N.B. For the critical editions and translations of the Dialogue see: Plato: Bibliographical Resources on Selected Dialogues


"In the *Sophist*, through the circuits of the ontological-binary procedure of the dialectical divisions, Plato tries to arrive not only at the truth of the things in themselves, but also rigorous methodic treatment, which minimizes its limitations and inadvertences, and locates it in a transcendent dimension, among the types of Being, secures to it the status of philosophical discourse, capable of saying that which is, as it is."


Les textes de ce volume ont été recueillis par Michel Narcy.
Table des Matières
Pierre Aubenque: Avant-propos p. 11
Première Partie: L'ORDRE DU TEXTE: SOPHISTIQUE, ONTOLOGIE, COSMOLOGIE
Deuxième Partie: VUES PERSPECTIVES
Barbara Cassin: Les Muses et la philosophie. Éléments pour une histoire du pseudos p. 291; Denis O'Brien: Le non-être dans la philosophie grecque: Parménide, Platon, Plotin p. 317; Pierre Aubenque: Une occasion manquée: la genèse avortée de la distinction entre l"étant" et le "quelque chose" p. 365;
Troisième Partie: LA TRADITION DU SOPHISTE
INDEX
Index de citations de Platon: I Index des citations du Sophiste p. 563; II Idex des citations d'autres dialogues p. 567; Index des citations d'auteurs anciens (Platon excepté) p. 571; Index des noms d'auteurs modernes p. 582.


"Plato, in his dialogue The Sophist, tried to disprove the thesis of Parmenides, according to which the contrary of the \( \textit{einai} \) would be the nonexistent \( \textit{me eina} \). Plato maintained instead that \( \textit{epsna} \) is not the contrary of \( \textit{einai} \) but its otherness (\( \textit{to eteron} \)). Plato's argument has seemed impeccable and constructive, and has had notable resonance and a sound approval through the history of the philosophy. Really, the deep structure of Parmenides' nominalized \( \textit{me eina} \) was a predicate. Plato replaced the universal notion of "being" (\( \textit{einai} \)) with an \( \textit{epsnai} \) assumed as a determined "thing. Besides he transformed the negative meaning of \( \textit{me} \) into the arithmetic meaning of less". So that \( \textit{me slum -- einai} \), and the wholeness of the "things", from which \( \textit{einai} \) was subtracted, became the wholeness less to be, viz. the. Such an argument is actually a paralogism, according to Aristotle who says exactly: "it is not the same thing to affirm not to be absolutely and to affirm not to be in a determined sense and about a determined thing (\( \textit{Soph. elench} \). 167 a 4). Then, Plato simply committed the well known paralogism which consists in changing a statement "\( \textit{a dicto simpliciter ad dictum secundum quid} \)."


"In the first part, it is argued that the Stranger has employed in his divisions both \textit{eikastic} and \textit{phantastic} speech, and that the issue of being arises because Theaetetus fails to recognize Socrates as the philosopher. In the second part, it is argued that \textit{phantastic} speech as the experience of \textit{eikastic} speech is false opinion, and that the double account of logos, as the weaving together of species and of agent and action, corresponds respectively to that which makes speech possible, the other, and that which determines truth and falsehood in terms of whether the agent is other than the action."


"Plato's explanation of false belief is reconstructed from his \textit{Sophist} and defended against the principal contemporary account. Since Frege, the received view in analytic philosophy of mind and language is that human cognition of the world is always mediated through some sort of intensional object whose identity conditions are such that the object is ontologically independent of the world. It is argued that
Plato's theory of human cognition, which makes no reference to intensional objects of that kind, is a better explanation insofar as it commits itself to a smaller ontology and succeeds in explaining what we want explained.


Edited by Gordon Neal.


"This paper argues that important changes in Plato's conceptions of being (ousia) and becoming (genesis) occur over the dialogues, but that the final version of the distinction between the two remains strong enough to sustain the essentials of the theory of degrees of reality which the distinction was originally devised to expound. This position is an alternative to the predominant prevailing positions -- that Plato's views underwent no significant change, or that there was a change so radical as to force the abandonment of Plato's middle-period metaphysics. Relevant passages in the "Phaedo", "Republic", "Theaetetus", "Sophist" and "Philebus" are fully discussed."


"The paper is an attempt to show how the problem of the nature and possibility of falsehood arises in the early parts of Plato's "Sophist". I argue that the participants in the dialogue operate with two related analogies, one which considers spoken images to be fundamentally like seen images, and another analogy which considers the objects of stating or believing to be like the objects of perceiving. (The second analogy has parallels in "Theaetetus" 188c-189b). These analogies lead to confusions which Plato attempts to dispel in the later portions of the "Sophist"."


"The purpose of the paper is to analyze Plato's arguments in the "Sophist" concerning 'absolute' non-being and to show that these arguments, once the notion of 'absolute' non-being is interpreted, have implications for (a) Plato's notion of being, (b) his views about the conditions for something to be a subject of discourse,
and (c) the first and sixth hypothesis of the "Parmenides".


