to look into this giant hole. It seems to me that, strictly speaking, even with the partial knowledge theories, we still must allow that it is impossible both to know and not know the same thing. For to say we have partial knowledge of Theaetetus, for instance—according to any theory that I have seen¹¹—is in fact to say that the real object of our knowledge—what we really know—is not Theaetetus but bits about Theaetetus, his name, job, age, and the like, or (depending on the theory) true

¹¹ Save one. Terry Penner maintains the exceptional theory that (a) Theaetetus himself, not bits of some sort about him, is the real object of knowledge, yet (b) the claim that we either know something completely or else not at all is a faulty dichotomy. Thus for Penner we can really somehow have knowledge of Theaetetus without having complete knowledge of him. Penner describes this somehow real, yet incomplete, knowledge of Theaetetus which makes Socrates' dichotomy faulty as an imperfect or partial "grasp" of Theaetetus.

This incomplete knowledge is "somehow real" in that it really succeeds in being about Theaetetus himself: in a private
(Continued next page.)

sentences about him, or facts or propositions about him. These partial knowledge theories can only understand the words "I partially know Theaetetus" or "I know and do not know Theaetetus" to say "I do know some things (facts, sentences, or whatever) about Theaetetus, but I do not know other things about

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note Penner says that our imperfect grasp "is sufficient . . . to allow us to refer to" whatever the object is, here, Theaetetus. Yet this real knowledge of Theaetetus is "incomplete" in that we can make mistakes about Theaetetus. Penner argues rhetorically for this possibility:

If you have only a partial grasp on Theaetetus—and don't know what part of your beliefs about him is accurate, what part isn't—and similarly for Theodorus and indeed anyone you meet in the street, then why might you not mistake the one coming for Theaetetus, or think Theaetetus is Theodorus . . . ?

Since he gives no further explanation of how this sort of knowledge can both be about something yet be mistaken, Penner's theory amounts to nothing more than an unelaborated denial of Socrates' rejection of the mismatched-objects explanation, that is, an unelaborated affirmation of that first explanation of false belief (an affirmation unelaborated even by a diagnosis of Socrates' mistake in rejecting that first model). (Continued next page.)

him." Thus I say that, strictly speaking, they agree with Socrates that it is impossible to know and not know the same thing.

We may well ask: How do the partial knowledge theories explain false belief? some explanation is needed; for why will not the same argument Socrates applied to knowledge of Theaetetus also apply to knowledge of bits about Theaetetus?¹²

The explanations which a partial knowledge theory might offer seem to be, as I will try to bring out, just what Socrates considers in his last three arguments: the explanation in terms of mismatched "thinkings", the wax-block model, and the bird-cage model. Each of these, like the first explanation in

(Continued from previous page.)

Penner's theory thus is too incompletely stated to be the subject of any specific criticism, yet it seems vulnerable to Socrates' general problem for any theory which maintains that knowledge (or thinking) can both be about something yet be mistaken: if the knowledge does mistake two things, it cannot be about one of those things any more than the other, cf. pp. 68f below.

¹² Terry Penner asks this question in seminars.

terms of mismatched objects, will be seen to require the Match-up Postulate, and it is their right to assume any such postulate which Socrates will deny in each case.

The explanation in terms of mismatched "thinkings". Perhaps an explanation can avoid talking about the objects of knowledge at all, but only talk about the "thinking" or the judging itself. In that case, we would explain how we can falsely think or judge that one thing is another by saying that what we match up in our minds are not the things we are thinking about, but the thoughts or "thinkings" themselves. Again, it is plain that anyone who accepts the Match-up Postulate will accept that this sort of mismatching is possible. According to that postulate, we can mismatch one "thinking" with another (say, a thinking about Socrates and a thinking about Theaetetus) even though those two "thinkings" do not really belong together.

Why Socrates rejects the mismatched "thinkings" explanation. For Socrates, this sort of explanation is unacceptable, too, and for the same reason why one cannot think one object of (complete) knowledge is another object of (complete) knowledge. Suppose, he says, that thinking is saying words (to oneself silently). Then, according to this explanation, in the false belief "Socrates is Theaetetus" there is a mistake, just as earlier in the first explanation of mismatched objects, but here we do not mistake one man for

another but one word for another. What we mistake in our minds is not the man Theaetetus for the man Socrates; rather, we mistake a name or description which belongs to Socrates with a name or description which belongs to Theaetetus. But as soon as it is clear that a mismatched-thinking explanation requires that we mistake one word for another, it is easy to see that it fails for the same reason as the original. We saw that that original explanation failed because it did not explain how, if I know both the men whom I am thinking of, I might think that one is the other. Likewise, this explanation fails because if I know both the words which I am thinking with, there is no explanation of how I might mistake one for the other. Socrates says:

Therefore, if thinking is speaking to oneself, no one who is saying both, that is, thinks both, that is, lays hold of both with his mind, would say, that is, think, that the one is the other (οὐδεὶς ἀμφοτέρᾳ γε λέγων καὶ δοξάζων καὶ ἐφαπτόμενος ἀμφοῖν τῇ ψυχῇ εἰποι ἂν καὶ δοξάσειεν ὡς τὸ ἕτερον ἕτερον ἔστιν). But, of course, the phrase concerning the other (τὸ ἕτερον) must be permitted by you [that is, don't quibble with me just because the Greek idiom for "the one is the other" reads "the other is the other"]. For I am saying the same thing as this: No one would think that the ugly is beautiful, or anything else of that sort.

—Well, Socrates, I do permit [that phrase—that is, I won't quibble with you because of the peculiarity of the Greek expression "the other"] (190c8-d1).¹³

Of course, it goes without saying that if you do not know the words, then you will not even be able to have them in mind in the first place so as to say them to yourself. Socrates adopts here a silent-speech theory of thinking, but his argument would seem to work just as well no matter what we take the thinking process to consist of—words, "paintings" (cf. Philebus 39b), "meanings," or whatever.

The universal complaint again, and the same consequence.

There seems to be the same hole in this argument against a mismatched-"thinkings" explanation as in the earlier argument against a mismatched-things explanation. What partial knowledge theorists believe is that we partially know words: we know some of the times they should be used without knowing other times when they should. That is, what we know are not words, but bits

¹³ It would not be satisfactory to read this argument, including this passage, as dealing with a mistake of things thought of rather than "thinkings", for such a reading would make this argument identical to the original mismatched-objects argument. Macdowell, pp.203-4, seems to agree.

about words such as facts, uses, or whatever. Socrates' last two arguments consider just these sorts of explanations in terms of bits.

The mismatched-wax-imprint explanation and its first problem. The wax-block model is an attempt to allow for partial knowledge of Theaetetus, by making the real objects of knowledge bits about Theaetetus. In this model, the bits are sharply divided into two quite different types: imprints in wax and perceptions. Such a model makes no attempt to claim that we can falsely judge concerning two bits of the same type. The same reason we saw above against making either the interchange of things or of words for things the root of falsity will also apply here to wax imprints: if we know two wax imprints, we cannot take one for the other (cf. 192a-c, 195c-d). Rather, this sort of two-type model only attempts to explain false judgment resulting from mismatching an object of one type with an object of another type. Again, it is obvious that anyone who accepts the Match-up Postulate would accept the possibility of this sort of mismatching.

As Socrates points out, this two-type model cannot explain errors within a type. False judgments will arise within the same type; we shall falsely judge that one wax imprint is another (196a-b), or that one perception is another.¹⁴ To successfully explain false judgment, a many-type model alone

will not be enough. Thus the wax-block model forces us to the bird-cage model.

The mismatched-bits-of-knowledge explanation and why it fails. If we are going to make the true objects of knowledge bits (facts, propositions, or whatever), we must explain how we can make false judgments with two bits of the same type. The bird-cage model tries to do exactly this. The explanation, as we have seen, is that we match up two bits which do not belong together, for instance, we mismatch the bird '7+5' with the bird '11'. And, as we have seen, the possibility of this sort of explanation will certainly be accepted by anyone who accepts the Match-up Postulate.

But as soon as the partial knowledge theorists give this explanation, Socrates raises the same old problem: the 'explanation' that we mismatch the bird '7+5' with the bird '11' requires that we mistake the bird '11' for the bird '12'. But nowhere has it been explained how if we know both birds we could mistake one for the other—it is the same old problem because

¹⁴ For a detailed examination of Plato's denial in the Theaetetus of perceptual incorrigibility, see Penner, ch.5, sec.8.

the mistake of the bird "11" for the bird "12" remains just as mysterious here as the earlier mistake of a description (or word for) Theaetetus for a description (or word for) Socrates, or the original mystery of the mistake of the man Theaetetus for the man Socrates. It would be completely irrational (πολλῆ ἀλογία), when bits are our objects of knowledge, to say we both know and do not know those bits (ἐπιστήμης παραγενομένης γινῶναι μὲν τὴν φύξην μηδὲν, ἀγνοῆσαι δὲ πάντα, 199d).

The problem for the partial knowledge theories. When Socrates first took up this problem of false belief, assumed that Theaetetus can be the object of our knowledge, and claimed that we either know him completely or do not know him at all (and not both), he seemed silly. "Surely you must allow that we can have partial knowledge of Theaetetus," the partial knowledge theories said. But the partial knowledge theories did not really claim that we know and do not know, or partially know, the same thing, Theaetetus, unless the phrase "partial knowledge of Theaetetus" was explained as knowing some bits (about Theaetetus), and not knowing other bits (about him). Those theories did not seem to want to say that, concerning those bits which we know about Theaetetus, we can know and not know the same thing. Their solution seemed to be that we can speak of partial knowledge of Theaetetus because the real objects of knowledge are something else, bits. But that answer gives no

explanation of how we mistake one bit for another; it merely assumes, as the very first "naive" explanation did, some sort of match-up postulate. Socrates can justifiably say that after our long discourse we ended up with the same perplexity we had in the beginning (μακρὰν περιελθόντες κάλιν ἐπὶ τὴν πρώτην πάρεσμεν ἀπορίαν, 200a).

Two last attempts to justify the Match-up Postulate rejected. There are two ways to go from here. The "partial" knowledge theories can either assert that there are bits of ignorance which we have in our bird-cage along with bits of knowledge, or they can declare that they were not really speaking seriously when they said that the real objects of knowledge--what we really do know--are bits about Theaetetus. In fact, they say, (though they are not really being serious now, either), the real objects of knowledge are other bits about the first order of bits we talked about.

The first of these two attempts runs into the same old problem yet again. As long as the objects of knowledge are these bits, whether bits of knowledge or bits of ignorance, either these bits of knowledge and ignorance are known or not. But, on the one hand, it is laughable to say that a man who knows both bits of knowledge and ignorance (ἐπιστήμην τε καὶ ἀνεπιστημοσύνην) could take one for the other, or again, knowing

neither, take one for the other, or finally, knowing one and not knowing the other, take one for the other (200b).

Digression: Church's solution to the perplexity of the bird-cage model. The second attempt, I said, is to declare that those bits about Theaetetus which we took to be the objects of knowledge are not, after all, the real objects of knowledge. We have only partial knowledge of them. Instead, there are bits about those bits, and these second-order bits are what we have in our bird-cage (200b). This is Church's solution (1946). His original bits were Fregean concepts. Faced with the problem of explaining how we could mistake one concept for another (that is, the problem of explaining how an analysis could be informative), he said that in the same way that there are concepts of things (such as Theaetetus), there are also concepts of concepts: "a name which denotes a concept must have, besides its denotation, also a sense" (pp.132-3). Church called this "the Fregean solution," for it is a special case of Frege's solution to Socrates' problem, the problem of how we could ever mistake one thing for another (that is, the problem of explaining how a statement of identity could ever be informative).

Although the problem is put in terms of informative identity statements instead of false judgments, the resemblance of Frege's work to the Theaetetus is remarkable. Frege

considers explaining the informative identity statement "a = b" in terms of the thing named by "a" and "b"; the Theaetetus begins by considering just such an interchange of things (the mismatched-things argument, 187e-188c). Frege also tries an explanation in terms of the words alone, "a" and "b" (". . . denn wäre eben von jenen Zeichen die Rede"); the mismatched-thoughts theory of the Theaetetus tries exactly this (cf. 190c-d). When this explanation also fails, Frege spells out a theory of bits (Sinne), which he accepts as the best explanation. The Theaetetus tries wax blocks and perceptions (in the wax-block model), then bits of knowledge (in the bird-cage model), but rejects both. The only difference in argument between the two developments is that a Fregean takes seriously the existence of ever higher orders of bits about bits ("concepts of concepts"); Socrates supposed that an ελεγκτικός—probably a reference to the Eleatic Stranger of the Sophist, cf. Sophist 216b7—would find that solution absurd (γελοῖος).

Frege and his followers never questioned that false sentences do exist. The five-step argument of Theaetetus 188-200 seems to question that very existence. For if we, with Socrates, do not take seriously a theory of ever higher orders of bits about bits, then the argument will drag us to the conclusion that there can be no false thinking or speaking:

If we find no escape from our perplexity, we shall, I fancy, become low-spirited, like seasick people, and shall allow the argument to trample on us and do to us anything it pleases (191a).

Interpreters of the wax block and bird-cage models have generally failed to see that Plato there is abandoning, and must know he is abandoning, any theory of bits. This includes any Fregean theory of sense and reference. Thus McDowell, for example, takes Plato not to have rejected a theory of sense and reference, but to have come very close but still just missed seeing the truth of such theories:

In the theory of 191a-195b, Plato has come quite close to a satisfactory way of dealing with the difficulty raised by the argument of 187c-188c, without, apparently, quite grasping the essential point. The difficulty can be undermined by the point that a thing can be qualified to figure in one's judgment by virtue of one's having some quite tenuous knowledge of it, in the sense of knowledge as to what it is. To put the point with an intentional crudity, a thing can figure in one's judgement by virtue of one's command of just one of the possible lines on to it. In a true judgement of identification, one commands two

different lines on to what is in fact only one thing. The fact that the two lines are different, even when the judgment is true, leaves open the possibility that, in a case in which one knows two lines on to what are in fact two different things, one may without obvious absurdity suppose that one is in the other sort of situation, i.e. that one's two lines are lines on to what is in fact only one thing.

