

# The Grounds of *Logos*: The Interweaving of Forms

Christopher Shields

Plato's view of a 'meaning' is simple. The name 'circle' which I now utter *means* the Form 'Circle', an eternal and unchanging object of thought. —Francis Cornford (1960)

## 1 Interwoven Forms and the Simple Semantic Theory

Cornford's easy assimilation of Forms to meanings is understandable. After all, says Plato, "*Logos* comes to be for us because of the interweaving of Forms with one another" (*Sph.* 259e5-6; *dia gar tēn allēlōn tōn eidōn sumplokēn ho logos gegonen hēmin*). Assuming for now something we will come to query, that the *logos* he has in view here is a *statement*, Plato's view about the relation between statements and Forms may indeed seem simple, perhaps, some may suspect, even simple minded: the semantic values of words making up the statements of our natural languages are Forms, with the result that statements come about when we combine those Forms, those meanings, in suitable ways with one another. So, just as Plato

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In his stimulating, philosophically adroit exposition of a paradox of knowledge and the mutability of Forms in Plato's *Sophist*, David Keyt (1969, p. 13) comments more fully in a similar vein on the close connection between thought and language in Plato's thought: "Knowledge, a Platonist might argue, implies thought; thought is simply 'a dialogue of the soul with itself' (*Sph.* 263D6-264B4); so thought implies language. Language in turn requires general names with fixed meanings; or, to put it another way, it requires fixed concepts to which general names are attached. But this is one of the roles that Forms play in Plato's philosophy ... the Form of horse is the meaning of the word 'horse'." Because Keyt's observation provided the initial impetus for the investigations leading to the present chapter, it is an especially fitting pleasure to offer this essay to him, with gratitude and admiration, in a volume dedicated to his honor. Keyt's unremittingly philosophical engagement with the works of Plato and Aristotle has served as a model to many—and will, no doubt, continue to do so for many years to come.

C. Shields (✉)

Lady Margaret Hall, University of Oxford, Oxford, OX2 6QA, UK  
e-mail: Christopher.shields@lmh.ox.ac.uk

says, *logos* comes about for us only by the interweaving of Forms. His weaving metaphor,<sup>1</sup> one echoed in several key passages of Aristotle,<sup>2</sup> is, on this approach, transparent and immediately intelligible: propositions are the whole cloth woven of the semantic threads of Forms. As different weaves yield different patterns from the same stock of thread, so different propositions result from different weavings of the same Forms. Language, in its indefinite variety and unending complexity, finds its underlying semantic structure in the woof and warp of Forms.

If Cornford's appeal to the semantic character is for these reasons understandable, then it is also distressingly quick and monodimensional. For Plato's remark about the interweaving of Forms has impressed his readers as no less elusive than rich.<sup>3</sup> Even if we assume, in keeping with one central strain of scholarship on Plato's *Sophist*, that the *logos* Plato mentions here is something broadly semantic in character, we are not licensed by Plato's contention to infer directly that Forms are meanings, and propositions the tapestries made of them. Indeed, as I shall argue, Plato's point of view about the relation of Forms to meanings in this passage is both less direct and more consequential than Cornford's simple, direct assimilation of Forms to meanings would suggest. For, importantly, Plato regards it as an immediate corollary of his view that if Forms had not been woven together with one another, our language and thought would be bereft of meaning; but that is to say, then, that if the Forms were not interwoven, language, and indeed thought, would not exist at all. So, according to Plato, if the Forms did not weave together with one another, you could not be reading this paragraph, as, undoubtedly, you are. Hence, Plato may conclude that the reader of this essay tacitly accepts not only the existence of Forms but also their freestanding semantic interrelations, whatever those may be. In this sense, Plato's contention constitutes an existence argument for Forms, an indirect one to be sure, but an existence argument all the same.

Indeed, if we trace this same train of thought a bit further, we can appreciate why Plato intimates that we must all acknowledge the interweaving of Forms lest we fall into an immediately self-undermining semantic endeavor: if Plato is right about the interweaving of Forms, then any purported denial of his dictum makes sense only by implicitly granting the thesis it seeks to undercut. This, presumably, is what Plato means when he contends that to deny the interweaving of forms is to speak nonsense—literally, in his idiom, to say nothing at all (*legoien an ouden*; *Sph.* 252b5).<sup>4</sup> The same contention seems more or less expressly advanced by Plato when he argues that those who deny the communion (*koinonia*; 252b9) of Forms “need not wait for us to refute them: as the saying goes, their foe comes from within their own household” (*Sph.* 252c5-7). He castigates those who deny communion and goes so far as to liken them to the ventriloquist Eurycles,<sup>5</sup> because “they undermine themselves, carrying about a voice of contradiction from within” (252c7-9). Their view, he concludes, is in fact the most utterly ludicrous of all (*panôn katagelastotata*; 252b8).

This is decidedly strong language from Plato, language consonant with the force of his convictions about the relations of Forms with one another. In view of these considerations, Plato's claim about the interweaving of Forms emerges as arrestingly ambitious, even radical.<sup>6</sup> After all, as he frequently shows himself well aware, not everyone is prepared to acknowledge the existence of Forms, and so for such people, posterior questions concerning their relations with one another simply do

not arise. Even so, Plato implies, Form deniers implicitly embrace the commitments they eschew, insofar as their very denials rely upon the obtaining of the commitments they seek to reject. Such, then, is the richness of Plato's remark.

The elusiveness of the remark is reflected in the variety of interpretations it has elicited from Plato's exegetes and critics. Even within the semantic interpretation at its most circumscribed,<sup>7</sup> scholars have understood Plato to be making a variety of distinct, nonequivalent points, all in different ways concerning the requisites of sentence meaning. Upon reviewing these understandings, it becomes clear that only one interpretation does justice to the precision and compactness of Plato's text. It also becomes clear, for allied reasons, that the semantic approach itself does at best partial justice to Plato's conception of the fundamentality of Forms to thought. What is left unexplained on this approach is the still more elusive question of *why* Forms should be required for sentence meaning. What is left unexplained, in fact, is precisely what interweaving (*sumplokê*) should consist in.

When we explore this question, I contend, we come to a deeper appreciation of Plato's metaphysics of meaning: he thinks that Forms comprise an *intensional sense structure*,<sup>8</sup> and that this structure moves us to a commitment well beyond anything one might regard from the standpoint of pure logic, or indeed from the standpoint of semantic theory narrowly conceived, in the manner of Cornford, as involving Forms as meanings and statements as the combinations of such meanings. Plato's suggestion is rather that Forms, as meanings, must stand in metaphysical relations to one another, relations including, among others, necessary cross-predication, necessary exclusion, and necessary super- and subordination. It is this structure, I will suggest, to which he alludes with his metaphor of *interweaving*.