"The article provides, first, a survey of the scholarly debate about the meaning of 'to be' in Plato's Sophist, starting from Cornford, centering on Michael Frede and Owen, and leading up to the present day discussion. Then, Plato's criticism of dualism, monism, idealism, materialism (Soph. 242b6-249d5) is given detailed analysis. The scope of this analysis is to substantiate the hypothesis that Plato distinguishes two types of propositions in Sophist, i.e., those of prediction and a particular kind of identity. Each type uses 'is' differently. However, even when criticizing traditional ontologies, Plato does not use 'is' to mean 'exists'."


"According to the received doctrine, which I do not question, the uses of the Greek verb 'to be' may first be distinguished into those that are complete and those that are incomplete. In its incomplete uses the verb requires a complement of some kind (which may be left unexpressed), while in its complete uses there is no complement, and it may be translated as 'to exist' or 'to be real' or 'to be true' or something of the kind. What role the complete uses of the verb have to play in the Sophist as a whole is a vexed question, and one that I shall not discuss. For I think it will be generally agreed, at least since Owen's important article of 1971, (1) that in our central section of the Sophist it is the incomplete uses that are the centre of Plato's attention. Anyway, I shall confine my own attention to these uses, and accordingly my project is to elucidate and evaluate Plato's account of 'is not' where the 'is' is incomplete. I might also add here that, for the purposes of the Sophist as a whole, I am in agreement with Owen's view that what Plato himself took to be crucial was the account of 'not', and what he has to say about 'is' is, in his own eyes, merely ancillary to this. But I do not argue that point, partly because Owen has already done so, and partly because it is not needed for my main contentions. As we shall see, one cannot in fact understand what Plato does say about 'not' without first considering his views on the incomplete 'is'.

Reverting to the received doctrine once more, the incomplete uses of 'is' may be
divided into two. In one sense the verb functions as an identity sign, and means the
same as 'is the same as', while in the other it functions merely as a sign of
predication, coupling subject to predicate, and cannot be thus paraphrased. The vast
majority of commentators on the Sophist seem agreed that Plato means to
distinguish, and succeeds in distinguishing, these two different senses of the verb.
This I shall deny. In fact I shall argue not only that Plato failed to see the
distinction, but also that his failure, together with another ambiguity that he fails to
see, wholly vitiates his account of the word 'not'. The central section of the Sophist
is therefore one grand logical mistake."

note omitted).

Existentiellen Interpretation Des "Sophistes". Würzburg: Königshausen und
Neumann.

28. Brague, Rémi. 2005. "La Cosmologie Finale Du Sophiste (263b4-E6)." In
Chatou: Les Éditions de la Transparence.

Philosophique de la France et de l'Étranger no. 116:557-569.

in Ancient Philosophy no. 4:49-70.

"Plato's Sophist presents a tantalizing challenge to the modern student of
philosophy. In its central section we find a Plato whose interests and methods seem
at once close to and yet remote from our own. John Ackrill's seminal papers on the
Sophist, (1) published in the fifties, emphasized the closeness, and in optimistic
vein credited Plato with several successes in conceptual analysis. These articles
combine boldness of 'argument with exceptional clarity and economy of expression,
and though subsequent writers have cast doubt on some of Ackrill's claims for the
Sophist the articles remain essential reading for all students of the dialogue. I am
happy to contribute an essay on the Sophist to this volume dedicated to John
Ackrill.

Among the most disputed questions in the interpretation of the Sophist is that of
whether Plato therein marks off different uses of the verb einai, 'to be'. This paper
addresses one issue under that heading, that of the distinction between the
'complete' and 'incomplete' uses of 'to be', which has usually been associated with
the distinction between the 'is' that means 'exists' and the 'is' of predication, that is,
the copula."

(1) Sympleke Eidon (1955) and Plato and the Copula: Sophist 251-59 (1957), both

31. ———. 1994. "The Verb 'to Be' in Greek Philosophy: Some Remarks." In
Language, edited by Everson, Stephen, 212-236. Cambridge: Cambridge University
Press.
"I examine key uses of 'to be' in Parmenides, Plato (especially *Republic V* and *Sophist*) and Aristotle. I argue against imposing modern distinctions (into predicative, existential or identity uses) on to the texts, showing that while Greek uses of *einai* may be partitioned into syntactically complete and incomplete (noted by Aristotle and perhaps at *Sophist* 255cd) the distinction was neither clear-cut nor perceived as philosophically important. I examine how these authors treated the inference from 'X is F' to 'X is' (compare that from 'X teaches French' to 'X teaches') and, more problematically (as Plato *Sophist* saw, correcting Parmenides and *Republic V*) from 'X is not F' to 'X is not'."


"This essay focuses on two key problems discussed and solved in the Middle Part: the Late-learners problem (the denial of predication), and the problem of false statement. I look at how each is, in a way, a problem about correct speaking; how each gave rise to serious philosophical difficulty, as well as being a source of eristic troublemaking; and how the ES offers a definitive solution to both. As I said above, the *Sophist* displays an unusually didactic approach: Plato makes it clear that he has important matter to impart, and he does so with a firm hand, especially on the two issues I've selected."