The above remarks are intended to bring out how close Plato has come to solving the problem posed by the argument...(pp.216-7).

McDowell's solution involves postulating a higher order of bits about ("lines onto") the first level of bits, and seems to suggest that Plato (i) came close to but (ii) missed this "successful" solution by (i) postulating bits in the first place but (ii) failing to go on to postulate bits about those bits. Plato's dismissal of that very solution at 200b-c is unrecognized (cf. pp.225-6).

Socrates' rejection of higher order bits. According to Socrates, we will run into the same problem with the second-order bits, if they are what we have or do not have in our cage (that is, if they are the proper objects of knowledge): the assumption (by the Match-up Postulate, of course) that we can mismatch two of these bit has not explained how we can mistake

one of these bits for another. In this way we will be driven to say that not even these second-order bits are what we have in our cage, but there are third, fourth, and ever higher orders of bits. Yet no order can be said to be in our cage, without the same problem as ever: if we do have it in our cage, that is, know it, how will we be able to mistake it for any other bit? We are forced to run without end up through higher and higher orders, 'without ever getting anywhere (καὶ οὕτω δὴ ἀναγκασθησθε εἰς ταῦτο ἵν' περιτρέχειν μυριάκις οὐδὲν πλέον ποιοῦντες, 200c).

A summary of Socrates' rejection of the Match-up Postulate in 188-200. In each attempted explanation of false belief, the Match-up Postulate was assumed. Against each mismatching explanation, Socrates argued that, although it inevitably required that we mistake one thing for another,¹⁵ there is no explanation of how this mistake is made.

This is laid out in the table.

<u>False Belief</u> (transparently described)	<u>Objects</u> <u>Mismatched</u>	<u>Irrational</u> <u>Mistake</u>
1. Theaetetus is Socrates.	Theaetetus and Socrates	Theaetetus for Socrates

2. Theaetetus is Socrates.	mental descriptions of Theaetetus and of Socrates	mental description of Theaetetus for one of Socrates
3. Theaetetus is Socrates.	wax imprint of Theaetetus and perception of Socrates	wax imprint of Theaetetus for wax imprint of Socrates
4. Twelve is eleven.	bird '7+5' and bird '11'	bird '11' for bird '12'

¹⁵ Notice that even the wax-block model, in postulating the mismatch of a Theaetetus-imprint to a Socrates-perception, requires that we mistake our Theaetetus-imprint for a Socrates-imprint. There is just as much a mistake here as a mismatching, just as, when I go and look in my tool box for a nut to fit a certain bolt and falsely think that I have found one, this mismatching of nut to bolt required that I mistake the wrong nut for one of the right size. The mistake seems to be just as much a mistake, and not merely a mismatching, whether or not there is a right-sized nut in the box at all.

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| 5. Twelve is eleven. | knowledge-bird
`7+5` and ignorance-bird
`11` | ignorance-bird
`11` for knowledge-bird
`12` |
| 6. The bird `7+5` matches up with the bird `11`. | bird of the
bird `7+5` and
bird of the
bird `11` | bird of the
bird `11` for
bird of the
bird `12` |
| 7. Some bird of the bird `7+5` matches up with some bird of the bird `11`. | bird of some
bird of the
bird `7+5` and etc. | |

The evident conclusion is that no matter what we take to be the proper objects of knowledge (people, descriptions, bits), an explanation of a false belief concerning those objects which depends on the Match-up Postulate will fail to explain what it presupposes—that we can mistake one of those objects for another.

This completes the first step of my argument that Plato in the Theaetetus rejects the Match-up Postulate. This first step was made by showing that the failure of the bird-cage model of false belief requires a rejection of the Match-up Postulate; I

have further argued that at 188-200 Socrates argues against the Match-up Postulate from the very first to the last argument in terms of knowing and not knowing. His argument was summarized in the table above.

STEP TWO: WHY THE REJECTION IS CANONICAL

The second step of my argument that Plato in the Theaetetus rejects the Match-up Postulate is to argue that Socrates' rejection of the Match-up Postulate in 188-200 is "canonical". That is, I will try to show that Socrates himself rejects the Match-up Postulate; that he is not at 188-200 coming to a conclusion which he himself does not hold. Now there are only two ways to claim that 188-200 is non-canonical: One might claim either that only 188-200 is non-canonical,¹⁶ or that more than 188-200 is non-canonical.¹⁷

The claim that only 188-200 is non-canonical undercut. The point of claiming that 188-200 is non-canonical is to avoid attaching to Plato the farfetched view that he rejects the

¹⁶ Fine (1979) seems to do this, pp.77-8.

Match-up Postulate. But Plato has Socrates say things incompatible with the Match-up Postulate after 188-200 (at 209a-c). If we allow that there at 209a-c Socrates is speaking in his own person, then he himself cannot hold the Match-up Postulate, so there would be no gain in taking 188-200 to be non-canonical. Thus I will consider 209a-c, where Socrates lays down a stringent requirement for anyone's thinking about anything.

209a-c: Socrates' theory of thinking. At 209a-c Socrates argues that if I am to be thinking of Theaetetus, I must have in mind the way in which Theaetetus is different from everything else (ὅτι τῶν ἀπάντων διαφέρει).

His proof is by contradiction. Suppose, he says, that I have a belief about Theaetetus, but do not have in mind any way in which Theaetetus is different from everything else (οὐδὲν ἐδόξαζον μόνον, ἄλλο τι ὅτι τῶν ἄλλων διαφέρεις, τούτων οὐδενὸς ἡπτόμην τῇ διανοίᾳ). Then, he says, I am thinking of something common which does not belong to you any more than to someone else (τῶν κοινῶν τι ἄρα διανοοῦμαι, ὅν οὐδὲν σὺ μᾶλλον ἢ τις

¹⁷ Cornford seems to do this, pp.111f.

ἄλλος ἔχει, 209a). Socrates emphasizes the contradiction with an oath:¹⁸

Come on now, by God! In that case how can I be thinking of you rather than anyone else?

Φέρε δὴ πρὸς Διὸς· πῶς ποτε ἐν τῷ τοιούτῳ σέ ἐδόξαζον ἢ ἄλλον ὄντινουν; 209b)

A result of this theory is that if I do not have in mind the way in which Theaetetus is different from everything else, then I am not thinking of Theaetetus at all but of something common (τῶν κοινῶν τι).

Why Socrates' theory of thinking is incompatible with the Match-up Postulate. According to the Match-up Postulate, I can mismatch one object with another, even if those two objects do not in fact belong together. As we have seen, whether this mismatch is of the man Socrates and the man Theaetetus, or of a perception of Socrates and an imprint of Theaetetus, or of the bird '7+5' and the bird '11', in any case the mismatch will

¹⁸ Socrates' oath, besides emphasizing the contradiction, should emphasize that he is here speaking canonically, that is, in his own person.

require that I mistake one thing for another (respectively, Theaetetus for Socrates, an imprint of Theaetetus for an imprint of Socrates, and the bird "11" for the bird "12"). But if I am to mistake Theaetetus for Socrates, I must not have in mind a way in which Theaetetus is different from Socrates; I must be thinking of something common which does not belong to Theaetetus any more than to Socrates. In that case, Socrates would ask, how can I be thinking of Theaetetus any more than of Socrates or anyone else who shares that common thing? Plainly Socrates would say that if I—as we might say—"know" a thing so little that I can mistake it for another, then I cannot really be said to know that thing at all; I cannot even be thinking about it.

So that there can be no mistaking his point, Socrates gives an example: he says that he will not be able to think about Theaetetus until he can tell the difference between Theaetetus' snub nose and his own or any other case of snub nose, and also can tell the difference between the other things about Theaetetus (τὰλλα οὕτω ἐξ ὧν εἰ σύ, Θεαίτητος) and those things when they are about others (209c).

Regarding the wax-block model, evidently Socrates would not call a wax imprint an imprint of Theaetetus unless that imprint captures the difference between Theaetetus' snub nose and any other case of snub nose and also captures the difference between the other things about Theaetetus and those things when they are

about others. Assume I have such an imprint. How, then, shall I possibly mismatch that imprint with a perception of Theodorus? Shall I do it, as Socrates glibly suggested before in motivating the wax-block model, because Theodorus is at a great distance and not seen well enough (διὰ μακροῦ καὶ μὴ ἰκανῶς ὁρῶν)? This glib suggestion must hold that my wax imprint does not tell me the difference between the shape and color at five hundred yards at twilight of Theaetetus and the same of Theodorus. In that case, plainly Socrates with his theory of thinking would insist that a thought using such an inadequate imprint is not of Theaetetus any more than of Theodorus.

In general, Socrates would take any alleged case of mismatching an imprint of X to a perception of Y to show that the imprint is of X no more than of Y or anything else which shares the thing held in common by X and Y, and that therefore the imprint is not of X at all.¹⁹

Since the bird-cage model, too, assumes we can mistake one thing for another (e.g. the bird "11" for the bird "12"), it is vulnerable to the same criticism. Socrates by this theory of thinking would say that the mismatching postulated by the Match-up Postulate of the bird "7+5" and the bird "11" in fact shows that we cannot have the bird "11" in mind at all but only something common, for we cannot tell it apart in this case from the bird "12".

It should by now be clear that Socrates' theory of thinking rules out any alleged case of mismatching, since, as 188-200 shows, any alleged case of mismatching depends on a mistake of one thing for another. In that thinking is way of thinking is theory of thinking is incompatible with the Match-up Postulate. Thus this theory, from outside of 188-200, undercuts the claim that Socrates does not in his own person reject the Match-up Postulate at 188-200. Indeed, this theory of thinking gives us a better idea how Socrates himself rejects the Match-up Postulate at 188-200.

How Socrates rejects the Match-up Postulate: his alternative. When Socrates brings up perplexities in explaining false belief at 188-200, he is not trying to make a new theory

¹⁹ One reply to Socrates' theory of thinking likely to be made today is that the two imprints are distinct, even if we cannot see that they are, on the ground that they have different causes: the one imprint has been caused by Theaetetus, the other by Theodorus. I guess Socrates would claim that, speaking precisely, the imprint was caused by various qualities or things about Theaetetus, but that, evidently (since the imprint is confusable), these qualities are all also held by others. So even the cause of this indistinct print is Theaetetus no more than it is those others having those same qualities.

of false belief together with a standard theory of what a thought is and what a true belief is. Imagine what such a cross-bred monster would be: On the one hand, following Frege, we would see ourselves rationally 'entertaining propositions' about various things (i.e. in fact thinking or musing about Theaetetus, Socrates, etc.). When we stop entertaining the thoughts and come to a judgment, say, a true judgment, we are still thinking about the thing in question. But when we stop entertaining thoughts about things and make a false judgment, following Socrates we must say that rationality stops--there is suddenly no belief at all in our heads, but only a vain silent analogy to the noise of hammering on pots and pans, like the false speech described by Cratylus. Such a cross-bred theory of course is ridiculous.

The theory Socrates is proposing is not limited only to a revision of what a false belief is; it is a wholly different theory of knowledge, too different to judge ridiculous as easily as it was to judge the cross-breed. According to this theory we are not thinking at all unless we are thinking about something, and we cannot think about anything unless we know all about it, including how its snub nose is different from all other cases of snub noses. On this view we have not any of us got real thoughts at all (until we get complete knowledge), but only phony thoughts,²⁰ phonies which are no more like a real thought

than, to use Socrates' metaphor, a wind-egg ($\alpha\upsilon\epsilon\pi\iota\alpha\iota\omicron\nu$) is like a newborn child (149a-151e, 157d, 161a, 210b).

The claim that more than merely 188-200 is non-canonical. We can avoid ascribing to Plato such a weird theory by saying that the whole discussion of false belief in the Theaetetus from 188 to the end of the dialogue is non-canonical. This has been done by Francis Cornford.

Cornford's argument that 188-200 is non-canonical. "The whole discussion," he claims, "is limited by certain fundamental premises, which are not Plato's own" (p.111). Of particular importance, Cornford holds that in fact Socrates did have an explanation of false judgment. The reason Socrates breaks off

20 "Well," Descartes (and we in his footsteps) will ask, "are we not then aware at least of these semblances of thoughts? And is not such awareness itself real thinking?" Plato's answer is "No." According to his theory of semblances (Sophist 235b-6b), a semblance of F is no more a semblance of F than it is not a semblance of F. And he everywhere argues that a thing which is S no more than it is not S cannot be S at all (cf. Theaetetus 188e, Republic 479a-b, Euthyphro 6d-8a, etc.). The last word, then, for Plato, is that since not even semblances exist for us to be aware of, even the Cartesian argument that I am thinking fails.

the discussion after the failure of the bird-cage model is "because he cannot go further without invoking the true objects of knowledge" (p.140), which are the Forms. "True knowledge has for its object things of a different order—not sensible things, but intelligible Forms and truths about them" (p.162).

Cornford's argument rejected. I find Cornford's reasoning implausible. No matter what we take to be the proper objects of knowledge—facts, bits, people, trees, or even Forms—Socrates' argument is the same. A false belief requires that two of those objects be mismatched, but Socrates will inevitably point out that any such mismatching presupposes that we can mistake one of those objects for another. But that mistake is impossible to explain, whether we know both the objects, neither, or only one. Since it makes no difference to this argument what the objects of knowledge are, it will not solve the problem to bring in Plato's Forms as the objects of knowledge. "Invoking the true objects of knowledge" thus will not help Socrates find an explanation of false belief.