If this proves correct, then an immediate corollary results: Plato's contention regarding the interweaving of Forms constitutes a transcendental argument for their existence. Were there no Forms, language and thought would be impossible; language and thought are actual and so possible; hence, Forms, as the necessary grounds of this possibility, exist.

Although this *existence* argument does seem to animate Plato's claim about the interweaving of Forms in the *Sophist*, this is not his first concern when characterizing their interweaving with one another. Rather, he means to establish that they do in fact have, of necessity, freestanding metaphysical and semantic relations with one another. This is a point some writers in the semantic tradition have failed to appreciate, partly, again, because they have failed to attend to the precision of Plato's language.

## 2 Positioning Plato's Remark

Plato's contention regarding the interweaving of Forms occurs within the larger context of his investigations in the *Sophist* into division and definition, predication and existence, negation and falsehood, and, more generally, into the parceling of reality into kinds.

In the long middle section of the dialogue, after the preliminary attempt to define the sophist by means of the method of division (*Sph.* 218e-231e), Plato engages in

some of his most intricate and demanding discussion of the notions of *being (to on)* and *nonbeing (to mê on)*, both individually and in relation to one another, and then again with respect to their roles in predication, both positive and negative. In this section, he launches a series of abstract, sometimes abstruse arguments all circling a series of tightly knit topics:

- Problems pertaining to nonbeing and what is not (237d-241c)
- Problems pertaining to being and what is, which are held to be no less demanding than those pertaining to what is not (242-251e)
- Problems brought about by some “late learners,” about whom Plato is disparaging, pertaining to the possibility of saying that one thing is many things (251a-c)
- Problems pertaining to the mixing of kinds, including five very important kinds (*megistê genê*), namely, being, motion, rest, sameness, and difference (251d-257a)
- Problems about negative expressions, difference, statements (*logoi*), names and verbs, appearances, and, once again, true and false statements (257b-264b)

In the middle of this last section, the Eleatic Visitor reminds Theaetetus that it had been established earlier that some Forms combine with one another, while others do not (259d9-26a3; cf. 251d5-252e8, 255e8-257a2; cf. 254c4-5). He does so, he suggests, to underscore his view that the sophist’s failure to show false speech and thought impossible results *inter alia* from his failure to grasp the ways in which nonbeing (*to mê on*) can be mixed with other Forms (260b2-c4).

It is in this connection that he introduces his contention about interweaving. It makes sense for him to do so, because he has been tussling with the sophist about being and nonbeing and also about positive and negative predication. Given that he has charged the sophist with failing to come to terms with the manner in which Forms can and cannot mix with one another, he has implicitly accepted the assumption that they do mix in some ways and in other ways not, and, indeed, that their doing so is required for discourse of any kind. He then introduces a striking, sweeping claim about interweaving in general. We may label this claim, with Ackrill (1955/1997, p. 72), statement (S):

(S) *Logos* comes to be for us because of the interweaving of Forms with one another (259e5-6).

Immediately noteworthy is the fact that (S) occurs as a premise in a truncated argument. The relevant passage, taken together, is:

The untwining (*to dialuein*) of each thing from every other is the complete disappearance of all *logoi*. For *logos* comes to be for us because of the interweaving of Forms with one another (259e4-6).

As the Eleatic Visitor would have it, (S) provides a reason for thinking that without the interweaving (*sumplokê*) of Forms with one another, *logoi* would be annihilated, presumably because the lack of interweaving would result in the isolation of each Form from every other, where such isolation precludes the existence of *logoi*. Thus, untwining is sufficient for the disappearance of all *logoi*, while interweaving is necessary and sufficient for communion (*koinonia*), which we will provisionally

introduce as the contrary of untwining (*to dialuein*).<sup>9</sup> So, interweaving is necessary for *logos*.

What is *logos* in this connection (*Sph.* 259e6; cf. 260a5 and 260a7)? A fair bit turns on the question, but we cannot be confident about its answer on narrowly lexical grounds: *logos* might, in principle, mean any number of different things, ranging from various semantic items in the neighborhood of *meaning* to various non-semantic notions, including, for example, *reasoning*, *reckoning*, *account*, or *explanation*. Or, it might simply mean something linguistic, like *sentence*. Crucially, even if we suppose, as I shall urge, that it means *statement*, that too is already ambiguous, straddling *sentence*, regarded as a token or type of some natural language utterance, or *proposition*, taken as something expressed by a sentence in the indicative mood, perhaps also the sort of thing able to be believed, hoped, or simply thought. To complicate matters, suppose that *logos* does mean *statement*. Then there is a further question as to what precisely we lose if Forms fail to interweave with one another. That is, one might naturally think that if *logos* means *statement*, and the unweaving of Forms makes *logos* disappear, then Plato must finally be understanding interweaving as necessary for sentence *meaning*. Possibly, however, he might be thinking not that interweaving is necessary for *meaning* but rather for truth and falsity; this is because the abolition of truth and falsity would equally result in the lack of *logos* understood as an assertoric statement. For, one might reasonably suppose that if there is no truth or falsity, then neither are there true or false sentences, with the further result that there are not assertions of truth or falsity, and so no assertions at all.<sup>10</sup>

As I have suggested, we cannot determine this matter before reflecting on the sorts of considerations Plato adduces on behalf of (S). Indeed, in the abstract, without exploring the context of the utterance, we cannot know what Plato takes himself to be saying. Consequently, the semantic interpretation, however initially natural and finally apt it may prove, cannot be assumed without argument. It is really just one of several possible approaches. Awareness of this fact, in turn, should prepare us to appreciate that the semantic interpretation is itself already open to a variety of nonequivalent formulations.

### 3 A Problem for Plato

One way to assess Plato's intended meaning is to reflect upon an important problem that has captured the attention of his readers. This problem pertains to the example Plato employs to illustrate and support (S). He says (261e12-263b11):

Eleatic Visitor: I'll say a statement (*logos*) for you by putting together a thing (*pragma*) with an action (*praxis*) through a noun (*onoma*) and a verb (*rhema*). You then tell me what it is a statement of.

Theaetetus: I'll do so to the best of my ability.

Eleatic Visitor: "Theaetetus sits." —Not a long statement to be sure?

Theaetetus: No, a rather modest one.

- Eleatic Visitor: Your job is to tell me both about whom the statement is and whose it is.
- Theaetetus: Clearly it is about me and it is mine.
- Eleatic Visitor: How about another?
- Theaetetus: What sort?
- Eleatic Visitor: “Theaetetus (with whom I am currently conversing) flies.”
- Theaetetus: And this too one should say belongs to no one other than me and is about me.