"In Plato's late dialogues *Sophist* and *Politicus* (*Statesman*), we find the chief speaker, the Eleatic Stranger, pursuing the task of definition with the help of the so-called method of division.

(...) However, there are major and well-known problems in evaluating the method as practised in the two dialogues, but especially so in the *Sophist*.

(...) I investigate below some of the many scholarly responses to this bewildering display of the much-vaulted method of division. I divide scholars into a 'no-faction', those who hold that we should not try to discern, in any or all of the dialogue's definitions, a positive outcome to the investigation into what sophistry is (Ryle, Cherniss), and a 'yes-faction': those who think an outcome is to be found (Moravcsik, Cornford, and others).(2) I shall conclude that in spite of the appearance of many answers (Moravcsik) or one answer (Cornford, Notomi), the reader is not to think that any of the definitions give the (or a) correct account of what sophistry is. But while I side with the no-faction, my reasons differ from those of Kyle and Cherniss, who, in their different ways, located the failure in the nature of the method of division. In my view the failure lies not, or not primarily, in the..."
method of division itself; but in the object chosen for discussion and definition. Sophistry, the sophist: these are not appropriate terms to be given, a serious definition, for the simple reason that a sophist is not a genuine kind that possesses an essence to be discerned. If we try to carve nature at the joints, we cannot hope to find that part of reality which is sophistry, for there is no such genuine kind as sophistry—especially not under the genus of techne, art, skill, or expertise." pp. 151-153).

(2) The views of Moravcsik, Cornford, and Notomi are discussed in the text of section III; those of the 'no-faction' in note 17.

(3) I use 'genuine kind' to indicate something with a wider extension than that of 'natural kind' familiar from Locke, Putnam, etc. I use it to mean the kind of entity which Plato would allow to have an ousia (essence) or phusis (nature) of its own (cf. Tht. 172b). Virtues, senses like hearing and sight, and crafts like angling would be recognized as genuine kinds in the intended sense."


Con il Sofista di Platone nella traduzione di Ermidio Martini


"In Plato's Sophist the mathematician Theodorus introduces to Socrates a man Theodorus says is a philosopher from Elea and a companion of the followers of Parmenides and Zeno. This Eleatic stranger, whose name is neither given nor asked for in the dialogue, is asked by Socrates to tell whether his compatriots thought of sophist, statesman, and philosopher as three classes or as fewer, and what names they used for such a class or classes.

In this paper I would like to pose and to explore the following questions: Why is there an Eleatic Stranger in Plato's Sophist? What if anything does this character say or imply or do that only a "companion of those around Parmenides and Zeno" (216a) would? I would also like to propose that central to these concerns is the question of how Plato read Parmenides' poem. Did Plato take the daimon's speech as a direct and literal
statement of Parmenides' views? What we can discover about this issue could be instructive in our considerations of how we might best read Parmenides." p. 215


"When Plato, in the Sophist, tries to turn down Parmenides' argumentation about the existence of non-being, he reaches a most unexpected conclusion: i.e., the Greek language, identifying "what is" to "the beings", makes it impossible to express what is not. Now, since the false discourse, proper to Sophists, supposes that "that which is not" exists, Plato examines the theories of the philosophers who came before him and discovers that, apart from the absolute nothingness on which he shares Parmenides's judgment, some kind of a non-being is possible, i.e., that of predication. True to his philosophy. Plato suggests a Form as warrant of such a "relative" non-being: the different (alterity, otherness). This Form, with its complementary Form, the identity, guarantees the definition of every reality."


Introduzione. Dopo sei tentativi insoddisfacenti di definire il sofista con il metodo diairetico, nella settima classificazione dicotomica Platone lo descrive come ‘produttore di immagini’. Tale caratterizzazione si scontra con le difficoltà sollevate dal ‘paradosso del falso’, l’argomentazione che cerca di provare l’inesistenza del falso. L’ampio excursus centrale del Sofista (236d5-264d9) affronta e risolve una delle versioni del paradosso del falso. Platone riconduce la fallacia dell’argomentazione a un'errata valutazione dei rapporti tra negazione ed esistenza, e correge lo sbaglio mediante una minuziosa analisi del significato della particella ‘non’.

La versione del paradosso del falso studiata nel Sofista può essere presentata, a meno di qualche inessenziale semplificazione, come un'argomentazione che esclude la falsità degli enunciati singolari affermativi: perché un enunciato singolare affermativo sia falso, bisogna che ciò che non è P sia detto essere P (‘P’ termine generale arbitrario), e quindi bisogna parlare di ciò che non esiste; ma è impossibile parlare di ciò che non esiste; di conseguenza, un enunciato singolare affermativo non può essere falso. Il passaggio critico di questa argomentazione si fonda sull'assunzione che la negazione predicativa implichi l'inesistenza: se x non è P, allora x non esiste.