General considerations. Of course there is no general proof that in all or any part of the Theaetetus Socrates is speaking in his own person, or that, if he were, he would represent Plato's own position. But certain considerations make it seem likely. (1) Any interpretation which dismisses Socrates' theory of thinking as not earnestly being held by Soc-

rates must also dismiss Socrates' everpresent metaphor of himself as midwife, since according to that metaphor Socrates is not separating good ("true") newborn thoughts from bad ("false") newborn thoughts; he is separating real infants (thoughts) from what are not in any way infants, except perhaps in the seeming pain they cause in coming to be, namely, wind-eggs (ἀνεμιαῖα). Also, (ii) if we take this theory of thinking to be a jest, we must do the same for similar passages in other dialogues (e.g. Statesman 277e-278c) or find other interpretations. The most persuasive argument against such non-canonical interpretations, of course, is (iii) to show how the rejection of the Match-up Postulate at 188-200 and the theory of thinking at 209a-c fit hand-in-glove with Plato's overall views. Jon Moline has in fact gone a long way towards doing just this, arguing that the only way Plato's overall theory of understanding can explain falsity is as being phony (see especially his chapters 5 and 6). Finally, I suppose, this interpretation of Plato could be made attractive by showing how his theory is a serious rival to more-widely-accepted theories. Without here undertaking such a task, I must conclude my argument that Plato in his own person rejected the Match-up Postulate in the Theaetetus.

FOUR

In this chapter I shall present a problem: in the Sophist Plato presents a definition of what false speech is (λόγος). To accept such a definition requires accepting the Match-up Postulate. Unfortunately, nowhere does the Stranger argue for the Match-up Postulate or give any sign of noticing the argument against the Match-up Postulate in the Theaetetus. Indeed, what is said just prior to the definition of false speech seems incompatible with the Match-up Postulate. Thus the problem will be to fit together the Stranger's definition of false speech with the lack of any consideration of Socrates' arguments against the Match-up Postulate and even with the Stranger's own remarks which are incompatible with the Match-up Postulate.

The Interweaving Postulate. The Stranger is a careful man. Whereas the Socrates of the Cratylus, like most of us, is content to assume that some things really do belong to other things in various ways (his example: one thing might be a representation of another), the Stranger takes the precaution of arguing that such belonging, which he calls interweaving, must in fact exist in some cases and not exist in others, (251d-252e; cf. chapter 1, pp.16-17). I will call his result the Interweaving Postulate. Once the Interweaving Postulate is established, the greatest kinds section is able to give biconditionals for true sentences. For example,

(1) "Motion is" is true iff the Forms Motion and Being interweave.

(2) "Motion is not rest" is true iff the Form Motion interweaves with Other with respect to Rest.

(3) "Motion is rest" is true iff the Form Motion interweaves with Rest (255e-256b).

Since, as we learn from the Timaeus (50-52), Theaetetus is nothing but various Forms interweaving in space,¹ we may also provide biconditionals for true sentences about him:

(4) "Theaetetus sits" is true iff one of the Forms for Theaetetus is the Form Sitting.

Here, of course, by "Forms for Theaetetus" I refer to all the various Forms which Theaetetus is, one of which must be the Form Sitting for the sentence to be true. Instead of "one of the Forms for Theaetetus is the Form Sitting," I will usually write "the Form Sitting interweaves with the Forms for Theaetetus."

¹ For argument, see Moline, chapter 4, who also cites Prauss, pp.54-60.

How the Interweaving Postulate works for false speech. Here we may wonder whether there is a way, using only the Interweaving Postulate, to provide biconditionals for false sentences, and whether such a biconditional will serve the Stranger as a definition of false speech. The answer to the first question is yes; to the second, no.

Consider the following incomplete attempt at a biconditional for a false sentence:

"Theaetetus flies" is false iff . . . interweaves with - - -.

Obviously, filling in the blanks with "the Form Flying" and "the Forms for Theaetetus" will not work, because we would no longer be able to maintain that "Theaetetus flies" is false. But there is a way to fill in the blanks using (I should say, mentioning) the Form Other. The Form Other is always aimed at something or other ($\pi\rho\acute{o}s\ \tau\iota$), that is, anything that is other is always other than something, or, in terms of interweaving, anything that interweaves with the Form Other always interweaves with it with respect to something ($\pi\rho\acute{o}s\ \tau\iota$). Thus, when speaking of an interweaving where one of the parties is the Form Other, we should for the sake of accuracy indicate what the Form Other is aimed at ($\pi\rho\acute{o}s$). See, for instance, example (2) above.

Now if "Theaetetus flies" is false, then of course Theaetetus will be other than flying. We may write:

The Forms for Theaetetus interweave with Other,

or, for the sake of accuracy,

The Forms for Theaetetus interweave with Other with respect to (πρός) Flying.

Thus we may provide the biconditionals for false sentences:

The sentence "Theaetetus flies" is false iff the Forms for Theaetetus interweave with the Form Other (with respect to Flying).

Why the Interweaving Postulate alone does not give a suitable definition of false speech. This method of completing biconditionals using the Interweaving Postulate and mentioning the Form Other cannot by itself serve the Stranger as a definition of false speech. If the Stranger only had the Interweaving Postulate, he would be unable to find any suitable definition; for the Stranger requires that every sentence "point out something" (e.g. it must point out about Theaetetus that he is sitting).

Two of the Stranger's requirements for speech. Before the Stranger lays out the "pointing out" requirement, he describes two other requirements by taking two examples of non-speech. Some words, he says, are upon (ἐπί) things that are done: a state something might be in or an action something might perform. He calls these things "doings" (πράξεις) and the words that are upon doings "doing-words" (ῥήματα, 262a). Other words, he says, are upon things that do: the thing which is in a state or which performs an action. He calls these things in general "doers" (τὰ πράττοντα) and the words which are upon doers "doer-words" (ὀνόματα, 262a). Now a word string, no matter how long, which is only upon doings, e.g. "walks runs sleeps," cannot be speech; nor can a word string which is only upon doers, e.g. "lion stag horse." But as soon as someone puts together doing-words with doer-words a sentence (λόγος) comes into being (262b-c). In the same way a sentence needs to be upon a doing; otherwise "lion stag horse" would be a sentence.

The Stranger's "pointing out" requirement. But these are not the only requirements. A string of doer-words fulfills the first requirement: it is upon at least one doer. And a string of doing-words fulfills the second requirement: it is upon at least one doing. But in neither case, says the Stranger, do the sounds uttered (τὰ φωνηθέντα) point out (δηλοῖ) a doing; they do not point out a doing; in fact, he says, not even a non-doing,²

in fact, not even the being of any being or even of a non-being² (οὐδεμίαν γὰρ οὔτε οὕτως οὐδ' ἐκείως πράξιν οὐδ' ἀπραξίαν οὐδὲ οὐσίαν ὄντος οὐδὲ μὴ ὄντος, 262c). Thus this requirement is a third besides the first two: a sentence needs to point out a doing.

As strongly as possible, the Stranger emphasizes that pointing out a doing is not achieved merely by being upon a doing: no amount of being upon doings--not even if someone uttered every doing-word there is in a row (262b)--will ever point out a doing, a non-doing, or even the mere being of any being or non-being. This pointing-out requirement seems to presuppose that words fit together only in certain ways, so that he who points out has managed to fit together (ἤρμοσεν, 262c) the words right; the Stranger says this person makes a connection (τι κεραίνειν, 262d).

² Apparently, in view of the Stranger's rejection of talk about what does not exist (237-9) and his break-down of "not" into "other" in the greatest kinds section (cf. chapter 1, pp.16-17), a non-doing is something other than any of the doings the doer in question is doing. Likewise, a non-being here is apparently something which is doing something other than the doing in question.

Why the Interweaving Postulate alone cannot fulfill the pointing-out requirement. Any attempt to break down the false sentence "Theaetetus flies" into a mere case of interweaving, even if we make mention of the Form Other, will fail to meet this requirement that sentences make connections or point out. Such attempts must fail because the Interweaving Postulate alone will not let us explain what a false sentence points out. For instance, suppose we tried to say that "Theaetetus flies" points out the interweaving of the Forms for Theaetetus with the Form Other (with respect to Flying). In this case, the (false) "Theaetetus flies" will point out the very same thing as the (true) "Theaetetus is other than flying" or "Theaetetus is not flying," which is ridiculous. Also, of course, we cannot say that the false "Theaetetus flies" points out the interweaving of the Forms for Theaetetus and the Form Flying, for there is no such interweaving³ (if such an interweaving existed, the sentence would be true, not false, cf.256b). Thus something more than the Interweaving Postulate and the Form Other will be

³ Professor Penner has emphasized the truth of this Parmenidean prohibition.

needed to fulfill the pointing-out requirement. This additional necessity, I claim, must be some kind of match-up postulate.

How the Match-up Postulate fulfills the pointing-out requirement. According to the pointing-out requirement, a sentence needs to point out a doing, apparently by "fitting together" that doing with a doer, by "making a connection" between a doing and doer. If we are to have false as well as true speech, the sentence must be able to "point out" a doing about a doer whether or not the doing and doer really being together or interweave. But this is precisely what the Match-up Postulate provides for: if sentences are matchmakers and pointing out is matching up, then by the Match-up Postulate the sentence will be able to point out one thing about another whether or not there is any interweaving of those two things. Thus I say that if the Stranger is to give a definition of false speech, he must accept the Match-up Postulate.⁴

Problems with committing the Stranger to the Match-up

⁴ Dete1, p.100, first pointed out that the Match-up Postulate—he calls it the "Bestimmbarkeitspostulat"—is needed for the Stranger's definition of false speech. In everyone else's interpretation, as well as modern theories of false speech in general, the Match-up Postulate is tacit.

Postulate. If we take the Stranger to have given a definition of false speech, we must take him to be committed to the Match-up Postulate, whether he knows it or not. Three serious problems, to my mind, follow from any such interpretation.

1. The problem of silence. If the Stranger accepts the Match-up Postulate, he has either done so without arguing for it or after giving arguments for it. It will be fairly easy to show that the Stranger gives no arguments for the Match-up Postulate. Thus, as interpreters, we must try to claim that the Stranger silently, without argument, accepted it. But this, I will argue, is a problem.

The Stranger's lack of arguments for the Match-up Postulate. We could interpret the Stranger to be giving at 261-3 the following sort of proof "by necessity" of the Match-up Postulate: (i) there are false sentences; (ii) if there are false sentences, then we must accept the Match-up Postulate; therefore (iii) we must by necessity accept the Match-up Postulate.⁵ But such an interpretation tears the heart out of the body of the dialogue. Throughout the body of the Sophist, the Stranger and Theaetetus are trying to track down the Sophist

⁵ Gilbert Ryle, e.g., seems to give this sort of argument.

and see what he is, but they are continually put back by the Sophist's ever-present insistence that there is no such thing as false speech. The heart of the dialogue comes at 261-3, where false speech is at last shown to exist by giving an adequate explanation of it, thus enabling the two to capture the Sophist. Therefore, to read this passage as a proof by necessity of the Match-up Postulate which takes for granted that there is false speech tears apart any connection between 261-3 and the whole dialogue. Plato surely would not have written such a dialogue; any arguments he may have the Stranger give for the Match-up Postulate will surely not presuppose the existence of false speech.

The only place in the Sophist where Plato could possibly be taken to be arguing for the Match-up Postulate without presupposing the existence of false speech is just before the greatest kinds section, at 251-2 where he argues that there are "interweavings" of some things with others. We might try to take this section to argue not only for the existence of true interweavings but also for the existence of match-ups (which can exist between two objects whether or not the objects really belong together or interweave).

Why 251-2 does not argue for the Match-up Postulate. A look at the argument of 251-2, however, shows that it only proves the existence of real interweavings, not (true or false) match-ups.

That argument is a proof by contradiction directed against "separatists". Separatists assert that there is no interweaving of any sort; they forbid us from asserting that some things interweave with others, that is, from matching up things that do not really belong together.⁶ They do not say that we cannot (i.e. that we lack the δύναμις to) match up what does not belong together, but that we ought not to do it (οὐκ εἰδότες). Evidently, then, since they take the trouble to forbid it, they believe in it. Thus their claim that μηδενὶ μηδὲν μηδεμίαν δύναμιν ἔχειν κοινωνίας εἰς μηδὲν is a complete denial of the Interweaving Postulate, not of the Match-up Postulate.

Just as we should expect, then, the proof by contradiction which the Stranger gives against the separatists depends only on their denial of the Interweaving Postulate: from the separatists' denial in general of interweaving the Stranger infers the specific denial of interweaving between Motion or Rest and Being (251e-252e). It is by this specific denial of interweaving (ταύτη τῆ συνομολογίᾳ, 252a) that every position is

⁶ They are described as οἱ οὐδὲν εἰδότες κοινωνίᾳ παθήματος ἐτέρου θάτερον προσαγορεύειν, 252b, e.g. χεῖρουσιν οὐκ εἰδότες ἀγαθὸν λέγειν ἀνθρώπων, 251b.

overturned, including that of the separatists themselves, which is the contradiction. Thus the refutation of separatism establishes only interweaving, not match-ups. Therefore what is argued for at 251-2 is nothing more than interweaving, and our only alternative is to take the Stranger to have accepted the Match-up Postulate without argument.