Plato’s prime illustration of a *logos* is then<sup>11</sup>:

- (I): Theaetetus sits (*Theaitêtos kathêtai*).

There is, however, this problem: Plato speaks of the interweaving of *Forms with one another* (*sumplokê eidôn tôn allêlôn*), in the plural, and yet his illustration evidently mentions just one Form. As Guthrie tidily sums up the situation: “This sentence has caused great difficulty, for at 263a the statement ‘Theaetetus is sitting’ is given as an example of a *logos*, yet it exhibits not a combination of Forms but of a single Form with a particular” (Guthrie 1978, p. 161). More precisely, and in the present context more pressingly, according to the *simple meaning theory* of Cornford, Forms are the meanings of words, while statements are interwoven meanings, that is, interwoven Forms. So, (I) seems a wholly inadequate illustration of (S). Indeed, it takes only a little reflection to see that matters are still worse than Guthrie and others have suggested: on the simple meaning theory of Forms, (I) positively refutes (S). Plato introduces (I) as an especially clear instance of a *logos*, where every *logos* is meant to involve the interweaving of Forms. Yet (I) does not—again according to the simple meaning theory of Forms—involve the interweaving of anything with anything else and certainly not the interweaving of some Forms with any other Forms. It seems to follow that (S) is false and shown to be so by (I).

From this perspective, (I) is much worse than an inept illustration. It seems a case of Plato exhibiting a rather bald confusion with respect to his own theory of Forms. If so, Plato’s introduction of (I) reflects rather badly on his understanding of his own position. It is not surprising, then, to find William and Martha Kneale contending in their *Development of Logic* that Plato “never dealt clearly with the distinction between singular and general statements” (1962, p. 20). What we see in the interplay of (S) and (I) is simply an unhappily stark symptom of this lack of clarity.

At any rate, we should conclude something along these lines if we adopt the simple meaning theory. Even so, commentators working within the tradition of semantic interpretation have responded to this problem fairly indulgently, not least by understating its severity. Some have apologized for Plato implicitly, by suppressing his view in an undertranslation of his Greek (Cornford 1960, p. 300), while others have apologized for him explicitly, by treating him as if he had somehow unwittingly *overstated* his own position regarding the interweaving of Forms (Ross 1951, p. 115). As one example of undertranslation, Cornford omits “with one another” (*allêlôn*; *Sph.* 259e5) and proceeds to represent Plato as adhering to a weakened version of (S), namely, what we may call (S’): “He has said that ‘all discourse depends on the weaving together of Forms’ (259E), *i.e.* at least one Form enters into the meaning of any statement” (Cornford 1960, p. 300).

Cornford's omission seems a wholly misplaced expedient. Not only does it fail to represent accurately what Plato actually says, but it purchases him very little in the process. For even if we assume that he had really intended (S') and not (S), we will find ourselves coming upon our same problem only a little downstream: an identity statement is no less a *logos* than a singular predication. Consider, that is, statements of the form "George Eliot is Mary Anne Evans." This, no less than (I), qualifies as a statement (*logos*). Yet it violates (S') as surely as (I) violates (S) (still, of course, on the assumption of the simple semantic theory). Nor will it do to rule identity statements out of consideration by fiat. For in that event, we might as easily have disallowed singular statements from consideration by the same sort of fiat. Nothing would be gained in either case by our doing so. On the contrary, we would only have succeeded in misrepresenting Plato's actual view.

Much the same can be said about an instance of a second apologetic strategy, one best typified by Ross. On his approach, it is acknowledged forthrightly that (S) is false. Still, on this approach, its falsity is to be treated as a mere overstatement of a defensible view in its proximity. The correct view, Plato's true view, is rather (S'') that "all subjects of statements except proper names stand either for Forms or for things described by Forms" (Ross 1951, p. 115). The thought would then be that for any statement, with the exception of those with a proper name in the subject position, the subject either stands for a Form or at least for something described by a Form.

Somehow Ross' view seems wrongly put by him. For even proper names may refer to objects, to use his idiom, described by Forms. Indeed, (I) seems to be one such case: "Theaetetus" refers to Theaetetus, and he is "described," as Ross says, by the Form of Being Seated. Perhaps, however, Ross means rather, somewhat more periphrastically, "Forms will always be implicated in any *logos*. Either the subject will stand for a Form (e.g., 'Justice is a virtue. '), or, failing that, as when the subject is a proper name, it will stand for something that is described by a Form (e.g., 'Solon is just.')." If so, then, first, his view will tend to collapse into Cornford's, and, more importantly, it will in any case fall prey to the same objection. That is, (S''), no less than (S'), is forced to treat statements involving identity as non-statements. Yet an identity statement is a *logos* no less than a singular or a general predication is a *logos*. So, once again, the corrected view offered to Plato is incorrect and is shown to be so by the existence of identity statements. So, again, not much is gained by attempting to render Plato's view acceptable by the device of underrepresentation. The net result merely postpones the day of reckoning. Strikingly, neither Cornford nor Ross adheres to the precision of Plato's actual statement of (S) and neither, in consequence, comes to terms with it. So, ultimately, neither serves Plato's final aim at all well, because each in his own way makes his view vague or imprecise.

## 4 Introducing Precision

Ackrill introduced precision into the discussion of (S) when he refused to countenance these deflationary strategies. Although he did not advance the point about identity statements introduced above against Cornford and Ross, his objections to

them were very much in keeping with this sort of response. When surveying their views, Ackrill contended, correctly, that Plato's (I) illustrates not the thesis that every meaningful sentence presupposes the existence of at least one Form, or the thesis that except for statements with proper names a Form always plays some role describing some subject, but rather that *logos* comes about because of the interweaving of Forms—in the plural—with one another (Ackrill 1955/1997, pp. 72–74). He then counseled, again correctly, that rather than rushing to rescue Plato from an unfortunate infelicity of illustration, we might instead work harder to understand how Plato might suppose his illustration to fit his principle. In short, Ackrill saw no reason to rescue Plato from Plato and instead sought to rescue him from his apologists.

In place of preemptory apologetics, Ackrill advocated understanding the relation between (S) and (I) by urging reflection upon the arguments Plato offered on behalf of (S) or at least on behalf of theses in the immediate neighborhood of (S).<sup>12</sup> To this end, he looked to Plato's discussion of Form intermixture (*summeixis*). For even if intermixture (*summeixis*) and interweaving (*sumplokê*) are different sorts of relations among Forms, surely Forms must be related to each other at least to the extent that one could draw some data from Plato's remarks about one of these relations to the application of the other. This would be especially so (although Ackrill does not suggest that it is so) if one relation were a species of the other. Perhaps, for instance, interweaving is a kind of intermixing. In that case, anything said of intermixing (*summeixis*) would automatically hold of interweaving (*sumplokê*) as well.