Platone ritiene (giustamente) che tale assunzione sia errata, e adotta la strategia di svelare, e quindi confutare, il ragionamento sofistico che sta a fondamento di essa. A suo avviso, tale ragionamento muove dal presupposto che la particella ‘non’ indichi contrarietà: dato che la copula ha portata esistenziale, la verità di un predicato nominale ‘è P’ rispetto a un oggetto x richiede (tra l’altro) l’esistenza di x; se il ‘non’ indica contrarietà, la verità rispetto a x del predicato nominale negativo ‘non è P’ richiede la soddisfazione di condizioni contrarie (ossia antitetiche, il più possibile lontane) rispetto a quelle che garantiscono la verità di ‘è P’, e quindi richiede (tra l'altro) l’in’esistenza di x. Pertanto ‘non è P’ è vero solo di ciò che non esiste, e la negazione predicativa implica l'inesistenza.

Platone demolisce tale ragionamento attaccandone il presupposto: il ‘non’ non indica contrarietà, ma solo diversità. Più precisamente: la verità del predicato nominale negativo ‘non è P’ rispetto a un oggetto x richiede ‘solo’ che x sia diverso da ciascuno degli oggetti dei quali è vero il predicato nominale ‘è P’, ossia (poiché la predicazione ha portata esistenziale) che x sia diverso da ciascuno degli oggetti che esistono e partecipano della proprietà significata dal termine generale ‘P’.

Ora, però, niente vieta che tra gli oggetti diversi da tutti quelli che esistono e partecipano della proprietà significata da ‘P’ ve ne siano di esistenti. Pertanto ‘non è P’ può essere vero anche di ciò che esiste, e la negazione predicativa non implica l’inesistenza. L’assunzione sulla quale si fonda il paradosso del falso è confutata.

Platone non si limita a demolire il paradosso del falso, ma propone anche un’analisi della falsità degli enunciati singolari nella quale mette a frutto i risultati dello studio della negazione: ‘s è P’ è falso quando s (l’oggetto del quale ‘s è P’ parla) non è P, ossia quando s è diverso da ciascuno degli oggetti che esistono e partecipano della proprietà significata dal termine generale P.


10 di 26 19/06/2018, 20:08"
"In this journal, Band 71, Heft 3, pp. 257-282, Michael T. Ferejohn proposed to apply to the interpretation of certain parts of Plato's *Sophist* a methodological principle which I shall call 'principle of joint explanation': given the close relationship between Platonic and Aristotelian philosophy, in particular circumstances it's possible to use Aristotelian texts to interpret obscure or vague Platonic passages. In this paper I shall criticize Ferejohn's application of the 'principle of joint explanation' to the *Sophist* and his interpretation of Plato's analysis of negation and of its philosophical aims."

"*Sophist* 255c-e contains a division of beings into two categories rather than a distinction between the "is" of identity, existence, and/or predication; this emerges from an analysis of the argument that employs the division. The resulting division is the same as that ascribed to Plato in the indirect tradition among the so-called "unwritten doctrines"; there the two categories are attached to the One and the Indefinite Dyad."

"Conclusion. Perhaps it is not so bad if the later Plato sounds more like Aristotle. But there remains an enormous difference of ontology between Plato and Aristotle, if any of the reports of Plato's 'unwritten doctrines' can be believed. We have already noticed that Plato thinks the distinction between *beings* and *others* can be put by saying that while *beings* partake of both the Forms Standalone and Relative, *others* partake only of the Form Relative. The partition of *beings* into Standalone ones and Relative ones, as I have construed it, is a categorial scheme: the scheme of Old Academic Categories adverted to in the introductory section of this article. Hermodorus (or whoever) was there quoted as saying that Plato says 'of the beings, some are by virtue of themselves, and some are relative to something'; that much we have the Eleatic Stranger saying in 255c13-14. But Hermodorus gives
us examples, where the Stranger does not: a man and a horse are by virtue of themselves; large and small [things] are relative to things. If we unpack these examples, we presumably find ourselves saying: Bucephalus is a horse by virtue of himself; it is because he is Bucephalus that he is a horse, or, perhaps better, it is not because of some other thing that Bucephalus counts as a horse, whereas the fact that Bucephalus is large is something whose explanation requires us to introduce other, relatively smaller, horses which are the norm for horses as far as size goes. This then leads to categorizations of the terms *man* and *horse* under the heading Standalone and *large, small, good, and bad* under the heading Relative. And it seems a sound conjecture that where I am speaking of 'terms', Plato would speak of 'forms': the division is a division of forms, if that is right.

But that is not the end of the story. The Hermodorus text, along with other texts, (1) would have us believe that Plato rooted the two categories Standalone and Relative in two super-Forms that stood above all the others: the mysterious entities known as the One and the Indefinite Dyad, from which the more ordinary Forms derived as numbers. I think this, too, should be taken seriously. But that is a large undertaking, not to be entered on here." pp. 69-70

(1) Including, besides the others quoted in I, many in Aristotle, and also the rather strange and somewhat garbled stretch of text in Sextus Empiricus, *Adversus Mathematicos* x 257-276 purporting to report on the views of 'Pythagoras and his circle'.