Why the Stranger's lack of arguments for the Match-up Postulate is a problem. It may not at first seem distressing that the Stranger apparently accepts the Match-up Postulate without argument. After all, it may seem that the Match-up Postulate is so obviously true that Plato does not need to argue for it, or that it is so fundamental that it is not surprising that Plato neglected to argue for it. The trouble with such a solution is that Plato does notice the Match-up Postulate in the Theaetetus. As we saw in chapter three, he rejects it as impossible at 188-200 on the basis of the theory of thinking at 209a-c. And Plato does have the Theaetetus in mind in the Sophist: he dramatically links the two dialogues as part of the same conversation related by Terpsion to Euclides (cf. chapter 1, p.3).

The Theaetetus tried five times to explain false belief. One of the failures, the second, was because of the problem of non-being: how can we say or think what does not exist? In the Sophist the Stranger recognizes this problem and ostensibly

works around it, working out a theory of not-being as being other. The remaining four failures of the Theaetetus are all the more conspicuously absent, then, from the consideration of the Stranger. Those four failures in the Theaetetus, we have seen, include a Fregean theory of sense and reference. Thus the problem the failures raise, namely, how to justify the Match-up Postulate, is at least as deep as Fregean theories. It is not the sort of position one can suddenly dismiss without argument, except through carelessness. And Plato, we have seen, was careful in writing the Sophist: he does not assume even that some things belong to others in certain ways, or even that false sentences are really sentences. Both of these were taken for granted in the Theaetetus (false belief, though puzzling, is never suggested not to exist there), which only refuses to assume the Match-up Postulate. Why, then, would a dialogue apparently more basic than the Theaetetus assume what even the Theaetetus doubts, and not only doubts but rejects?

2. The problem of the Sophist's puzzle. Suppose, despite the problem of silence, that the Stranger does accept the Match-up Postulate in the Sophist. If so, there would be no puzzle at all as to what a false sentence says. The Sophist's puzzle was that a false sentence says what is not (= what is the opposite of being, i.e. what does not exist), and therefore says nothing at all. But, for anyone who believes in match-ups,

it is just not believable to say that a false sentence says what is not: a false sentence says or asserts a match-up, which certainly does exist. The puzzle is answered by saying that, for example, the false sentence "Theaetetus flies" says or asserts the match-up of the Forms for Theaetetus and the Forms for Flying. A Stranger who accepts the Match-up Postulate would surely say words to this effect:

A false sentence does not say what is not, i.e. nothing at all; it says something that is, namely, a certain match-up between two objects. By the hypothesis that this sentence is false, it of course follows that there is no interweaving between those two objects, but this lack of interweaving has no effect on what the sentence says, i.e. on the match-up.

Unfortunately, the Stranger in fact is puzzled about what a false sentence says (Fowler's translation):

We are really . . . engaged in a very difficult investigation; for the matter of appearing and seeming, but not being, and of saying things, but not true ones--all this is now and always has been very perplexing. You see, . . . it is extremely difficult to understand how a man is to say or think that

falsehood really exists and in saying this not be involved in contradiction. . . . This statement involves the bold assumption that not-being exists, for otherwise falsehood could not come into existence (236e-237a).

Perhaps the most important part of the Sophist is to solve this puzzle, which would not be a puzzle to anyone who believes in the Match-up Postulate.

The problem of 259e-260b. The final problem is that if the Stranger does accept the Match-up Postulate, then 259e-260a is inexplicable. Four passages concern us:

- (a) It is because of the interweaving (συμπλοκήν) of Forms with each other that speech (λόγος) comes to be.
- (b) All speech is utterly finished iff there is no interweaving of anything with anything. (τελευτάτη πάντων λόγων ἐστὶν ἀφάνισις τὸ διαλύειν ἕκαστον ἀπὸ πάντων.)
- (c) Because we were able to force the separatists to admit that one thing interweaves with another (ἕτερον ἑτέρῳ μίγνυσθαι), we were able to establish that

there is such a thing as speech ($\tau\acute{o}$ $\tau\acute{o}\nu$
 $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\nu$ $\eta\mu\acute{\iota}\nu$ $\tau\acute{\omega}\nu$ $\acute{o}\nu\tau\omega\nu$ $\acute{\epsilon}\nu$ $\tau\iota$ $\gamma\epsilon\nu\omega\nu$ $\acute{\epsilon}\tau\iota$ $\acute{\nu}\alpha\iota$).

- (d) We would be robbed of it [i.e. no one would in any way be able to speak], if we agreed that there is no interweaving of anything with anything ($\acute{\alpha}\phi\eta\rho\acute{\epsilon}\theta\eta\mu\epsilon\nu$ δ' $\acute{\alpha}\nu$ [i.e. $\acute{o}\ddot{\upsilon}\delta\acute{\epsilon}\nu$ $\acute{\alpha}\nu$ $\acute{\epsilon}\tau\iota$ $\kappa\omicron\upsilon$ $\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\epsilon\iota\nu$ \acute{o} $\acute{\iota}$ \acute{o} $\acute{\iota}$ τ' $\eta\mu\epsilon\nu$], $\acute{\epsilon}\acute{\iota}$ $\sigma\upsilon\nu\epsilon\chi\omega\rho\acute{\iota}\sigma\alpha\mu\epsilon\nu$ $\mu\eta\delta\epsilon\mu\acute{\iota}\lambda\alpha\nu$ $\acute{\epsilon}\acute{\iota}\nu\alpha\iota$ $\mu\acute{\iota}\xi\iota\nu$ $\mu\eta\delta\epsilon\nu\acute{\iota}$ $\pi\rho\acute{o}\varsigma$ $\mu\eta\delta\acute{\epsilon}\nu$).

The interweaving or denial of interweaving in each of these passages (in (a), η $\sigma\upsilon\mu\pi\lambda\omicron\kappa\eta$; in (b), $\tau\acute{o}$ $\delta\iota\alpha\lambda\acute{\upsilon}\epsilon\iota\nu$; in (c), $\tau\acute{o}$ $\mu\acute{\iota}\gamma\nu\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$; in (d), η $\mu\acute{\iota}\xi\iota\varsigma$) is real interweaving, not matching-up.⁷

We may simplify these claims as follows. Let "S" stand for the sentence "There is speech," "IP" for "the Interweaving Postulate is true," "-" for negation, "+" for implication, and " \leftrightarrow "

⁷ This follows from the context of 259e. The position claiming $\tau\acute{o}$ $\delta\iota\alpha\lambda\acute{\upsilon}\epsilon\iota\nu$ $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa\alpha\sigma\tau\omicron\nu$ $\acute{\alpha}\pi\omicron$ $\pi\acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\omega\nu$ is what was argued against in order to establish the $\sigma\upsilon\mu\pi\lambda\omicron\kappa\eta$. The $\delta\iota\alpha\lambda\acute{\upsilon}\epsilon\iota\nu$ is plainly the intended result of $\tau\acute{o}$ $\pi\acute{\alpha}\nu$ $\acute{\alpha}\pi\omicron$ $\kappa\alpha\tau\acute{o}\varsigma$ $\acute{\epsilon}\pi\iota\chi\epsilon\iota\rho\acute{\epsilon}\iota\nu$ $\acute{\alpha}\pi\omicron\chi\omega\rho\acute{\iota}\zeta\epsilon\iota\nu$ $\acute{\alpha}\lambda\lambda\omega\varsigma$ $\tau\epsilon$ $\acute{o}\kappa$ $\acute{\epsilon}\mu\mu\epsilon\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\varsigma$ (259d), where $\tau\acute{o}$ $\acute{\epsilon}\pi\iota\chi\epsilon\iota\rho\acute{\epsilon}\iota\nu$ $\acute{\alpha}\pi\omicron\chi\omega\rho\acute{\iota}\zeta\epsilon\iota\nu$ is of course the separatist program argued against at 251d.

for the biconditional. Then we may represent the four claims this way:

- (a) IP \rightarrow S
 (b) \neg IP \leftrightarrow \neg S
 (c) IP \rightarrow S
 (d) \neg IP \rightarrow \neg S

It follows from (b) alone or from (c) and (d) together that the Stranger believes that the Interweaving Postulate is necessary and sufficient for speech to be. But if the Stranger holds the Match-up Postulate, he ought to say that the Interweaving Postulate is neither necessary nor sufficient for speech to be. In this way, then, 259e-260a becomes inexplicable.

Why the Interweaving Postulate is not necessary. Even if there were no real interweaving at all, we still by the Match-up Postulate would be able to assert any sentence we chose. To be sure, all speech would in that case be false, but by the Match-up Postulate it would be speech nonetheless. Also, it follows that we could not give a (true) analysis of false speech in this case. In both of these ways, speech would be greatly limited. But the Stranger with (b) and (d) says as plainly as possible not that the complete lack of all interweaving leaves us with a reduced range of speech or with unanalyzed speech, but

rather than the loss of the Interweaving Postulate would utterly destroy all speech (τελευτάτη πάντων λόγων ἀφάνισις); no one in any way would be able to speak (οὐδὲν ἄν ἔτι που λέγειν οἷοί τ' ἦμεν). Likewise it seems clear that even a partial range of speech should be enough to establish that there is such a thing as speech (τὸ τὸν λόγον ἡμῖν τῶν ὄντων ἐν τι γενῶν εἶναι). Thus (c), along with (a) and (b), seems to be at odds with our interpretation.

Why the Interweaving Postulate is not sufficient. As we have already seen, anyone who believes, as the Stranger does, that every sentence must point something out in order to be a sentence must believe in the Match-up Postulate, if he is to be able to assert that false sentences are speech. Now anyone who takes this route and asserts that false speech is speech will be further inclined, as it seems to me, to declare that the Match-up Postulate is needed even for true sentences. Such people will inevitably declare, I think, that it is the Match-up Postulate, not the Interweaving Postulate, which is the essence of sentences: what makes a true sentence true and a false sentence false is the Interweaving Postulate, but what makes a true or false sentence a sentence at all is the Match-up Postulate. For example, what makes the true sentence "Theaetetus sits" true is the interweaving of the Forms for Theaetetus and Sitting, but what makes "Theaetetus sits" a sentence at all

is the match-up it makes between the Forms for Theaetetus and Sitting, whether or not in fact such an interweaving exists. In this way, then, I claim that anyone who believes in the Match-up Postulate will in all likelihood think that it, not the Interweaving Postulate, is essential for any sentence, and hence that the Interweaving Postulate is not sufficient for any speech to be speech.

I am not claiming here, certainly, that the Interweaving Postulate is not enough for any theory of speech, but only that, roughly, it is not enough for any theory of speech which says that false speech is really speech; precisely, that anyone who believes that false speech is really speech will most likely not regard the Interweaving Postulate as sufficient for any speech.

Summary of problems. We may sum up our problems in the following series of questions: if Plato does accept the Match-up Postulate in the Sophist, where does he consider his previous rejection of it in the Theaetetus? If he nowhere does give arguments for it, how can he have been so careless as to tacitly assume it, while still taking the care to argue for and not merely assume even the Interweaving Postulate and even the existence of false speech? If the Match-up Postulate is blithely assumed, why should the Stranger find the Sophist's puzzle, which only asks, after all, for what is pointed out, the least bit perplexing? And how can anyone who accepts the Match-up

Postulate assert that it is the Interweaving Postulate which is necessary and sufficient for speech?

FIVE

Four features to fit together. It is time to stop and consider how to fit the pieces of the Theaetetus and Sophist together. To do this, I take note of four striking features in the text.

First, the Theaetetus and Sophist are in fact only two parts of one underlying story, the story which Euclides had one of his slave boys read to Terpsion.

Second, one result on the face of the Sophist is that false speaking really and truly seems to be a combination of "doer" words and "doing" words which makes out the other as the same and what is not as what is:

Something said about you, which says, however, of what is other that it is the same, i.e. of what is not that it is--such a combination coming from doer-words and doing-words in all likelihood is false speech.

περὶ δὴ σοῦ λεγόμενα, λεγόμενα μέντοι θάτερα
ὡς τὰ αὐτὰ καὶ μὴ ὄντως ὄντα, παντάπασιν
ἔοικεν ἢ τοιαύτη σύνθεσις ἕκ τε ῥημάτων
γινομένη καὶ ὀνομάτων ὄντως τε καὶ ἀληθῶς
γίνεσθαι λόγος ψευδῆς, 263d.

Third, in sharp contrast to this definition of false speech, one result on the face of the Theaetetus is that false thinking cannot be thinking that one thing is another and not itself. Whether the thing thought about is a man (as in the original mismatched-objects argument), a word or description for the man spoken by the soul to itself (the mismatched-thoughts argument), or any bit about the man, this result is the same: if we have both things in mind, we cannot think one of them is the other; if we have neither thing in mind, we cannot think one is another; if we have only one of them in mind, we cannot think it is the (unthought of) other or that other it.

Finally, in both the Theaetetus and the Sophist, thinking (whether true or false) is taken to be nothing but speaking (silently to oneself), Theaetetus 189e-90a, cf. 190c; Sophist 263e.

How the features do not fit. In short, on the surface the Theaetetus denies what the Sophist asserts, yet both the Theaetetus and Sophist are part of the same story. How can we fit all these features together? Can any of them be denied? The first feature, the unity of the Theaetetus and Sophist, seems undeniable.¹ And the fourth feature, the equivalence for Plato of speaking and thinking, also seems undeniable. Accepting, then, the first and fourth features, most writers seem to try to fit the negative result of the Theaetetus with the positive

result of the Sophist by putting the Sophist "on top of" the Theaetetus. That is, they take Plato in the Theaetetus to say, "I have not yet found a solution to the problem of false thinking or speaking." Then, from a point of higher understanding in the Sophist, they take him to say, "I did not have one before, but now I have found a solution to the problem of false thinking and speaking."

In somewhat more detail, they would describe how the Sophist is on top of the Theaetetus as follows. The Theaetetus considers five different ways to explain false thinking, but is satisfied with none of them. Then in the Sophist Plato does come up with a satisfactory way to explain false speaking and thinking. It is commonplace to suppose that the sixth way of the Sophist must somehow overcome the problems the five ways of the Theaetetus could not.