In any event, Plato entertains three theses with respect to the relations Forms might bear to one another (*Sph.* 251d-252e):

- (1) Every Form combines with every other.
- (2) No Form combines with any other.
- (3) Some forms do and others do not combine with one another.

He rejects the first two, extreme theses, and ultimately endorses the last, moderate thesis.

As Ackrill observes, the most relevant thesis relating to the interweaving of Forms is (2), against which Plato advances two arguments. In the first instance, he contends that philosophers of all stripes would be speaking nonsense or saying nothing at all (*legoien an ouden*) if there were no intermixture of Forms at all (*medemia summeixis*). Moreover, those who advance (2) undermine their own case even as they speak: their refutation emerges from an enemy within their own household (252c5-7), because they refute themselves even as they endeavor to make their case.

How they manage to do so, however, is a bit unclear. Indeed, applying Ackrill's exacting standards to himself, we find that he ascribes to Plato in this connection a view not expressed by Plato in the *Sophist* or elsewhere, at least not overtly, namely, that "the very statement of (2) involves a contradiction." Which contradiction? As Ackrill himself hastens to add, "It is not of course that they straightforwardly both assert and deny *summeixis* (intermixture)." Rather, "The thesis 'No Forms combine with one another' is held to be self-refuting because its meaningfulness presupposes that some Forms do combine." Finally, then, "Plato's conclusion, that there are



connections between Forms, rests upon the simple fact that some sentences are meaningful and some are not” (Ackrill 1955/1997, p. 75).

There is something importantly right about Ackrill’s contention but also something troubling. He is right that Plato’s treatment of (2) provides important data regarding his attitude toward the interweaving of Forms. Still, it is troubling that Ackrill seems to offer three nonequivalent diagnoses about the self-undermining character of (2), the thesis that no Form combines with any other. First is the suggestion that any expression of (2) involves a contradiction—though what contradiction that is Ackrill does not say, preferring only to say which contradiction it is not. Next is the suggestion that no assertion of (2) could be *meaningful* if (2) were true, since precisely what (2) denies, namely, that at least some Forms combine with other Forms, is a necessary condition of the meaningfulness of statements. Finally there is a third, nonequivalent suggestion that (2) is shown to be false, ultimately, by the fact that some sentences are meaningful and others are not. In sum, Ackrill offers Plato three nonequivalent arguments for the falsity of (2): one from contradiction, one from the conditions of meaningfulness, and, finally, one from the (putative) general fact that some sentences are meaningful and others are not. In so doing, he establishes none of these objections uniquely.

In order to develop and secure the sort of strategy Ackrill advocates, it is thus necessary to consider why Plato should be so confident that the advocates of (2) are doomed to self-refutation. In particular, one should like to know, *in this dialectical context*, why the advocates of thesis (2) should be compelled to acknowledge that even in offering a *logos*, they sow the seeds of their own downfall. In this connection, we shall see that the simple semantic theory of Cornford comes up short—even while a more subtle and satisfying semantic thesis emerges. Hence, although Cornford’s easy assimilation of Forms to *meanings* is unsustainable, a more general thesis about *meaningfulness* does indeed emerge from Plato’s presentation of the interweaving of Forms in the *Sophist*.

## 5 A Platonic Sense Structure

In raising these questions about Ackrill’s understanding of Plato’s attitude toward (S), I do not mean to suggest that he has somehow misconstrued Plato’s approach to its eventual grounding but that he has underconstrued it. Indeed, if we proceed further along Ackrill’s same line of explication, I contend, we come to a deeper appreciation of Plato’s true attitude toward the wellsprings of (S) and so to the interweaving of Forms with one another.

To begin, then, two complementary features of Ackrill’s approach seem fruitful and worth pursuing further. First is his suggestion that to understand the relation between (S) and (I), we must first plumb Plato’s motivations for advancing (S). Second is his suggestion that in order to make progress in this direction, we should focus first on Plato’s independent remarks about the intermixture of Forms. For while Plato in fact uses a fair number of discrete terms regarding Form-to-Form

relations in the *Sophist*—including combining or commonality (*koinônia*), connecting (*prosaptain*), blending together (*summeignushthai*), joining or fitting together (*sunarmottein*), being consonant with (*sumphônein*), partaking (*metalambanein*), and participating (*metechein*)—he seems to have some root ideas about their manner of association. Some Forms seem of necessity mutually predicable; others seem of necessity mutually unpredicable of one another; some seem of such a nature that if one, F-ness, is predicated of something other, then a second Form, G-ness, must also be predicated of that same thing; and still others will be such that if F-ness is predicated of something other, then G-ness cannot be predicated of that thing. Without tracing out these fine-grained relations, we may conclude that if at least some of them obtain, then (2) is false, that is, some Forms will combine with some others.

As we have seen, Plato offers the judgment that those who deny *all* of these sorts of association find themselves engaged in a self-undermining enterprise. Consider, more fully:

Eleatic Visitor: Further, now, these people meet with the most ludicrous of all results by following the account of those people who will not allow one thing to share in the quality of another.

Theaetetus: How so?

Eleatic Visitor: Because they are compelled when referring to anything to use the words ‘being’ and ‘apart’ and ‘from the others’ and ‘by itself’ and any number more. They are powerless to avoid using them or from connecting them in their statements, and so have no need of others to refute them; their enemy is in their own household, as the saying goes, and, like that extraordinary Eurycles, they carry out their own refutation within themselves.

Theaetetus: True: your comparison is most apt. (*Sph.* 252b8-d1)

Despite Theaetetus’ pliant agreement, it is unclear precisely why Plato thinks that this is so. Still less is it clear why his opponent should be compelled to acknowledge an enemy lurking in his own household.

Evidently Plato has some general argument of the following sort in mind:

- (i) Suppose someone, perhaps Antisthenes,<sup>13</sup> insists that no Form has a share in any other. Call this thesis *the discreteness contention* (**DC**).
- (ii) A necessary condition of the possibility of (**DC**) is that not-(**DC**).
- (iii) So, if Antisthenes asserts, or seeks to assert (**DC**), then he has implicitly accepted not-(**DC**).
- (iv) If (iii), then anyone who asserts (**DC**) refutes himself.
- (v) So, anyone who asserts (**DC**) refutes himself.