---


Reprint of the original edition published in 1903


"The *Republic* and its predecessors interpret sophistry as the employment of reason in the service of the appetites (or spiritedness). But although the *Sophist* defines sophistry in several ways, none of which is entirely satisfactory, it never discusses this earlier approach. It proceeds entirely in terms of material products rather than value-laden goals. The tripartite soul is not mentioned, and attentiveness to difference of value is actively discouraged. At the same time, however, the dialogue abounds with allusions to the tripartite soul and value. My essay explores this tension and suggests a resolution that also explains the six preliminary definitions
and the purpose of the trilogy as a whole."


"A new, unifying account of Plato's discussion of the problems is introduced that places it squarely within the framework of his theory of Forms as it was understood by Aristotle and the ancient Platonists, instead of the linguistic frameworks in which it has been placed by modern scholars. The account takes the form of a continuous analytical summary of, and commentary on, the "Sophist", 236d9-259d8."


"In this paper I try to support the position (held by Proklos, Mallet, Burnet, and A. Taylor) that the "friends of the Forms" in Plato's Sophist (248a ff.) are Pythagorean philosophers. My main argument for this claim is the term 'synetheia' as used by the Eleatic Stranger at Sophist 248b8: as the passage Meno 76c-d (not taken into consideration by Ross in Plato's Theory of Forms p. 105) shows, this term may well denote acquaintance with persons, not only habituation. Hence, Plato has the Eleatic Stranger refer to philosophers with whom he, because of his Italian background, is well acquainted. For these philosophers, there are no other likely candidates than the Pythagoreans."


"The theory of falsity and negation in Sophist 254 D-263 D contains the idea that (a) rest does not participate in movement, nor movement in rest (254 D-255 A ; 255 A-E ; 255 E-257 A), because (b) this would turn their opposite natures into each other. Only the first part of (a) is true and the reason given for it is not sound. The invalidation of the argument may be repaired by dropping the false part of (a), that movement does not partake of rest. Further, (b) stands on its own and could be
dropped without consequences for the construction of the theory. So, although (a) + (b) plays a part in the foundations of the theory, it is not fundamental in the sense that its unsoundness would shake these foundations: what is argued for with the help of it remains valid."


"The passage appears to predicate not-being of a Form. Because "being" admits of both complete and incomplete uses we can find, in the present passage, the verb being used in both senses to show that *to me on* is indefinite in quantity with regard to each form."


"Plato's claim that a form, F, can be predicated of itself is not a claim about causal explanation. To say that F-ness is F is to say something about the being F-ness is, which is being F, something F indeed. That is why it can be called F and that is what we do in saying that F-ness is F. (Evidence is drawn from *Sophist* and *Phaedo*.)."


"The Stranger in the Sophist is careful to distinguish false statements from elliptical relational assertions which sometimes appear to resemble them."

Il *Sofista* platonico e la sua fortuna nella filosofia contemporanea.


"In defining what Being is in the *Sophist*, Plato uses the verb to be in one sense only, that of participation. There is neither an "is" of existence nor one of identity."


"In view of much recent discussion of the passage in the *Sophist* in which Plato discusses the relations among the forms, (*) it may not be inappropriate to examine this passage from the point of view of modern logical theory. There is indeed already one such study by Karl Dürr, (**) who attempts to represent the relations among the forms within the framework of classes in *Principia Mathematica*. Since we consider some of these relations to be modal in character, we cannot accept the adequacy of this framework for this purpose.

In what follows we shall examine the connection between relations among the forms and the relation of participation between forms and individuals (section 2), the peculiar character of forms corresponding to relative terms (section 3), and finally the formal representation of the described logical structures (section 4). The main point which emerges is that the problems discussed by Plato are closely related to difficult problems in current logical theory."


77. ———. 1996. "The Literary Form of the *Sophist*." In *Form and Argument in Late Plato*, edited by Gill, Christopher and McCabe, Mary Margaret, 135-152. Oxford:
"In Sophist 247d8-e4, the Eleatic Stranger presents an image of Being as *dunamis tou poiein kai tou pathein*. This paper aims to investigate the meaning of this *horos* and to establish the value set on *dunamis*. A comparison with other Platonic passages where the formula occurs (Phaedrus and Theaetetus) reveals that the Sophist provides a double change: on the one hand, the *dunamis* moves to the field of Being in an unprecedented way, on the other hand the formula is not ascribed to Hippocrates or Protagoras anymore, but it is introduced by a protagonist who intends to defend it. A reading of the previous and following arguments shows that the *horos* can thoroughly help to understand the dialogue's structure and argumentation. Not only useful for defining Being, it also permits to explain the *koinonia* of the Kinds and to lay the foundation for the theory of non-being. Finally, it proves an efficient mean of definitely going beyond sophistry by replacing it with a real and philosophical ontology."