But my look at the five ways of the Theaetetus seems to show a problem with this approach. As we have seen, when Socrates gave up those five ways, he seemed to be denying even what Cratylus had accepted, that one can mismatch a painting to a person. But in the Sophist the Stranger's definition of false

¹ See Detel, p.11, n.1, for references.

speech at 261d takes for granted that one might be able to take Flying (in thought or speech) for something else, namely, one of the Forms Theaetetus is. In short, the Sophist makes an assumption which the Theaetetus denies can be made. The commonplace of interpreters, then, seems wrong: the sixth way of the Sophist does not overreach the five failures of the Theaetetus. Rather, the dissatisfaction of the Theaetetus extends to Sophist-type solutions.

Now there is one easy way to match up the Theaetetus' problems with the Sophist's solution, which does not require the Sophist to overcome by argument those problems. We only need to claim that the Theaetetus is much too demanding, that its demands indeed are ridiculous. Then we can match up the Sophist with the Theaetetus this way: that Plato presented a definition of false speech at Sophist 263d, without ever even speaking to the problems of the Theaetetus, is evidence enough to show that Plato there recognized at last those problems for what they really are—quite silly and not worth arguing against.

Of course, Socrates' problems and his theory of thinking might be wrong. But, to my eyes, it is not a theory that we, with our Fregean, bird-cage-like senses, can dismiss as laughable without need of any arguments. Much less would Plato, who would not tranquilize himself by postulating level upon level of such mystery objects, who patiently argued against the

most extreme relativism of the Sophists, which was poles apart from his own views and hence far easier to laugh off, much less would this realist have dismissed in this too-easy way a realism only slightly more extreme than that of the early Socrates of the Cratylus.

How the pieces fit together. The only choice left, I think, is to put the Sophist 'below', not 'above', the Theaetetus. That is, our new approach will claim that his real position was that false beliefs are not beliefs at all, that false sentences are not sentences at all. Now, on the face of it, it is apparent that the Stranger does really give a definition of false speech. So our puzzle is far from being put together. What is going on in the Sophist? This question must be answered if we are to take this new approach.

In answering this question, I will need two tools, Comparison and Guess. With the first tool, I can compare Plato's dialogue style of . . . with the modern, expository style. The second tool helps me figure out one reason Plato might have had for using his dialogue style at all. With this Comparison and Guess, I hope, I will be able to fit together the Theaetetus and Sophist.

Dialogue compared to Exposition. One trademark of exposition is writing that begins with a question—for my needs, a question of the form "What is X?"—and ends when the answer to

that question has been reached. By contrast, the dialogue also sets out a question, then reaches an answer, but then, at least in the peculiar dialogue style I need to look at, it also goes on to deny that answer.

I will take some examples of questions and answers and compare the look exposition has with the look of this peculiar style. Suppose the question is "What is courage?" Expository writing may take this question and follow it with (in short) the answer "Courage is knowledge of what is to be hoped for and what is to be feared." And that is the end of it. By contrast, the dialogue the Laches takes the same question (190d-e) and reaches (in short) the same answer (194d-97b, esp.195a). But it goes on to give up this answer (198af, esp.199e).

Next, suppose the question is "What is virtue?" Expository writing may follow this question with (in short) the answer "Virtue is knowledge." That is the end of it. By contrast, the dialogue the Meno takes the same question (86c) and reaches the same one-sentence answer (87d-e). But it goes on to give up this answer (89cf).

Suppose the question is "To what is the name "not-being" to be applied?" ποῖ χρῆ τούνομ' ἐπιφέρειν τούτο τὸ μὴ ὄν;) In expository writing we may find the answer "The expression "not-being" cannot be applied to anything; it is not even language" (τῶν ὄντων ἐπὶ τι τὸ μὴ ὄν οὐκ οἰστέον. οὐδὲ λέγειν φατέον, ὅς

γ' ἂν ἐπιχειρῆ μὴ ὄν φεγγεσθαι). We would expect that answer to end that exposition. By contrast, I look at the little dialogue inside the Sophist from 236d to 239c. It asks the same question (237c) and gives the same answer (237c-38d). As we might by now expect, it then goes on to give up this answer (238df, esp. 239b-c).

Finally, suppose the question is "What is false speaking (or thinking)?" In expository writing, we may find the answer (at least, if someone like Cratylus wrote exposition) "'False speaking' is not even language; 'false thought' is not even thought." We would again expect this answer to end that exposition. By contrast, I now turn to the story, the dialogue read by Euclides' slave to Terpsion (which includes the Theaetetus and Sophist). There the same question is asked (first at Theaetetus 187c-d). Now suppose that Socrates' theory of thinking, as I took it from 188a-200c, 207d-208b, and 209a-c, was to force the Cratylus-like answer upon us. If this dialogue is in the same peculiar style as the other examples, we would expect it to go on and give up this answer later in the story. And so it does. The Sophist gives up this answer when it claims that false speaking can be marked as a kind of speaking (263b, d), and false thinking as a kind of thinking (264a-b).

With this much comparing done, I will pick up my other tool, Guess.

A guess why Plato used this peculiar style of dialogue.

One of the few times we see Plato spell out a criticism of other philosophers for their writing is in the Sophist (242c-43d). The Stranger thinks that Parmenides (among others) has used language too easily (ευκόλως μοι δοκεῖ Παρμενίδης ἡμῖν διειλέχθαι, 242c), that is, the writings of Parmenides and others do not really help us to understand their positions:

They overlooked the most of us way too much; they had no consideration. For each one reasoned out their own argument without caring whether we follow them or are left behind.

ὅτι λίαν τῶν πολλῶν ἡμῶν ὑπεριδόντες ὀλιγόρησαν. οὐδὲν γὰρ φροντίσαντες εἴτε ἐπακολουθούμεν αὐτοῖς λέγουσιν εἴτε ἀπολειπόμεθα, περαίνουσι τὸ σφέτερον αὐτῶν ἕκαστοι, 243a-b.

Their style, evidently, was to present only the conclusion of some path of argument. For instance:

Never shall this be proved, that things that are not are. But be sure in your search that you hold back your thought from this way.

οὐ γὰρ μή ποτε τοῦτο δαμῆ, φησὶν, εἶναι μὴ εὐὐντα· ἀλλὰ σὺ τῆσδ' ἀφ' ὁδοῦ διζήμενος εἶργε νόημα, 237a.

or

All is one (ἐν τὸ πᾶν, 244b).

How in the world are we ever supposed to understand sayings like these? (τούτων, ᾧ θεαίτητε, ἕκαστοτε σὺ τι πρὸς θεῶν ξυνίης ὅ τι λέγουσιν; 243b).

There must be a better way to present philosophy (or any kind of knowledge) than this aphoristic style. Plato chose the dialogue.

For I say that it is necessary for us to use this method, questioning them directly, as if they were here in person.

λέγω γὰρ δὴ ταύτη δεῖν ποιεῖσθαι τὴν μέθοδον ἡμᾶς, οἷον αὐτῶν παρόντων ἀναπυθαστομένων, 243d.

There is a gain in using the dialogue instead of the aphorism to present philosophy. The trouble with aphorisms is that by themselves they show no path of understanding. I take it that Plato quite rightly saw no value in teaching someone to spout some slogan, say, "All is one," if that person did not know the theory that went along with those words. And the aim of the dialogue style is to make clear the stuff that is important—the theory, the reasoning beneath the one-sentence answer. Aphorisms result in slogans; dialogue results in making clear the thought (or theory or "whole position") of those speaking the slogan (τι' καθ' οἱ λέγοντες αὐτὸ δηλοῦν ἤγουνται, cf. 243d).

Now I am ready to guess: Plato used his peculiar style of dialogue, having the two speakers answer a question and then later give up that answer, because he aimed only to present a way to understand his whole position. He did not care for one-sentence answers. He did not trouble to mention any such theory-in-a-nutshell slogans, for he believed that without an understanding of the whole position the slogan or one-sentence answer is no help, and with the understanding the slogan is not needed.

With this much guessing done, I will go back to the dialogues I compared and see what I can make of them. I expect to get the following sort of picture of this peculiar style of

dialogue. In each there is a teacher and a student. The student is brought to a one-sentence answer mid-way through the dialogue, then further examined. In what follows, some problem with the student's understanding of the whole position beneath the one-sentence answer will let that answer be undermined. The dialogue ends. But if the student spots the problem that led to his rejecting the answer, he will again be able to hold that answer, but with a better understanding of the whole position beneath it. And if he does not spot the problem, at least he will know more than someone who rests content with a slogan and nothing else in this way: neither will understand the answer, but the one is at least aware that he does not understand, the other has not even got that far (cf. Apology 23a-b, Theaetetus 210b-c).

Using my Guess, then, this is what I make of the Laches,² where the question is "What is courage?" The student, Nicias, announces his one-sentence answer that courage is knowledge of what is to be feared or hoped for (195a). He has a pretty good understanding of the whole position that goes along with this

² My view of all the Socratic dialogues in many ways comes from Professor Penner.

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answer. He denies that courage is one thing and wisdom another (195a). He is able to distinguish between the courageous person's knowledge of dangers and benefits and each other scientist's knowledge of dangers in their own areas (195b-d), even the soothsayer's (190e-96a). He does not call lions, leopards, or boars courageous, but only fearless, that is, devoid of the understanding of danger (196e-97b). But—and here he starts to slide off the edge—he takes it that courage is only a part, along with many other parts, of virtue (198a). Following this slip-up, he has to agree that courage is not only the knowledge of the fearful and hopeful (which lie in the future), but of good and evil things without reference to time (199c, cf. 198df). But in that case, he must also grant that the courageous person must lack no part of virtue; courage, instead of being only a part of virtue, will be all of virtue (199d-e). This contradiction tells Nicias that he has not discovered what courage is (199e), that is, he did not have the (whole) answer. But the problem is not in Nicias' one-sentence answer, rather, it is his understanding of that answer which is lacking, for he thinks that courage is only a part of virtue. If he had argued that courage is indeed the whole of virtue, as is justice, piety, temperance, and wisdom, that is, that those five words stand for a single being (cf. Protagoras 349a-b), he would not have slipped into the trouble which he had.

This picture of the Laches is just what I should have expected. The student had the right one-sentence answer, but that did not matter. His own lack of understanding, his not seeing the whole position that goes along with his answer, forced him to deny the one-sentence answer. But the perplexity he was left in may make him less sure that courage is only one part of virtue. When or if he comes to accept the unity of virtue, he will again be able to assert his right one-sentence answer, but—what is important—with better understanding.

Next I take my Guess to the Meno, where the question is "What is virtue?" Meno reaches the one-sentence answer that virtue is knowledge (88c-e). But he loses his hold on this answer because of his lack of understanding of the whole position: he thinks that if anything is a knowledge (or science), there must be teachers of it (89d). As soon as he allows this, he must grant that there are no teachers of virtue, neither Themistocles (93c-e), nor Aristides (94a), nor Pericles (94b), nor Thucydides (94c-d), nor any other typical, decent Athenian citizen, contrary to the suggestion at 92e. Nor are there any among the fine characters of Meno's own homeland (95a-b), nor even among the sophists (95c, 96a-b). So he must give up his one-sentence answer that virtue is knowledge. Meno is left perplexed at the end. But if he ever comes to question his assumption that there are at least some competent teachers

for every knowledge (or science), if he ever decides that perhaps everyone is ignorant of the knowledge of virtue (as Socrates believed, Apology 23a-b), then he may once again assert his right one-sentence answer, but--and this is what matters for Plato--with better understanding.

I pick up my Comparison again. In both expository writing and dialogue a question is asked. An exposition reaches a one-sentence answer, and that ends the matter. The dialogue, at least one peculiar style of dialogue, also reaches a one-sentence answer, but that is not the end. The dialogue also goes on to give up that answer. To get that answer back, the student or reader must have a certain amount of understanding. It is easy to see that a given one-sentence answer is part of an expository writer's position. But I cannot say if our dialogue writer, Plato, accepts a given one-sentence answer unless I also understand enough other parts of his position to be able to tell why the teacher does not need to give up that answer along with the student at the end of the dialogue. But, by Comparison and Guess, this much I can say: Plato does not make expository writing; he makes dialogues. So, when we approach his work, it is not safe, as it might be for expository writing, to assume that a given one-sentence answer or lack of it is part of the teacher's or Plato's position. I guess that when trying to interpret Plato, we need do more than take a given one-sentence

answer and then by inspecting the text decide that the teacher holds it here, but does not hold it there, but again holds it over there. I guess that, facing a dialogue, we must try to find an understanding of the teacher's whole position throughout the dialogue. With that whole position, as well as we can make it out, we will be able to decide whether or not the teacher holds any given one-sentence answer as part of his position.

Hanging on to both tools, I can now turn to the Sophist 236d-239c. The question there is "To what is the name "not-being" to be applied?"

καὶ χρὴ τοῦτον ἐπιφέρειν τοῦτο τὸ μὴ ὄν;

Right away, the student, Theaetetus, gets a one-sentence answer he can agree with: "Not-being" cannot be applied to anything: τῶν ὄντων ἐπὶ τι τὸ μὴ ὄν οὐκ οἰστέον. With this passage, the Stranger has mentioned the words (or uttered the noise) "not-being," but he denies that "not-being" has any use.

Now, by two arguments, the Stranger shows a part of his own understanding of the one sentence answer which he just gave Theaetetus.

We cannot even concede that such a person (the one saying "nothing") speaks—even if we insist that he says nothing. Rather, we must assert that he who tries to utter "not-being" is not even speaking. (ἄρ' οὖν οὐδὲ τοῦτο συγχωρητέον, τὸ τὸν τοιοῦτον λέγειν μὲν, λέγειν μὲντοι μηδὲν, ἀλλ' οὐδὲ λέγειν φατέον, ὅς γ' ἂν ἐπιχειρῆ μὴ ὄν φθέγγεσθαι; 237e.)