This is why the enemy of Antisthenes comes from within his own household: he need not await any refutation from without, since he has already done that job well enough himself.

One obvious point about this argument is that it is indirect, in the sense that those who deny interaction also presuppose its truth. It is thus, as Ackrill noted, plainly in keeping with a similar sort of indirect proof of Aristotle’s, namely, his elenctic

proof for the principle of noncontradiction in *Metaphysics* IV 4, even to the point of sharing some of its same language. If the parallel is apt, then there is one further point of note, namely, that Aristotle's proof is avowedly indirect because it *must* be indirect. Whatever the ultimate status of his proof, Aristotle rightly notes that no direct proof for the principle of noncontradiction could avoid circularity (*Met.* 1006a2-6).

Further, just as there is a question about the precise grounds of Aristotle's contention that all attempts to deny the principle of noncontradiction succumb to some form of self-undermining, so there is a question in the *Sophist* as to why Plato feels himself secure in alleging self-refutation against those who affirm (2). This is, then, a question as to the grounds of (ii), the claim that a necessary condition of the possibility of (DC) is that not-(DC). We have implicitly already considered a number of nonequivalent possibilities, mainly in the realm of statement meaning. Some suggestions, not mutually exclusive are the following:

- If (DC) is to be *meaningful*, then not-(DC).
- Any assertion of (DC) is, unbeknownst to those asserting it, a *contradiction*.
- If (DC) is to be asserted, it must be asserted *as true*, but then it must be the case that some statements are true and others false, which in turn requires not-(DC).
- If (DC) is to be assertoric at all, then not-(DC).

So, since one or the other (or all) of these grounds must be in place in order for anyone to assert (DC), a necessary condition of the possibility of (DC) is not-(DC).

Let us consider the often-mooted suggestion that Plato's (ii) depends immediately upon considerations pertaining to logic. It is in principle possible that Plato has such a claim in view, but he does not advance it in any plain terms. He does say, in an allied passage, that those who maintain (1), the claim that every Form combines with every other, implicate themselves in the greatest of impossibilities. They will be forced to say, for instance, that *motion rests*. Those saying such things, according to Plato, are implicated in the most extreme impossibilities (*tais meigstais anagkais adunaton*; *Sph.* 252d9-10). This prompts Ackrill to say: "These we can observe to be self-contradictory, logically impossible" (Ackrill 1955/1997, p. 74).

If this were so, then one might legitimately import analogous considerations to (2), by suggesting that those who deny any sort of combination of Forms are implicated in a contradiction of logic. That would, it seems, provide the securest possible grounds for (ii).

Unfortunately, in neither case do principles of logic apply. As regards (1), Ackrill is not entitled to appeal to logical impossibility: whatever its demerits, the statement "motion rests" is not a contradiction of logic. On the contrary, its logical form is perfectly unobjectionable. Indeed, as I will suggest, it is precisely its being a nonlogical impossibility that gives the claim its force and interest. For the present, however, we may simply note that any attempt to locate a form of logical impossibility in (1) as a basis for finding the grounding (ii) in pure logic stalls. For the impossibility to which Plato appeals in (1) is entirely nonlogical. Consequently, any movement in that direction would serve only to obscure the kind of impossibility Plato has in view in either case, by proposing peremptorily a kind of impossibility unsuited to his purposes.

Better, perhaps, then is the suggestion that (ii) is self-undermining due to considerations of meaningfulness. Here, put in its most direct formulation, the suggestion would be that anyone who asserts (DC) implicitly denies the possibility of meaning. Hence, (DC) is meaningful only if it is, according to its own terms, not meaningful; hence, it is self-undermining. If that is correct, however, the self-undermining character of any denial of (2) results not from a contradiction, at least not a contradiction in logic, but rather from some nonlogical incompatibility resulting from any denial of the intermingling of Forms: those who deny (2) do not contradict themselves but rather rob their own assertions of meaning even as they speak.

Why so? To be sure, on its surface, the statement “Forms do not interweave with one another” seems perfectly meaningful, even if it proves to be false, and indeed even if it proves to be necessarily false. If we permit ourselves to become exercised about the possibility of false judgment, as Plato does to very good effect in both the *Sophist* and *Theaetetus* (*Sph.* 236d5-264b10; *Tht.* 167a6-8, 187c7-200c7; cf. *Rep.* 478b5-478c2; *Euthd.* 284b1-284c6; *Cra.* 429c6-430a5), then we should not be inclined to do so because we think that necessarily false judgments are *meaningless*. It is easy to understand the meaning of the statement  $7 + 5 = 11$ , even though it is necessarily false; indeed, to grasp that it *is* necessarily false seems first to require that we have understood its meaning. Looked at this way, any immediate or direct appeal to the meaninglessness of (DC) requires, at the very least, significant amplification.

The relevant amplification begins by reconsidering what I have termed the *simple semantic theory* characteristic of the framework of interpretation evidently embraced by Ackrill in common with the targets of his criticisms. Perhaps appeals to meaning in this connection are unsatisfying because they seem to rely too readily on the easy thought that Forms *are* meanings.<sup>14</sup> Perhaps, that is, the simple semantic theory is our culprit. For, after all, if Plato shows that those who deny the interweaving of Forms run afoul of the strictures of meaning only because they fail to appreciate that Forms *are* meanings, then he shows only that those who deny the simple semantic theory must adhere to some other theory of meaning in order to avoid self-refutation. Needless to say, most philosophers have been independently inclined to do so anyhow; indeed, most think it is a mistake to suppose that anything at all like the simple semantic theory is worth taking at all seriously and (in partial consequence) not one in any case appropriately ascribed to Plato.<sup>15</sup> This would, as a matter of the dialectic currently before us, include even those who were happy to admit the existence of Forms. So far, then, we have been given no reason to ground (ii) in any considerations pertaining to the meaningfulness of discourse.

Still, there is a possible route to grounding (ii) in claims pertaining to meaning, and it is one that acknowledges that the simple semantic theory of Cornford is hopelessly inadequate to the task. We might instead take a cue from Keyt who, while seeming initially to agree with Cornford in expressing the simple semantic theory, in fact points to a deeper and more illustrative connection: *logos* need not mean merely statement meaning.<sup>16</sup> Instead, it might refer to statements in common with *rational discourse in general*, a possibility made vivid by Plato’s suggestion that thinking (*dianoia*) and discourse or statement (*logos*) are the same thing, except that what we call thinking is an inward dialogue of the soul carried by the mind with

itself without spoken sound (*Sph.* 263e4-5; cf. *Phil.* 38c5-38e8; *Tht.* 189e6-190a6). This suggests that the stakes are in fact higher than any narrow investigation of statement meaning might portend. For if thought is somehow internal language, where in fact Plato affirms a parallel between belief (*doxa*) and statement (*logos*), the first internal and silent and the latter voiced and public (*Sph.* 263e10-264a3), then he is equally saying that without an interweaving of Forms we cannot so much as think.