"In the famous passage Sophist 248E6-249A2, the Eleatic Stranger suggests that "real being" is somehow inseparable from intellect or "intellectual motion." Modern interpretations of this passage either hold that Plato wants to redefine real reality to include all things that are in motion or that he wants to include one type of motion..."
within the really real. Both of these interpretations have serious difficulties. According to the older Platonic interpretation of the passage which I shall defend, Plato wants to claim that the inseparability of intellect and real reality means that eternal objects of thinking could not exist without their being eternally thought."


"Plato's *Sophist* consists of seven definitions of the sophistic art that, with the exception of the last, reveal mostly fragmentary aspects of the essence of sophistry. The sixth *logos* (226 B 1-231 B 8) depicts the art as noble. Here the sophist emerges as someone who is able to identify contradictory arguments and thereby to remove hindrances to truth. But his activity can be seen as an intellectual game devoid of seriousness because vague as to its intentions. This *logos* thus facilitates the transition to the final definition, which portrays the sophist as unable to teach because he lacks true knowledge."


"In this paper I will argue that dichotomous division yields a good definition of a target kind only in the simplest and most uncontroversial cases. Plato also uses division in defining more complex kinds, but then it serves as a preliminary strategy, which undertakes to expose some puzzle about the kind under investigation, which the enquirers must resolve in some other way, or at least in conjunction with some other method.

We have trouble catching the sophist, because we find him, not at the end of a single branch, but at many different termini, allowing multiple definitions. We find the statesman at a single terminus, but he has many rivals there, who claim to share his expertise; the definition of the statesman reached by dichotomous division, though very detailed, turns out to be much too general. These disappointing results serve a purpose. Plato wants us to see that something about the sophist explains why he turns up all over the map, and that something about the statesman explains why he has company at the terminus. In each dialogue, reflection on the peculiar outcome of division enables the enquirers to recognize something about the kind in question which helps to explain the peculiarity. The enquirers aim to discover a real definition that applies to all and only instances that fall under a kind, and which specifies its essence -- the feature or complex of features that explains why in the case of the sophist he turns up in too many places, and why in the case of the statesman he is not alone at the terminus." (p. 173)


"In part one of this essay I defend the thesis that the "greatest genera" of the "Sophist" are not the metaphysical ideas of the earlier dialogues, and that the "participation" of these genera in each other is to be understood from a linguistic or logical, rather than metaphysical, perspective. The genera are like concepts, not essences. In part two I argue that the Stranger's doctrine of the genera means that they cannot be unified, self-predicative, separable, and stable; the doctrine deteriorates for reasons internal to itself. I suggest throughout that the Stranger's philosophical orientation is more "subjectivistic" than that of (Plato's) Socrates; unlike the ideas, the genera are subject to the soul's intellectual motion and productive capacity. Finally, I suggest that there is no convincing reason for holding that the Stranger's views are superior to those of Socrates."


Heidegger's lecture course at the University of Marburg in the Winter Semester of 1924-25.
Translated by Richard Rojcewicz and André Schuwer.
Original German edition: *Platon, Sophistes* - Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1992, edited by Ingeborg Schüssler (Gesamtausgabe, II, 19)


"There is an influential view, developed during the last fifteen years, concerning the relationship between the concept of existence and the notion of Being in Plato's *Sophist.* (a) Three distinguishable claims are involved in this account:
(1) Plato does not wish to isolate the existential use of 'to be' from its other uses.
(2) Plato's discussion of being concerns syntactically incomplete uses of 'to be,' not syntactically complete uses of the verb. (b)
(3) The concept of existence plays no role in the philosophical problems discussed or their solutions. Plato operates with a "scheme of concepts which lacks or ignores an expression for 'exist.'" (c)
I have no quarrel with (1). But (1) must be clearly distinguished from (3) since Plato may have failed to mark out the existential use of 'to be' while nevertheless using the word to mean existence with this latter concept playing an important role in the argument. In this paper I will try to show that there are no good reasons to accept (2) or (3). Although I shall deal with points raised by John Malcolm and Michael Frede, the focus will be on Professor Owen's paper. The first section will
argue that Owen's interpretation of the *Sophist* is untenable and the second section will show that his arguments for (2) and (3) are unsuccessful. Finally, the third section explains how the position I defend is compatible with Plato's employment of negative existentials.

The position I defend is that the concept of existence does not monopolize but is part of the notion of Being in the *Sophist.*


(b) Owen, pp. 225, 236, 240-41. Frede makes the still stronger claim that every use of 'to be' in the *Sophist* is incomplete (Frede, pp. 37, 40, 51). I discuss Frede's interpretation in an appendix.

(c) Owen, p. 263.


"I argue that the notion of 'communion of Forms' in Plato's "Sophist" is intended to account for the truth and not for the meaningfulness of statements; and that the relation of communion which holds between Forms is identical with the relation of participation which connects individuals to Forms, and that no other relations constitute communion."