It is impossible rightly to utter or to speak or to have in mind "not-being" all by itself; it is unthinkable, inexpressible, unutterable, unspeakable. (συννοεῖς οὖν ὡς οὔτε φθέγγεσθαι δυνατὸν ὄρθως οὔτ' εἰπεῖν οὔτε διανοηθῆναι τὸ μὴ ὄν αὐτὸ καθ' αὐτό, ἀλλ' ἔστιν ἀδιανόητόν τε καὶ ἄρρητον καὶ ἀφθεγκτόν τε καὶ ἄλογον; 238c.)

The first argument, that one who says not-being is not even speaking, 237e-d, looks like Socrates' argument of the Theaetetus (189a-b) that one who thinks not-being is not even thinking. It is no surprise that parallel arguments are made, since Plato holds that thinking is nothing but speaking (to oneself silently). I line both up below.

The "thinking nothing" is not thinking argument:

(T1) He who thinks thinks at least one thing. (ὁ δοξάζων ἔν γε τι δοξάζει, cf. Theaetetus 189a).

(T2) He who thinks what is not thinks no one thing. (ὁ ἄρα μὴ ὄν δοξάζων οὐδὲν δοξάζει.)

(T3) But he who thinks no one thing does not think at all; it is impossible to think what is not, either about what is or all by itself. ἀλλὰ μὴν θ' γε μηδὲν δοξάζων τὸ παράπαν οὐδὲ δοξάζει. . . . οὐκ ἄρα οἶόν τε τὸ μὴ ὄν δοξάζειν, οὔτε περὶ τῶν ὄντων οὔτε αὐτὸ καθ' αὐτό, a-b).

And the "speaking nothing" is not speaking argument:

(S1) He who says something says at least one thing. (ὁ τι λέγων ἔν γε τι λέγειν, cf. Sophist 237d.)

(S2) He who says "nothing" says not one thing at all. (ὁ μὴ τι λέγων παντάπασι μηδὲν λέγειν.)

(S3) We should not even concede that he who speaks nothing is speaking. That is, we should never say "It is true that he is speaking, however, he is saying nothing." Instead, whenever anyone tries to utter "what is not," we should insist that he is not even speaking. (ἄρ' οὖν οὐδὲ τοῦτο συγχωρητέον, τὸ τὸν τοιοῦτον λέγειν μὲν, λέγειν μὲντοι μηδὲν, ἀλλ' οὐδὲ λέγειν φατέον, ὅς γ' ἂν ἐπιχειρῆ μὴ ὄν φθέγγεσθαι; 237e.)

To be sure, there are some differences between the two arguments. For instance, the sub-argument for (T1) is different than the one for (S1).

(for T1) Thinking is parallel to seeing, hearing, and touching (Theaetetus 188e-9a).

(for S1) It is impossible to say the expression "something" all by itself, stripped and disconnected from everything (Sophist 237d.)

Likewise the sub-arguments for (T2) and (S2) are different.

(for T2) To see, hear, or touch what is not is to see, hear, or touch no one thing.

(for S2) "Something" or "some" is the sign for either one, two, or many.

But it is clear that (T3) and (S3) are equivalent. Given the equivalence of speaking and thinking, both Socrates and the Stranger would say that the event commonly described as "saying (or thinking) what is not" is not speaking (or thinking) at all. In other words, what pre-analytically is called "saying (or thinking) what is not," after analysis is not called speaking (or thinking) at all.

The second argument given by the Stranger comes to the same result.

(1) When a thing exists, something else that exists may be attached ($\pi\rho\omicron\sigma\gamma\acute{\iota}\nu\epsilon\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$) to it (238a).

(2) But it is not possible for anything that exists to be attached to what is not.

(3) But numbers exist.

(4) So we cannot attach any number to what is not.

(5) But (suppose for a minute that we can say or think what is not) to say either "a thing which is not" or "things which are not" or any other way of talking or thinking about what is not requires attaching some number to what is not (238b-c).

(6) But (4) rules out the requirement of (5) that numbers be attached to what is not.

(7) Therefore what we supposed in (5) is impossible; we cannot say or think what is not all by itself "without any strings attached"; it is unthinkable, inexpressible, unutterable, unspeakable.

After hearing these two arguments, Theaetetus might seem to be able to answer the question "To what is the expression "what is not" to be applied?" He seems to have a hold on the one-sentence answer:

"What is not" cannot be applied to anything; it is not a part of language, i.e. of the things that can be said.

An over-hasty teacher, an expository writer, might end the lesson there. But a cautious teacher, a dialogue writer, will test the student's understanding by putting up some problems. The test seems justified; Theaetetus' hold on his one-sentence answer is not secure.

The first problem that the Stranger tests Theaetetus with is as follows. They have supposed that what is not has nothing to do with any number, one or more. But that supposition--by using the expression "what is not" (as opposed to "things which are not")--itself attaches the number one to what is not by speaking of it in the singular (238e).

The second test: the Stranger himself had said that it was unspeakable. But in so doing he tried to attach being (by means of the verb "to be") to not being, a contradiction (238e-239a).

Third: in attaching that verb to it, the Stranger had addressed it in the singular, just as he had done with the adjective "unspeakable."

Fourth: even in stating these problems, the Stranger had called it "it," which is not speaking rightly, for even this

manner of referring to it gives it the form of the singular, and so tries to attach the number one to it.

Theaetetus finds these problems overwhelming, both for him and the Stranger (239c). But he has lost somehow the Stranger's conclusion (S3) that we should not even concede that he who speaks "not-being" is speaking. For each problem depends on this concession being made in the case of some sentence or other. The first problem concedes this to be a sentence: "What is not has nothing to do with any number." This problem presupposes that, in the case of this sentence at least, we can speak of what is not; that, in this case, the noise "what is not" is a part of language.

Likewise for the second test, when someone says "The thing that does not exist cannot be spoken of," they must hold that, in the case of this sentence at least, one can speak of what is not.

And it is easy to find the bogus sentences of the third and fourth tests, too, if we hang on to the claim that he who tries to utter "what is not" is not speaking at all. Should Theaetetus come to see this, he will also be able to see his way clear of the four tests the Stranger has put up. His better understanding will let him again hold the one-sentence answer that "what is not" cannot be applied to anything; it is a noise, not a piece of language.

This passage from the Sophist, then, looks as if it too is of Plato's peculiar dialogue form. But where has all this comparing and guessing taken me? By looking at the one story underlying both the Theaetetus and Sophist, namely, the long story Euclides had his slave read to Terpsion, I can set out my new position. Near the middle of that one underlying story was this one-sentence answer:

(-F) There is no such thing as false thinking (or speaking), cf. Theaetetus 188c, 189b, 190e, 196b-c, 200a.

And later in the story its denial:

(F) There truly is such a thing as false speaking and thinking, cf. Sophist 263d.

The old position, we saw, fit these two claims together by taking the real high claim of the story to be (F). It took the claim at the story's middle, (-F), to be below the story's later point, (F). Thus, looked at from the angle of my Comparison, the old approach takes the story to be of the expository form, the form that puts the "right" one-sentence answer at the end for all to see.

The new approach takes the real high point of the story to be (-F). It takes this point, properly understood, to be far above the story's later point (F). Thus, according to my Comparison, the new position sees the story to be of Plato's peculiar dialogue form, the form that buries the "right" one-sentence answer in the middle, to be dug out only by those who get a good enough hold of Plato's whole position.

But to claim the Theaetetus fits together with the Sophist in this way is not even to begin a proper commentary of the text, but only to lay down some guesswork for such a commentary to build from. In the remaining chapter, I will not be able to provide such a complete commentary. Instead, putting down more groundwork, I will consider two big problems for this new approach, which I will try to answer.

Two problems. The advantage of our new position is that we do not need to try to solve—to Socrates' satisfaction—the problem of false speech. But there are two big problems for this new position which need to be solved.

One problem is to find an interpretation of Sophist 261-263, where the Stranger and Theaetetus seem to find a way to say that false sentences do in fact exist. Since I take the Sophist to be written in Plato's peculiar dialogue form, I will expect that the Stranger's understanding, but not Theaetetus', will undermine the final result, just as in the Laches Socrates' understanding enabled him to undermine the ostensible final result that courage is not the knowledge of what is to be hoped for and feared, and as in the Meno Socrates' understanding undermines the ostensible result that virtue is not knowledge, and as in the Sophist the Stranger's understanding undermines the ostensible problems with the position that "what is not" cannot be applied to anything.

The other problem is how to interpret the overall program of the Sophist, tracking down the Sophist, which seems to require showing that falsity does exist. Over and over the Stranger reminds us that we can locate the art of the Sophist only by showing that falsity does exist in thought and speech. No interpretation can ignore the fact that the whole purpose of

the Sophist is to put the Sophist in his place—but where is the Sophist's place, if there is no such thing as falsity? This is the problem I will try to solve first.

THE FIRST PROBLEM: THE SOPHIST'S PLACE

What is the art of the Sophist? Judging from the Gorgias, we should expect that, like the rhetorician (ῥήτωρ), the Sophist has no art at all (462b). Judging from the Phaedrus, we should expect that, like the rhetorician, the Sophist's art either gives him knowledge in every area or else in no area (260ef., esp. 262c). In the Sophist, the Stranger and Theaetetus find it absurd to say that the Sophist has knowledge in every area (233a). So, in line with the Gorgias and Phaedrus, we should expect that in the Sophist the Stranger means to deny that there is an art of sophistry.

Of course, this expectation cannot be fulfilled by the old position. For according to that longstanding tradition, the Stranger does think there are such things as false sentences, so the Stranger must think that the Sophist does have an art, the art of deception, that is, the art of producing false thinking (cf. 240d). Thus the old position had to maintain that in the Sophist Plato reverses his opinion of the Gorgias and the Phaedrus that there is no art of sophistry.

But, according to the new position, Plato does not change his mind. With this new position we can maintain that in the Sophist, too, just as everywhere else, Plato means to deny that there is an art of sophistry. This position can argue that Plato makes this denial by reducing to absurdity the Sophist's claim to practice an art. Plato reaches the absurdity in two steps: (1) if there is an art of sophistry, it must be an art of deception, but (2) there can be no such thing as an art of deception.

1. Why the Sophist's art must be deception. This first step of Plato's argument takes place between 218b and 241b. There the Stranger has claimed that the Sophist is a different sort of thing (γένος) than the Statesman or Philosopher (217a-b) and undertakes to mark off clearly with Theaetetus what the Sophist is (διορίσασθαι σαφῶς τί ποτ' ἔστιν).

To begin with, the Stranger says, the only thing he and Theaetetus have in common concerning the Sophist is his name (τούτου περὶ τῶνομα μόνον ἔχομεν κοινῆ, 218c). The very first question (τὸ ζήτημα πρῶτον) is whether or not the Sophist is a man with no professional knowledge or a man who has an art (κότερον ἰδιώτην ἢ τινα τέχνην ἔχοντα, 221c). The Stranger asks this question in a clever way, making a pun, for the word "sophist" could be taken in two different ways. The word could be taken to refer to a professor of rhetoric, or it could refer

to any sort of scientist, anyone who practiced an art or science. Thus the Stranger asks if a professor of rhetoric has a science by wondering with a pun if the sophist is really—without a doubt—a sophist (ἰδιώτην θήσομεν, ἢ Θεαίτητα, ἢ παντάπασιν ὡς ἀληθῶς σοφιστήν; 221c-d). Theaetetus takes it that the Sophist by no means can be a man without art (οὐδᾶμῶς ἰδιώτην), but his grounds for saying so are dubious, according to what the Stranger has said. Theaetetus' reason is that everyone with the name "sophist" (that is, "scientist") must be that sort of thing (that is, a scientist): παντὸς δεῖ τοιοῦτος εἶναι τὸ γε ὄνομα τοῦτο ἔχων,¹ 221d. Evidently this is carelessness on Theaetetus' part. He is coming to a conclusion from the name alone, without considering the thing. About the only advice the Stranger has given him so far is that such conclusions are dubious. Instead, the Stranger has recommended always coming to conclusions about the thing itself by argument rather than from the name alone, without any argument: δεῖ δὲ

¹ Winckelmann's emendation. I would render "πάντως δεῖ τοιοῦτος" B or "πάντως δεῖ τοιοῦτον" I as "the one having this name must by all means be such (that is, a scientist)."

ἀεὶ παντὸς περὶ τὸ πρᾶγμα αὐτὸ μᾶλλον διὰ λόγων ἢ τούνομα μόνον συνομολογήσασθαι χωρὶς λόγου, 218c.

How is one supposed to argue about the thing itself? The Stranger gives two such arguments, each one reducing to absurdity the claim that the thing itself, sophistry, is an art, unless it is an art of deception. The first argument is that if sophistry is one art, it is at least six arts (221d-231e), which seems absurd. The second argument is that if the Sophist's art is in any field, it is in every field (232b-d), which also seems absurd. The only possible escape from these perplexities is to claim that if the Sophist has an art, it must be the art of making deceptive appearances (233d-235a). But the Stranger shows that this escape depends on there being false speech (240b-241b). Thus the Stranger will be able to complete his reduction to absurdity of there being a Sophist's art by arguing that false speech is impossible and hence that there can be no art of deception. Before going on to this second step, I will take a closer look at the twin arguments of the first step.