That is a strident claim, and not one plausibly unpacked in terms of the relation between words and Forms, where words are items in natural languages and Forms are their semantic values. Rather, it suggests the more general and ambitious thought that without Forms and their relations *to one another*, the very enterprise of rational inquiry cannot get underway (cf. *Prm.* 135). This is why, indeed, the Eleatic Stranger generalizes his remarks about statement meaning to the enterprise of philosophy taken as a whole: “If we were robbed of *logos* (namely, as one of the kinds of things that exist [*tôn ontôn hen ti genôn einai*]), then, what is worst of all, we would be robbed of philosophy” (*Sph.* 260a5-7).

Altogether, then, these remarks suggest that what is in view is not the simple semantic theory advocated by Cornford but rather something more general. Plausibly, I will suggest, this more general condition of thought is something less atomistic than Cornford contends, but something broadly semantic in character all the same. Plato seems to be relying, namely, on what we may call the thesis of *intentional sense structure*.

This thesis finds its clearest manifestation in Plato’s development of (I), the very illustration which gave rise to our reconsideration of his attitude toward the interweaving of Forms. Plato contrasts the true statement (I) “Theaetetus sits,” with the false statement “Theaetetus flies.” His treatment of the false statement has occasioned very many different interpretations.<sup>17</sup> According to the most compelling interpretation, owing to Brown,<sup>18</sup> Plato’s account of falsity in this passage requires understanding his approach to be given in terms of a “limited incompatibility range” of predicates. That is, when someone utters the false statement “Theaetetus flies,” he commits the error of “saying different (*heteron*) things from the things that are” (*Sph.* 263b7), where, crucially, he has already distinguished what is *only* or *merely* different (*monon heteron*) from what is positively contrary (*enantion*) (257b1-c3). The false speaker (and, let us remember, the false thinker) predicates of a subject a feature which is different from the features had by the subject (else his predication would be true). His proposed predicate is thus excluded from the class of predicates in fact applying to the subject.<sup>19</sup>

This exclusion may, however, happen in a number of nonequivalent ways, and Plato is under no obligation to select one uniquely. After all, some falsehoods are necessary falsehoods and some merely contingent; further, some necessary falsehoods are logical falsehoods, and others are merely metaphysical or categorial. So, the exclusion may occur *either* because a feature predicated is *inconsistent* with a feature had by the subject *or* because that feature is simply of such a nature as to be precluded from instantiation by a feature had by that subject *or* because it happens to be different from the set of properties in the set of properties holding of the

subject. If I say that Theaetetus is pale, when he is dark, then I say what is incompatible with his being pale (though, again, no logical contradiction is involved in the *logos Theaetetus is pale and dark*).<sup>20</sup> Less obviously, if I say that *Theaetetus stands* while he sits, we can judge that what is predicated is different (*heteron*) because sitting and standing are not truly co-predicable. If I say, more bizarrely, that Theaetetus is a three-sided figure, then I say something excluded by some obtaining categorial feature of his, namely, that he is a human being, something categorially incompatible with his being an abstract entity. Neither of these last two facts is a consequence of logic, but each results from the freestanding relations obtaining between Forms with one another. In short, some Forms will not permit themselves to be coinstantiated together, while others marry happily. Their proclivities in these respects derive not (only) from the principles of logic that they, in common with everything else, must respect. Rather, Forms marry or repel one another due to their own intrinsic natures.

Crucial to the current discussion is the fact that Plato is advancing (2), and so ultimately (ii), as a point about the structure of Forms taken corporately, not taken atomistically. When he rejects (1) and (2) in favor of (3), he makes a series of related points: *some* Forms, of necessity, bear some relations to other Forms; *some* Forms, of necessity, do not bear certain relations to other Forms; *all* Forms, of necessity, bear some relations to *all* Forms; and *all* Forms, of necessity, do not bear certain relations to any Forms. This yields a rather more complex argument than we have seen so far for (ii), the claim that a necessary condition of the possibility of (DC) is that not-(DC). This more complex argument is one which, like the simple semantic theory that it replaces, is in fact semantic in character but, unlike that simple theory, does not rely upon any commitment to the claim that there is a one-to-one correspondence of predicates to Forms. Forms, according to the thesis of an intensional sense structure, *may* be meanings, but they need not be. What is central to the argument is that Forms bear freestanding, nonlogical relations to one another, both categorial and semantic in character. This is the thesis of their standing in an intensional sense structure.

As regards Plato's commitment to (ii), the claim that a necessary condition of the possibility of (DC) is that not-(DC), all that matters is that Forms are implicated in meaning, in the sense that their relations to one another make meaningful discourse possible. His thought is rather that for *logos* to be possible, whether in the exterior realm of language or in the interior realm of thought, freestanding *metaphysical and semantic relations* between Forms must obtain. Meanings which are determinates under a determinable must, when predicated, carry in their wakes the meanings which are superordinate to them: nothing can be said to be green without also being colored. Plausibly, no speaker or thinker has the ability to predicate greenness of grass who does not equally have the ability to predicate *being colored* of grass; indeed, anyone without that ability seems unable to think the more determinate *logos*. In the same vein, meanings preclude their contraries when predicated, when, that is, they have contraries: nothing said to be white all over can also be said at the same time to be black all over. Moreover, this same observation obtains whether the contraries in question are polar opposites or mere determinate features under a shared determinable: nothing said to be red all over can at the same time be said

correctly to be green or black all over. Plato's suggestion is that neither language nor thought—*logos* in general—creates these forms of superordination or subordination but must instead adhere to them. Because they are given as conditions for the possibility of *logos*, and because their being given is rooted in the interweaving of Forms, all *logos* come to be for us because of an interweaving of Forms with one another.

To make his argument for (ii) explicit, then, if the discreteness contention (DC) is to avoid saying nothing, and so if it is to say anything determinate at all, it must be the case that freestanding intensional relations obtain between the semantic values of the predicates of our language; but if such relations obtain, then we may conclude that the discreteness contention is false—not as a matter of logical necessity, nor even as a matter of metaphysical necessity given directly. Rather, the prize of *logos* is won only because *logoi* reflect the intensional sense structure required for their possibility. It is in this way that those who pretend otherwise meet with an enemy from within their own household: theirs, like every domain of *logos*, is a household founded upon a freestanding, nonlogical metaphysical necessity, one these detractors are unable to deny. When they try to formulate a *logos* to the contrary, whether in speech or thought, they undermine their own campaign. This is why, then, Plato uses the caustically strong language in which he indulges: their view is the most ludicrous of all (*pantôn katagelastotata*; *Sph.* 252b8). They may as well be uttering the *logos* in speech *I am not speaking* or worse, thinking the *logos* in thought *I am not thinking*.