"According to what I will call the 'new' interpretation, the meaning of `being' which plays an important role in the philosophical argument of the Sophist is not 'existence' but 'being such and such,' what is expressed by syntactically incomplete uses of 'to be.' (a) In an earlier paper I claimed, to the contrary, that 'being' is used to mean existence in the Sophist's argument, although its meaning corresponds to the other uses of the verb as well. (b) Against the new interpretation I argued as follows:

(1) The aporiai of 237-41 are solved in 251-59 by rejecting 237-41's assumption that 'not-being' means 'contrary to being' and claiming that 'not-being' instead means 'different from being.'

(2) On the new interpretation, 'the contrary of being' means 'what is (predicatively) nothing.'

(3) The aporia of 240c-241b cannot be given a coherent interpretation if 'not-being', as there used, is understood to mean 'what is (predicatively) nothing.'

(4) Hence the meaning of 'not-being' required by the new interpretation is unacceptable, and the new interpretation should be rejected.
In a recent note John Malcolm has replied to this argument and raised some other objections to my paper. (c) Here, I will limit myself to explaining why Malcolm's objections have no force, and why his reply to my argument simply exchanges one absurdity for others. p. 121


(c) "Remarks on an Incomplete Rendering of Being in the Sophist," Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie (1985), pp. 162-65. Ensuing references to Malcolm will be to this paper.


"Plato's solution to the problem of falsehood carries a notorious reputation which sometimes overshadows a variety of interesting developments in Plato's philosophy. One of the less-noted developments in the Sophist is a nascent conception of truth which casts truth as a particular relation between language and the world. Cornford and others take Plato's account of truth to involve something like correspondence; some find the origin of Aristotle's "correspondence" account of truth in Plato's Sophist. But all this assumes a lot about Plato, much less Aristotle. For one, it assumes that to claim that the statement 'Theaetetus is sitting' is true is to claim that it is true because it corresponds with the fact that Theaetetus is sitting. Other scholars have been reluctant to accept Cornford's view, but few offer any explanation of what sort of account of truth we might ascribe to Plato by the end of the Sophist. Tarski has argued that truth is a simpler notion than that of correspondence. In fact, he claims his own "conception" of truth is similar to the classical conception we find in Aristotle's Metaphysics -- a conception of truth formulated in Greek in much the same way Plato formulates it in the Sophist. Unfortunately, Tarski never sufficiently explains what it is about the classical conception that makes it closer to his own. I argue that Tarski is generally right about the ancient conception of truth, but this is not to claim that Tarski's own conception is in Plato. By interpreting Plato's solution to the paradox of not-being and his solution to the problem of falsehood, I argue that Plato's account of truth implies a simpler notion of truth than correspondence. I outline various types of correspondence theory and show that none of these fits what Plato says about truth, syntax, and meaning in the Sophist."


"Interpret the *Theaetetus* and the *Sophist* as Plato's first move in the project of reshaping his metaphysics, with the double aim of avoiding problems raised in the *Parmenides* and applying his general theory to the philosophy of nature. The classical doctrine of Forms is subject to revision, but Plato's fundamental metaphysics is preserved in the *Philebus* as well as in the *Timaeus*. The most important change is the explicit enlargement of the notion of Being to include the nature of things that change. This reshaping of the metaphysics is prepared in the *Theaetetus* and *Sophist* by an analysis of sensory phenomena in the former and, in the latter, a new account of Forms as a network of mutual connections and exclusions. The *Theaetetus* deals with becoming and flux but not with being; that topic is reserved for Eleatic treatment in the *Sophist*. But the problems of falsity and Not-Being, formulated in the first dialogue, cannot be resolved without the considerations of truth and Being, reserved for the later dialogue. That is why there must be a sequel to the *Theaetetus*.

"One of the great questions that Plato considers in the *Sophist* is that of the number and nature of real things (242C5-6). The protagonist of the dialogue, an Eleatic stranger, raises problems for both the pluralist (243D6-244B5) and the monist (244B6-246E5) without resolving them and then turns to the battle of gods and giants, the battle between those who hold that "body and being are the same" (246B1) and those who hold that "true being is certain intelligible and bodiless Forms" (246B7-8). What the one holds is the logical contrary, not the contradictory, of what the other holds; so it is possible that they are both wrong. This seems in fact to be the Eleatic's conclusion (249C10-D4), although by the time he gets to the friends of the Forms the property under examination has shifted from corporeality to mutability. The Eleatic stranger presents the friends of the Forms with an interesting paradox (248D1-E5). This is my subject. The friends of the Forms hold
that real being "is always invariable and constant" (248A11-12). But being is known (248D2). And on the hypothesis that to know is to act on something, that which is known is acted upon (248D10-E1). Further, to be acted upon is to be changed (248E3-4). Therefore, since being is known, it is changed (248E3-4). But this conclusion contradicts their original contention." p. 1


"In his *An ambiguity in the "Sophist,"* Gregory Vlastos showed that statements about Forms in the central section of the "Sophist" may be either 'ordinary' or 'Pauline' predications. This paper refutes Vlastos's claim that Plato was "utterly unaware" of this ambiguity. 255c-e is taken to be the crucial passage here. This paper adapts the interpretation given by Michael Frede of this passage and shows that the sense of Plato's partaking-terms (which are used to analyze statements about Forms) switches from a 'Pauline' to an 'ordinary' usage at a definite point in the text which falls at the end of the crucial passage. The context and content of the passage determine that the switch is deliberate on Plato's part. An analysis of an earlier passage, 250a-e, confirms this point."