The "1 = 6" argument. On the assumption that the Sophist has some one sort of art (221d), the Stranger shows that the Sophist appears to be so many things that Theaetetus says he is quite perplexed (ἀπορῶ δὲ ἔγωγε ἤδη διὰ τὸ κολλᾶ πεφάνθαι, 231b-c). The Sophist appears to be:

1. a paid hunter of the young and wealthy, 231d,
2. a wholesaler (ἐμπορος) of bits of learning for the soul,
3. a retailer (κάπηλος) of the same,
4. a seller of his own productions (αὐτοπώλης) of bits of learning,
5. an athlete in contests of words,
6. a purger of the soul, 231e.

The Stranger says that the result—when someone appears to have knowledge in many areas, but is called by the name of a single art (ἐπιστήμων τις πολλῶν φαίνεται, μίας δὲ τέχνης ὀνόματι προσγορεύεται)—that this appearance is not sound (τὸ φάντασμα τοῦτο ὡς οὐκ ἔσθ' ὑγιές, 232a). He claims that anyone who gets this impression (ὁ πάσχων αὐτό) is unable to see that one thing of the art at which all the results aim (οὐ δύναται κατιδέειν ἐκείνο αὐτῆς εἰς ὃ πᾶντα τὰ μαθήματα ταῦτα βλέπει). Plainly this multiple account of what is supposed to be one art is unacceptable for the Stranger: μὴ τοίνυν ἡμεῖς γε αὐτό . . . πάσχωμεν. Thus they need to try again.

The "knowledge of anything = knowledge of everything" argument. To begin the second argument of the pair, the Stranger recalls one thing especially distinctive of the Sophist (ἐν γὰρ τι . . . μάλιστα κατεφάνη αὐτόν)—they had said that he was a disputer (ἀντιλογικόν), and taught this same thing to others (καὶ τῶν ἄλλων αὐτοῦ τούτου διδάσκαλον γίγνεσθαι).

If the Sophist's art is an art of disputation (τῆς ἀντιλογικῆς τέχνης, cf. 232e), the Stranger and Theaetetus can figure out what the Sophist is by considering the area in which he is able to dispute: σκοπῶμεν δὴ, περὶ τίνος ἄρα καὶ φασὶν οἱ τοιοῦτοι ποιεῖν ἀντιλογικούς, 232b. But Sophists seem able to argue about everything (περὶ πάντων, 232c-e). If they are really able to dispute about everything, they must have knowledge of everything (πάντα ἐπίστασθαι). But that is impossible (233a).

The force of this argument is that if the Sophist's art is of anything in particular—whether of things divine (232c), or of earth and sky, or of being and becoming, or of laws and affairs of state, or even of wrestling—it must equally be said to be of everything else, which is absurd.

The new position takes the Stranger's conclusion to be that the Sophist has no knowledge in any area, and, being ignorant (ἀνεπιστήμων), he cannot even speak soundly to dispute (ὕγιες τι λέγων ἀντειπεῖν, 233a), that is, he does not rightly dispute

(ἀντιλέγειν ὀρθῶς), but only seems to (φαίνονται). Thus the sophists appear to be wise in all things: πάντα ἄρα σοφοὶ . . . φαίνονται [sc. ἐπιστημόνως ἔχειν], but really are not (οὐκ ὄντες γε).

2. Why there can be no such thing as an art of deception.

The Sophist has the knack of deceiving people by giving the impression of knowledge without really having knowledge. The only thing left that could be the Sophist's art, therefore, is deception of some sort; he has the art of creating fallacious appearances with words, semblances (φάντασμα), as opposed to accurate likenesses εἰκόνα, cf. 234c-d. The Stranger says that such an art of deception is also perplexing (ἄπορος, cf. 236d-e, 239c), that it seems to require absurdity (ἄτοπον, 240c). The Stranger finally asks if there is any way at all to consistently define the Sophist's art: τὴν τέχνην αὐτοῦ τίνα ἀφορίσαντες ἡμῖν αὐτοῖς συμφωνεῖν οἴοι τε ἐσόμεθα;

The Stranger suggests that, when we say that the Sophist's art is an art of deception, we may say that his art causes our mind to think falsely (ψευδῆ δοξάζειν τὴν ψυχὴν ἡμῶν φησομεν ὑπὸ τῆς ἐκείνου τέχνης, 240d). But the Stranger doubts whether false speech can be consistently spoken of (240e-241b). The Stranger says Theaetetus speaks rightly (ὀρθῶς) to remind him that the only way in which false speech can come to be (θ: πῶς γὰρ ἂν ἄλλωσ τοιοῦτος γενοίτο;—ε: σχεδὸν οὐδαμῶς) forces us

over and over to attach being to what is not, which they have just agreed (236d-239c, cf. pp.111f above) is the most impossible thing in the world: τῷ γὰρ μὴ ὄντι τὸ ὄν προσάπτειν ἡμᾶς πολλάκις ἀναγκάζεσθαι, διολογησαμένους νῦν δὴ κου τοῦτο εἶναι πάντων ἀδυνατώτατον.

Thus, if the Stranger does in what follows in fact argue that false sentences are impossible (as our new position must claim, contrary to the appearance of 261-3), he will have succeeded in showing that there is no art of sophistry. By denying that there is an art of sophistry, the Stranger will have succeeded in separating the Sophist from the Philosopher and Statesman, on the assumption that each of these has an art. And he will have found the Sophist's "place": outside the arts along with, presumably, "rules of thumb", "old wives' tales", and other irrational "knacks". Our first main problem of interpretation, then, can be solved, if we can show that the Stranger denies the existence of false speech throughout the Sophist. This will depend on finding such an interpretation of 261-3, where false speech is ostensibly defined.

THE SECOND PROBLEM: THE DEFINITION OF FALSE SPEECH

The Stranger will seem to find a way to define false sentences and beliefs. Thus the new position claiming that the Theaetetus and Sophist are written in Plato's peculiar dialogue

style and claiming that the Stranger denies the possibility of false speech must somehow devalue the apparent reversal later in this dialogue, just as the apparent reversals at the end of the Laches, Meno, and Sophist 236d-239c are devalued by a satisfactory grasp of the teacher's whole position.

In fact, the Stranger gives quite a few hints that his own understanding will devalue the later reversal. He says that the later reversal appears to attack (ἐπιτίθεσθαι) the theory of his own father, Parmenides (τὸν τοῦ πατρὸς Παρμενίδου λόγον, cf.241d, 242a). But the Stranger has a pressing request for Theaetetus: that he will not think that the Stranger is turning into a sort of parricide (μὴ με οἶον πατραλοῖαν ὑπολάβῃς γίνεσθαί τινα, 241d). Also, the Stranger says that he has always been too fainthearted (ἀπειρηκῶς) to refute this theory and still is now, 242a. He is afraid that he will seem to be mad (μανικῶς), reversing his own position (παρὰ πόδα μεταβαλὼν ἑμαυτὸν ἄνω καὶ κάτω). And he is undertaking the refutation for Theaetetus' sake (σὴν γὰρ δὴ χάριν ἐλέγχειν τὸν λόγον ἐπιτησόμεθα, 242a-b), so it would seem that he is not undertaking it on his own behalf.

Our new position can unravel all these hints. The Stranger declares that he might seem to Theaetetus to be doing something crazy (cf.216d: τοτὲ δ' ἔστιν οἷς παρ᾽ ἄσχοιντο ἄν ὡς παντᾶσιν ἔχοντες μανικῶς). But in fact he is not about to refute

Parmenides' theory (he is too "fainthearted" for that; we should not take him for a parricide). Instead, it is Theaetetus and his beliefs, not the Stranger's, which need consideration and refutation by the Stranger (cf. Socrates' description of the Stranger at 216b: φαύλους ἡμᾶς ὄντας ἐν τοῖς λόγοις ἐποφόμεθός τε καὶ ἐλέγχων, θεὸς ὢν τις ἐλεγκτικὸς).

Of course, this interpretation depends on our finding a way to understand 262-3. This is what I will now try to provide.

I will try to show how Sophist 261c-263d argues for the Stranger's position that

(1T) A string of words is a sentence iff it is true,

against Theaetetus' position that

(1T or F) A string of words is a sentence iff it is true or false.

There are actually two parts to this argument. The first part, 261d-262e, shows that Theaetetus' support for his view (1T or F) will in fact be support for the Stranger's claim (1T). This argument unfolds in peculiar dialogue style. Certain claims are made, which seem to support (1T or F). But these claims themselves need support, which can only come from certain deeper claims. And those deeper claims, if they are support for anything, are support for (1T). The Stranger will point out to Theaetetus how (1T or F) presupposes the first level of claims,

and how those claims depend on the deeper claims. In line with my Guess, this instructor supplies the understanding, that is, most of the pieces of the argument which devalues (1T or F), but leaves unsaid the final one-sentence conclusion, namely, that the deeper claims are support for (1T) before (1T or F).

The second part, 262e-263c, parallels Socrates' result in the Theaetetus that a thought cannot both be about something and be false. In this part, which is also in the dialogue style, all of Socrates' argument about thought is recast for sentences, except the one-sentence conclusion that a sentence cannot both be about something and be false.

Part one: 261d-262e. First, I will take a closer look at the first part, 261d-262e. The Stranger gets Theaetetus' assent that some words fit together (ἔσυναμύρται) and some do not (261d), where they both are taking "fit together" to say "make up a sentence." And it is clear that Theaetetus' assent could be understood either as the Stranger's claim:

(2T) Only a string of words that will point out an interweaving in the world will fit together. [Call this "fitting together_T"],

or as Theaetetus' claim:

(2T or F) Whether or not a string of words will point out an interweaving in the world, some words will, some will not, fit together. [Call this "fitting together_T or F".]

Next the Stranger sets out the distinction Theaetetus had in mind for determining whether or not words fit together_T or F. We will see that this distinction will establish (2T) before it establishes (2T or F).

Fitting together_T or F is distinguished by marking off different kinds of words. That is, Theaetetus will agree that

(claim 1) A statement never consists of doer-words spoken together, nor of doing-words apart from doer-words, spoken together.

οὐκοῦν ἐξ ὀνομάτων μὲν μόνων συνεχῶς
λεγομένων οὐκ ἔστι ποτὲ λόγος, οὐδ' αὖ
ῥημάτων χωρὶς ὀνομάτων λεχθέντων, (262a).

For example, (a) "walks runs sleeps" is not a sentence, and no other string of doing-words, no matter how long, will make up a sentence (262b). And (b) neither is "lion stag horse," or any string of only doer-words, a sentence (262b-c). But the Stranger, without saying that this is what he will do, in fact undercuts this argument for fitting together_T or F by carrying it one step further. He points out to Theaetetus the deeper

claim, the reason why "lion stag horse" or "walks runs sleeps" are not sentences.

The Stranger says that in neither of these examples do the sounds uttered (τὰ φωνηθέντα) point out (δηλοῖ) any doing or non-doing or being of anything that is or is not (262c). On Theaetetus' level, this final reason for (2T or F) may seem to close the case in favor of (1T or F). But, on the Stranger's level, this final reason undercuts (2T or F), supporting instead (2T).

I can redo the Stranger's argument with this drawing.

a b

F G

Take a and b to be doers, F and G to be doings. In the picture I show that a doer x does some doing y by drawing a line between x and y.

Suppose that the Stranger holds that

(2T) Only a string of words that will point out an interweaving in the world will fit together,

which in this picture amounts to the claim that only "Fa," "Fb,"

"Gb," and "Gota" are sentences, where "Gota" says "a is other than G."² Suppose he is arguing against Theaetetus, who holds

(2T or F) Whether or not a string of words will point out an interweaving in the world, some words will, some will not, fit together,

which amounts to the claim that all of "Fa," "Fb," "Ga," "Gb," "Fota," "Fotb," "Gota," and "Gotb" are sentences, some of them being false. Theaetetus can support his (2T or F) by claim 1,

a statement never consists of doer-words spoken in succession, nor of doing-words, apart from doer-words, spoken together,

which rests on examples such as (i) "ab" is not a sentence, and (ii) "FG" is not a sentence. But here the Stranger points out that the underlying reason why neither "ab" nor "FG" form a sentence can only be that neither points out anything, any interweaving, in the picture. But (the Stranger leaves unsaid)

² To keep things simple, I will not mention "aotb" and "GotF," though I think it is clear that the Stranger must take them to be sentences, too.

this reason surely supports (2T) instead of (2T or F). In the picture, neither "Ga" nor "Fotb" points out anything. So, by Theaetetus' own deeper reason, he should also deny that "Ga" or "Fotb" are sentences.

In the text, the Stranger applies this argument to the example sentence "a man learns." Theaetetus says that this is a sentence (Σ: λόγον εἶναι φησ . . . ;—Θ: ἔγωγε, 262c-d), because whoever says it points out something about what is or becomes or has become or will become (δηλοῖ γὰρ ἤδη που τότε περὶ τῶν ὄντων ἢ γιγνομένων ἢ γεγυότων ἢ μελλόντων, 262d). Whoever says this does not merely pronounce words (as in the examples of non-sentences) but connects something (οὐκ ὀνομάζει μόνον, ἀλλὰ τι κεραίνει, 262d). He weaves together the doing-words with the doer-words (συμπλέκων τὰ ῥήματα τοῖς ὀνόμασι, 262d).

In my model, we might restate the Stranger's argument this way, with the example sentence "Gb." This is a sentence because there is something behind it in the model, this:

b
G.

The Stranger would say that "Gb" points out (δηλοῖ) something, namely, the interweaving of b and G. In his view, the interweaving behind the words is what lets one make a connection (κεραίνει τι), what lets one weave together (συμπλέκει) the words.

In the text, the Stranger concludes this part of the argument by saying that "according to how things do or do not fit together, words do or do not fit together."

οὕτω δὴ καθάπερ τὰ πράγματα τὰ μὲν ἀλλήλοις ἤρμοιτε, τὰ δ' οὐ, καὶ περὶ τὰ τῆς φωνῆς αὐ σημεῖα τὰ μὲν οὐχ ἄρμόττει, τὰ δὲ ἀρμόττοντα αὐτῶν λόγον ἀπειργάσατο, 262d-e.