With this enhanced understanding of Plato's motivations, we may return, at last, to our initial problem. It has seemed to many that Plato's illustration (I) *Theaetetus sits* hardly illustrates the doctrine it was introduced to illustrate, namely, (S), that *logos* comes to be for us because of the interweaving of Forms with one another (259e4-6). We now see that his plural locution is fully intended: Plato's remark is no excusable overstatement; still less must we suppress features of (S) to make (I) conform to it. On the contrary, (I) illustrates (S) precisely because in every *logos*, more than one Form is in play. Every statement, whether voiced or silent within the soul, is assertoric; hence, every statement is truth evaluable. What makes truth evaluability even possible? How are statement-making *logoi* to be parceled into the true and the false? According to Plato, what makes *logos* in general possible is that determinate semantic content is possible; but determinate semantic content is in turn possible only if various necessary relations between semantic values obtain. Crucially, these necessary relations respect logical strictures but extend also to the freestanding relations between Forms, relations which involve their standing in non-extensional, nonlogical relations with one another: *logos* requires, beyond logic, the antecedent existence of an intensional sense structure, a structure of meanings whose own autonomous relations are required for the very possibility of meaningful thought and discourse. We might say, then, that when Forms provide meaning, they provide more meaning than even Cornford imagined: he was right that Forms *involve* meaningfulness; but the meanings Forms involve prove to be systemically enmeshed rather than simple and atomistic, because they are complex both in their internal decompositional sense structures and their noncontingent, nonlogical relations to one another.

## 6 Conclusions

Plato thinks that *logos* comes about because of the interweaving of Forms with one another. It was natural, almost unavoidable, to understand him initially just as Cornford had done, imagining him to be maintaining that Forms are meanings, with the result that woven meanings constitute the statements we make, aloud in speech and silently in thought. There emerge two mistakes in this natural understanding. First, we should not suppose, with the simple semantic theory, that Forms are meanings; surely, at the level of the lexical, they are not. Fortunately, if we attend to Plato's own examples in the *Sophist*, we see that he has not intended a doctrine so narrowly atomistic. Second, less obviously but also more importantly, we do not go about weaving Forms together ourselves, as if by an act of semantic stitching. For on this approach, without our efforts, Forms would fail to bear their antecedently given necessary relations. This is way Plato gives every indication that he regards the interweaving of Forms as given to us rather than as effected by us.

We would overreact badly to these realizations, however, if we corrected ourselves by concluding that Forms are altogether irrelevant to the semantic features of thought and language. Plato makes no such concession. On the contrary, he demands that those prepared to deny the interweaving of Forms justify their success in assertion. When they attempt to do so, Plato insists, the voice which refutes them is their own. Alas, they may not even take refuge in silence: their silent *logos* is *logos* all the same. When Plato says that *logos* comes about for us through the interweaving of Forms with one another, he means nothing less than that rationality itself requires the existence of antecedently given Forms standing in independent metaphysical and semantic relations to one another. Without Forms standing in such relations, we could not engage in rational discourse—we could not, indeed, be rational beings. So deep is Plato's attachment to (S): *logos* itself, he believes, comes to be for us because of the interweaving of Forms with one another (259e4-6).<sup>21</sup>

## Notes

1. Plato uses the word in several different contexts, only sometimes in connection with Forms, language, truth, and falsity. Interestingly, the word is concentrated in Plato's later works, occurring five times in the *Politics* (though not in semantic contexts, perhaps 281a3 is relevant), three times in the *Sophist*, and once each in the *Laws*, *Theaetetus*, and *Symposium*. See esp. *Tht.* 202b5; *Sph.* 240c1, 259e6, 266c6. All translations are my own.
2. In Aristotle, talk of interweaving is often, though not always, correlated with the requisites of truth and falsity. In this sense, his dominant diction is closest to Plato's use of the term in the *Sophist*. Cf. *Cat.* a16-18, 1b25, 2a6-9, 13b10-13; *Int.* 21a5; *Top.* 113a1, 147a33, 153a30, 154b16; *An.* 428a26-29, 432a11; *Met.* 1027b30, 1065a22.
3. The literature on *Sophist* 259e4-6 is extensive. In addition to Ackrill's (1955) seminal article, some especially useful discussions are Cornford (1960), Ritter (1910), Peck (1962), Lorenz and Middlestrass (1966), Heinaman (1982), and Silverman (2002). Guthrie (1978, pp. 161–62) provides a succinct overview of some of this literature, without attempting to advance the issue it engages.



4. Ackrill (1955/1997, pp. 75–78) appropriately makes much of this point, not least by connecting it in an illuminating way with Aristotle’s use of the same locution in *Met* IV.4.
5. Eurycles was a ventriloquist, mentioned by Aristophanes (*Wasps* 1015–20), whose name was given eponymously to ventriloquists in general. In some contexts, he was represented as being able to project his voice into the bellies of others, so that (evidently) he could represent them as refuting themselves by a second voice from within even as they spoke; in others, including scholiasts on Aristophanes, he is also represented as having prophetic powers. See Musurillo (1974, p. 237)
6. This suggestion runs directly counter to the deflationary treatment offered by Heinaman (1983), who thinks that scholars who ascribe theses concerning *meaning* to Plato are misguided: “I believe that such an interpretation is too optimistic and that Plato’s view is less sophisticated than scholars would like to admit” (p. 175). If the considerations of the current chapter are apt, then scholars have been, on the contrary, rather too shy when characterizing the stridency of Plato’s view.
7. Ackrill (1955/1997) crystallizes this tradition in an exceptionally clear article, first reviewing and criticizing the main proponents of the tradition before him, but then extending it in a fruitful direction. I suggest below in Sect. 4 that however far it is extended, this tradition leaves some important aspects of Plato’s conception of the relation between Forms and *logos* unexplored.
8. I use the phrase “intensional sense structure” to characterize the semantic theory proposed by Katz (1990); its precise application to the *Sophist* I make clear in Sect. 4. Very roughly, for now, an intensional sense structure, in Katz’s contemporary Platonist philosophy of language, is a system of intensions with a decompositional structure in virtue of which individual senses bear determinate, noncontingent, nonlogical relations of superordination, subordination, and categorial compatibility and incompatibility to one another. Katz contends:

We postulate that the sense of the syntactic simple ‘woman’ is complex, consisting of the sense of ‘human’, the sense of ‘adult’, and the sense of ‘female’. On this postulation of decompositional sense structure for ‘woman’, the redundancy of ‘a woman who is female’ is immediately accounted for with the same intuitively obvious notion of redundancy that accounts for the redundancy of expressions like ‘a woman who is a woman’. This case is exactly parallel to that in which Chomsky postulated an underlying syntactic structure in order to extend the account of subject and direct-object relation in sentences like ‘John loves Mary’ to sentences like ‘John is easy to please’ and ‘John is eager to please’. By parity of reasoning, we postulate an underlying semantic structure in order to extend the account of redundancy in expressions like ‘woman who is a woman’ to expressions like ‘woman who is female’. Decompositional postulations require a grammatical locus for the unobservable complex senses they postulate; so we are led to taking the step of positing that grammatical structure contains an underlying level of sense structure. (pp. 64–65)

Further, says Katz: “Semantic properties and relations like analyticity and analytic entailment, which also depend on sense containment, can be accounted for on the same decompositional hypotheses used to account for redundancy and superordination” (p. 65).

9. Plato’s diction in this important passage is somewhat peculiar: *to dialuein*, without an accompanying preposition, tends to mean simply *disintegrate*, *dissolve*, or *destroy* (*Phd.* 80b4, 80c4, 88b1; *Rep.* 609c2; *Ti.* 68d5; *Phil.* 32a2; *La.* 201c3), though it is also used, punningly, in the *Sophist* at 252d4 by Theaetetus to mean *solve*. Two especially helpful passages are *Gorgias* 524b3–4, where it means *separation* or *disentangling* (*scil.* of the soul and body, which are said to continue to exist once separated), and *Statesman* 281a6, where *dialutikê* is introduced as an antonym of interweaving (*sumplokê*), which is in turn said to be a kind of intertwining: *to men tês huphês sumplokê tis esti pou* (*Pol* 281a3). Taking those references together with the appearance of the preposition *from* (*apo*) in the current passage, it seems reasonable to understand Plato as intending something in the neighborhood of *unbraiding* or *untwining* by *dialuein*. This suggestion gains some further confirmation from the use of *apochôrizein* at 259c1.

10. Heinaman (1983, p. 176) asks: "So the first problem is this: does communion of Forms explain the truth or the meaningfulness of statements?" He answers (p. 185): "I conclude that the communion of Forms accounts for the truth of statements, not their meaning. And so the suggestion that the doctrine of communion of Forms lays down conditions for meaning rather than truth must be rejected."
11. Cornford (1960, p. 303 n. 1) comments on what he takes to be a shift in the meaning of *logos*, from "discourse" to "statement" in the course of this discussion. There seems to be no reason, however, to detect any such shift: given that *logos* at 262d14 is taken to illustrate its usage at 259e6, it must take the same meaning there; and given that there is no indication that Plato has shifted his diction in the intervening passage, there is for the same reason no reason to suppose that he has shifted his meaning and then shifted it back again.
12. Ackrill (1955/1997, p. 78): "These few remarks must suffice to indicate how a *sumplokê eidôn* is presupposed by any and every statement, including those about Theaetetus. Plato admittedly does not argue the point in connection with the Theaetetus examples, which are used in the discussion of a different topic. Still, it is a related topic, since it does involve the incompatibility of two predicates."
13. It is possible, as many scholars have suggested, that Antisthenes is to be counted among the late learners ridiculed at *Sophist* 251c. In fact, however, we cannot be secure about that judgment. See Cornford (1960, p. 254). In the present context, let us introduce him as a foil.
14. Cf. note 1.
15. For a judicious review of the relevant evidence, see Crivelli (2008). In a similar vein, most philosophers have been inclined to deny that predicates can be identified with properties. For a clear and useful, if ultimately unpersuasive, discussion of the case against identification, see Mellor (1997). Mellor argues: ". . . universals are not to be understood semantically as meanings, references, or extension of predicates. This does not of course prevent there being obvious connections between universals and predicates. For example, to every property there obviously corresponds a possible predicate applying to all and only particular with that property. But it does not follow from this, and is not obviously true, that to every actual predicate there corresponds a single property or relation" (p. 255).
16. See note 1.
17. See Moravcsik (1962), Keyt (1973), Frede (1967), Brown (2008), and Crivelli (1993) and (2008).
18. Brown (2008). Brown follows Keyt (1973) in referring to one standard account as the "Oxford Account" and a second as the "Incompatibility Account." Briefly, according to the Oxford Account, the false *logos* "Theaetetus flies," like every other statement composed of a noun and a verb, is false when *the verb* signifies everything that is *other (heteron)* than what Theaetetus *is* (i.e., everything other than what obtains with respect to Theaetetus). The Incompatibility Account maintains that this same *logos* is false when *the verb* signifies is *incompatible* with what Theaetetus is (i.e., it signifies something incompatible with what obtains with respect to Theaetetus). The Incompatibility Account supposes without warrant that what is different or other (*heteron*) is positively incompatible. The Oxford Account does not suffer that shortcoming but implicitly and without warrant supplies a universal quantifier by suggesting, as it must, that the verb signifies *everything* that is other. Brown's limited account makes sense of the examples, which involve incompatibilities (or, as I would prefer, Forms whose natures necessarily preclude co-instantiation) while not introducing the textually unwarranted universal quantifier.
19. This much remains correct about the "Extensional Account," as it is called by Crivelli (2008), that is, the account offered by Crivelli (1993), namely, that a statement composed of a noun and a verb is false when "the object signified by [the noun] is other than everything of which the action signified by [the verb] holds." This is correct as far as it goes, though, according to the interpretation offered in the text, it does not go the full distance alone. In general, the alternatives advanced as mutually exclusive in the literature cited in notes 28 and 29 are often, in fact, not mutually exclusive but rather different forms of difference.

20. To be clear, there is a contradiction in the triad: (i) Theaetetus is pale; (ii) Theaetetus is swarthy; and (iii) Nothing is such as to be pale and swarthy (i.e., all over). Note, however, that this merely relocates the question of incompatibility to (iii), which is not a logical contradiction but a metaphysical incompatibility given rise by the natures of pallor and swarthinness.
21. I am grateful to Dominic Bailey, Rachel Singpurwalla, and Fred Miller for comments on an earlier draft of this essay. I am also deeply indebted to Paolo Crivelli for his generous and instructive discussions concerning the topics it engages.

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