"In the *Sophist*, Plato demonstrates the application of two different types of dialectics: diairesis and the method to investigate the *megista gene*. The aim of this paper is to reveal the methodological unity behind this pronounced duality. The common origin of both methods can be found in the aporetic part of the *Parmenides*. The application of that type of dialectics is restricted in the *Sophist* to its adequate field and -- in the middle part of the dialogue-- a variation introduced to solve the paradoxes of the *Paramides*. Meinwald's non-aporetic interpretation of the *Parmenides* is discussed but rejected."


"(I) A close analysis of "Sophist" 257-259 yields a new interpretation for Plato's doctrine of the "parts of otherness" there. I show how it defines a sense of non-being different from, and stronger than, that earlier defined by otherness itself (in "Sophist" 251-257), and I claim that this explains why Plato twice specifies this doctrine, rather than that, as the explanation of non-being he needs to refute Parmenides (258b and 258e). Next I explore the philosophical force of this doctrine of "parts of otherness". First (II) I show its logical role in analyzing the sense of negative predication statements, using comparisons with Wittgenstein's early analysis of negation. Then (III) I treat its metaphysical role, defining that element of negativity in becoming that corresponds to Aristotle's principle of "privation" ("Physics" I). A brief addendum argues that Plotinus read Plato's doctrine of the "parts" in the same way as developed here."


"Reply to J. Malcolm's critical response (Some cautionary remarks on the "is"/"teaches" analogy, 2006) to L. Brown's reading of the verb "to be" in Greek (Being in the Sophist. A syntactical inquiry, 1986 and The verb "to be" in Greek philosophy: some remarks, 1994) generally and Plato's Sophist in particular. Malcolm fails to show that Brown was wrong, but Brown was indeed wrong: her central thesis -- that there is a semantic continuity between complete and incomplete uses of einai-- lacks the textual support it requires from the Sophist, and a central argument of that dialogue tells against it." 


"An examination of Sophist 247 D-E suggests that Plato has the Stranger articulate a definition of being according to which whatever has the power to act or be affected is a being. He does this by distinguishing relations of causation from relations of change. On this view, Plato himself endorses the position put forward at 247 D-E."

"Firstly, this article presents through a minute analysis Parmenides' ontological doctrine on not-being taken from his Poem. Moreover, it handles with a period in Plato's thought that could be adequately qualified as a Parmenidean period of his not-being ontology. Nevertheless, Plato, in his search for a precise and true definition of the sophist, is forced to abandon his former way of thinking about not-being. That is the main content of his dialogue entitled The Sophist. This dialogue defends another meaning of not-being. For Parmenides not-being just meant nothing. Besides not-being as nothing, now for Plato there is a positive sense of not-being, which is the different or the other."


Summary. "(I) The notion of an is of identity in English. Some passages from Plato suggesting the existence of the comparable notion of a special estin of identity in Greek. (II) What in particular would lead Plato to recognize such a special sense of estin? Forms, participation, and predication. In the account of ordinary singular predications, a predicate 'Y' is true of a subject X just in case X participates in the form the Y associated with. (III) Self-participation. If nothing can participate in itself, then for any forms X and Y, X participates in Y and so is Y only if X is not Y. Even if self-participation is allowed, still in the majority of cases a subject is not what it participates in. The difficulty for all theories of predication which wish to explain how a thing can be something which it also is not. (IV) The is of identity re-examined. Some fallacies which might support the notion, and some arguments against it. (V) Sophist 255e11-256d10. Plato does not explicitly recognize an estin of identity. Four competing, "equally best" accounts of the grammatical theory he may implicitly be invoking: (i) the estin of identity; (ii) relational terms; (iii) the definite article; (iv) the not of nonidentity. (VI) Conclusion. The notion of a special estin of identity has little basis in Plato's text."


"The general analysis of negation in the Sophist and a detailed examination of Sophist 257b3-c3 show that Plato distinguished sentences that assert non-identity, e.g. "Motion is not identical" with assorted other Forms, from sentences of negative predication proper, e.g. "Helen is not wise". Plato is not concerned either with truth-conditions of negative sentences or with supplying the details that would give a materially adequate account of such sentences. Instead, he is concerned almost exclusively with stating what is required if we are to understand a negative predicate and if the negative predicate is to have a determinate meaning."

On the website "Theory and History of Ontology" (www.ontology.co)

Annotated Bibliography on Plato's *Sophist*. Second Part: M- Z

Plato: Bibliographical Resources on Selected Dialogues

Plato's *Parmenides* and the Dilemma of Participation

Semantics, Predication, Truth and Falsehood in Plato's *Sophist*

Plato's *Cratylus* and the Problem of the "Correctness of Names" (under construction)

Index of the Section: Ancient Philosophy from the Presocratics to the Hellenistic Period