Looking at my model, the Stranger might put it this way. In the model, the things F and a fit together, so the words "F" and "a" fit together; they form a sentence, "Fa." But the things G and b do not fit together, so the words "G" and "b" do not fit together; "Gb" is not a sentence. The pieces of language fit together when and only when the corresponding pieces of the world fit together. If we offer a distinction of types of words alone, whether it is between doer- and doing-words or names and live verbs, or anything else, and try to define being a sentence with that distinction alone, then the Stranger will claim that the only evidence we can bring out for our word-based distinction is in fact evidence for (2T), not (2T or F).

Theaetetus views this first part of the argument from a different level, of course. He somehow still takes the fitting together of words to be fitting together_T or _F, seizing the

examples of sentences and non-sentences (262b-c) without grasping the reason for their being or not being sentences.

Part two: 262e-263c. The second part of the Stranger's argument, 262e-263c, begins with the Stranger laying down the "aboutness" requirement: a sentence—if it is to be a sentence—must be about something. For a sentence not to be about something is impossible (λόγον ἀναγκαῖον, ὅτανπερ ἦ, τινὸς εἶναι λόγον, μὴ δὲ τινὸς ἀδύνατον, 262e, cf. *Theaetetus* 189a, 189d-e).

Vaguely, he also says that every sentence must "have some quality" (ποιόν τινα). Again we see two different levels of understanding here. On one level, Theaetetus takes this to say that every sentence must have the quality of being either true or false. On another level, the Stranger takes this to be the quality of being true. The Stranger will now go on to use the aboutness requirement to reduce Theaetetus's position to absurdity, although he will neglect to say the final one sentence of the *reductio*, namely, the sentence "Therefore, false sentences are impossible."

In the text, the Stranger deals with an example of a true sentence first, "Theaetetus sits." This sentence is about something—Theaetetus himself (263a). Likewise, in my drawing, the Stranger would say that the true sentence "Gb" is about something, too, b.

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Next, in the text, the Stranger asks Theaetetus what this is about: "Theaetetus flies." Theaetetus claims that no one could deny that this is about nothing but himself,

καὶ τοῦτον οὐδ' ἂν εἰς ἄλλως εἴποι πλὴν ἐμὸν
τε καὶ περὶ ἐμοῦ, 263a),

that is, everyone would agree that this is about Theaetetus. Looking at my drawing, Theaetetus would likewise claim that "Ga" could only be about a. The Stranger makes this reply:

But we agree that every sentence must have some quality. . . . What quality must one say each of these sentences has? (263a-b).

Theaetetus, of course, says that one is false, the other true.

To reduce Theaetetus' position to absurdity, the Stranger needs one more claim—to be about a thing, a sentence must say or point out something about that thing. For instance, the true sentence "Gb" points out G about b. In the Stranger's words, "the true sentence says the things that are, as they are, about Theaetetus" (λέγει δὲ αὐτῶν ὁ μὲν ἀληθῆς τὰ ὄντα ὡς ἔστι περὶ σοῦ).

The trouble with Theaetetus' position is saying what the false "Ga" says or points out about a. If he had the Match-up Postulate, he could say that "Ga" points out G about a, irregardless of the fact that G is not about a. In our model we had:

a
F G

Here G is not about a, only F is. The false, therefore, says what is other (that is, G) than what is about a (that is, F). It says what is not (that is, what is other than) as if it is. In the Stranger's words, ὁ δὲ δὴ ψευδῆς ἕτερα τῶν ὄντων . . . τὰ μὴ ὄντ' ἄρα ὡς ὄντα λέγει, (263b).

Just as in the first part of the argument, 261d-262e, Theaetetus seizes this much of the explanation and does not see any trouble. But Theaetetus does not see what this purported solution rests on. In Theaetetus' eyes, the Stranger seems to be saying that, although G is not about a, nevertheless G can be said about a. For G is not contrary to being, and thus unutterable (as was shown at 236d-239c). It is not in that it is other than something, here a.

The Stranger's theory of "not" as other than certainly does let him say what is not, that is, what is other than. In this way Theaetetus is right. But the whole greatest kinds section does not enable him to say what is other than a about a; this is

the point Theaetetus has missed. We can say what is "not" or what is other than, "for we said that about each thing there is much that is, and much that is not." (πολλὰ μὲν γὰρ ἔφαμεν ὄντα κατὰ ἕκαστον εἶναι που, πολλὰ δὲ οὐκ ὄντα.) Without the Match-up Postulate, this reason shows at most that only true sentences can exist.

According to the Stranger's theory of "not," in my model we are allowed to say that F is, with reference to or about a and b, and that G is with reference to or about b, but is "not" or other than with reference to a,³ cf. 257b, above pp. 18f.

This theory of "not" offers no support for the claim Theaetetus needs, that a false sentence says (about a thing) things that are, other than what really is about that thing (cf. 263b: ὄντων δὲ γε ὄντα ἕτερα κατὰ σου). To take a case from the model, this theory of "not" offers no support for the claim that "Ga" says G about a. Really, G is not about a. And this can be said: Gota. Really, F is about a. And this can be said: Fa. This is as far as the Stranger's theory of "not" will carry us.

³ Not to mention that a is other than with reference to b, and F is other than with reference to G.

All in all, the requirements which the Stranger puts on sentences might be written this way. Let S be a word string, x a doer, and φ a doing or a non-doing (that is, a doing that is other than some doer's doings).

(i) S is a sentence (that is, S fits together) if and only if there is an x such that S is about x (262e, 263c).

(ii) S is about x if and only if there is a φ such that S says φ about x (cf. 263b).

(iii) S says φ about x if and only if, first, S contains words (τὰ τῆς φωνῆς σημεῖα) for x and φ and, second, φx.

The result, of course, is that there are no false sentences. Theaetetus, forgetting or never noticing that the Match-up Postulate was rejected, does not see where the argument has led. The Stranger, a lesson in self-restraint in teaching, does not blurt out this one-sentence answer. Instead, one last time, he reminds Theaetetus of the main premises:

1. If "Theaetetus flies" is not about Theaetetus, it is not about anything (εἰ δὲ μὴ ἔστι σὸς, οὐκ ἄλλου γε οὐδενός, 263c).

2. If "Theaetetus flies" is not about anything, it is not a sentence at all (μηδενός δὲ ὧν οὐδ' ἂν λόγος εἴη τὸ παράπαν).

ἀπεφήναμεν γὰρ ὅτι τῶν ἀδυνάτων ἦν λόγον ὄντα μηδενὸς εἶναι λόγον, 263c).

Theaetetus, not grasping the Stranger's whole position, tacitly supplies the premise that "Theaetetus flies" is about Theaetetus. Thus his conclusion is that "Theaetetus flies" is a sentence. But it is part of the Stranger's whole position that "Theaetetus flies" is not about Theaetetus, since it does not say anything about Theaetetus (for Flying is not about Theaetetus) any more than "walks runs sleeps" says Running about Walking or "lion stag horse" says Stag about Lion. Thus the Stranger's tacit conclusion is that "Theaetetus flies" is no sentence.

Finally, the Stranger sets out a description of a false sentence which, to him, makes it plain that there are no false sentences, but which, to Theaetetus, appears to show that there can be false sentences:

Something said about you, which says, however, about what is other than that it is the same, i.e. about what is not that it is-- such a combination of doer- and doing-words appears to be really and truly a false sentence.

(περὶ δὲ σοῦ λεγόμενα, λεγόμενα μέντοι θάρτερα ὡς τὰ αὐτὰ καὶ μὴ ὄντα ὡς ὄντα,

παντάπασιν ἔοικεν ἡ τοιαύτη σύνθεσις ἔκ τε ῥημάτων γιγνομένη καὶ ὀνομάτων ὄντως τε καὶ ἀληθῶς⁴ γίνεσθαι λόγος ψευδῆς, 263d.)

The Stranger realizes that such a combination of doer-and doing-words is never a sentence because of the "aboutness" objection: If "Theaetetus flies" does not say what is about Theaetetus, then it is not about Theaetetus (nor is it about anything else) so it is not a sentence after all.

⁴ The phrase "ὄντως τε καὶ ἀληθῶς" is probably meant to recall Theaetetus' too-early claim about an unsuccessful model of false thinking: τότε ὡς ἀληθῶς δοξάζει ψευδῆ, Theaetetus 189c. Socrates says such an answer shows contempt, not respect, for him (189c). Evidently, such an answer must hold him in low regard because it supposes he will not question an obvious problem, the problem of the truly false (τοῦ ἀληθῶς ψεύδους, 189c-d). How could someone slowly think quickly? How is it possible for someone to heavily fall lightly? If these things cannot be done, then how can someone truly think falsely (cf. 189d)? This argument from the impossibility of opposites is never addressed later, neither in the Theaetetus nor the Sophist, just as the argument in the Theaetetus from the impossibility of knowing and not knowing the same thing.

Thus "ὄντως τε καὶ ἀληθῶς" is probably meant to be a reminder that, even if a way has somehow been found to say what is not, there still remain unsolved problems. (Continued next page.)

Theaetetus missed the aboutness objection. He thinks one may justly call (δικαίως ἂν καλοῖτο, cf. Theaetetus 189c) such a combination of words a false sentence. He used to have the same hopes for false thinking. After Socrates showed that false thinking cannot be thinking what is not (i.e. the contrary of being) at 188d-189b, he considered the view that false thinking is thinking what is, but thinking one thing instead of another

(Continued from previous page.)

I note that most writers have thought that the argument from the impossibility of opposites is a silly argument, and most have then inferred that, since they think it is a silly argument, Plato must have thought it was silly, too, and never meant it to be taken seriously. The text will not permit such a reading. This can be seen as soon as we pick out just what in the argument has made it seem silly. The argument does seem right for some kinds of actions, such as running or falling. What has seemed silly is to put this type of action on a par with the action of thinking. But Plato in all seriousness does put thinking on a par with falling- and running-type actions, such as touching (surely one cannot heavily touch lightly), hearing, and seeing; he does this, quite seriously, only a few lines before he makes this argument. However silly it may seem to us, Plato took this parallel seriously. Any satisfactory interpretation, then, should either show where and how he gives up this parallel, or else describe how he solves the problem of false sentences without giving up this parallel.

(ὅν μὲν ἀεὶ δοξάζει, ἕτερον δὲ ἀνθ' ἑτέρου, 188c), as if a thought could be mistaken about what it is about (ἀμαρτάνων οὐ σκοπέει), that is, as if it could be about something other than what it is about. Theaetetus soon found out that this attempt to describe false thinking also failed; there is no way one could think such a thing, whether we say the thought is about both things or only one or the other (cf. 189d-e).

Socrates' argument in the Theaetetus about thinking works the same way as the Stranger's argument about sentences. Socrates argues that if the thought is about only one or the other of the things, it cannot be the thought that the one is the other, for it would be forced to think about what it is not thinking about (ἀναγκάζοιτο γὰρ ἂν ἐπάπτεσθαι καὶ οὐ μὴ δοξάζει, 190d). Likewise, it is obvious that a sentence about⁵ only Theaetetus or only flying could not say that Theaetetus is flying. But, Socrates argues, if the thought is about both things, there is no way that one could think that the one is the

⁵ Clearly, the word "about" is being used differently with respect to a thought in the Theaetetus than it is with respect to a sentence in the Sophist 262e, where the "X" in "about X" refers only to the doer, not the doing. In the Theaetetus, the "X" in "about X" can refer to both the doer and the doing.

other: οὐδείς ἀμφοτέρω γε . . . δοξάζων . . . δοξάσειεν ὡς τὸ ἕτερον ἕτερόν ἐστιν, 190c. Likewise, the Stranger would say that if two things are other, one may not say they are the same. The words simply would not fit together to make up a sentence. If the two things do not weave together, it is impossible to say that they do (cf. 259e: τελευτάτη πάντων λόγων ἐστὶν ἀφάνισις τὸ διαλύειν ἕκαστον ἀπὸ πάντων· διὰ γὰρ τὴν ἀλλήλων τῶν εἰδῶν συμπλοκὴν ὁ λόγος γέγονεν ἡμῖν). Words fit together to make up sentences according to the way things fit together in the world (cf. 262d-e: οὕτω δὲ καθάπερ τὰ πράγματα τὰ μὲν ἀλλήλοισι ἤρμοττε, τὰ δ' οὐ, καὶ περὶ τὰ τῆς φωνῆς αὐ σημεία τὰ μὲν οὐχ ἀρμόττει, τὰ δὲ ἀρμόττοντα αὐτῶν λόγον ἀπειργάσατο.) Speech is impossible if forms do not blend (διὰ γὰρ τὴν ἀλλήλων τῶν εἰδῶν συμπλοκὴν ὁ λόγος γέγονεν ἡμῖν).

Conclusion. Our new position requires that we be able to separate two levels of understanding, the level understanding the whole position and the level of incomplete understanding, and that the whole position can plausibly be seen in the text to devalue the ostensible conclusion. This I have tried to do. It seems to me that (i) the Stranger showed how the doer word/doing word distinction rests on the principle that a sentence should point out something about something, and (ii) he showed that this aboutness requirement cannot be met by false sentences

(Theaetetus' "understanding" of the situation notwithstanding). If this is right we can at last fit together the parts of the story told to Terpsion: Socrates' theory of thinking (209a-c) fits together with the Stranger's theory of sentences; Socrates' view of falsity complements, not contradicts, the Stranger's. No more need we say that in the Sophist Plato gave a quick solution to one of the problems of falsity, that of being and not-being, and forgot to explain the problem of knowing and not knowing, left unsolved at Theaetetus 188-200.

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