

THE SOPHIST OF MANY FACES: DIFFERENCE (AND IDENTITY) IN *THEAETETUS* AND *THE SOPHIST*¹

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One can argue that the problem posed by difference/identity in contemporary philosophy has its roots in the persistent epistemological imperative to be certain about what we know. We find this demand in Plato's Theaetetus and Sophist. But beyond this demand, there is a sense in the earlier dialogue that difference is not a passive feature waiting to be identified. "Difference" points towards an active differentiating. In the Sophist, difference appears in the method of dividing and gathering deployed to hunt for the elusive "sophist." Difference is also one of the great kinds that weaves together other kinds. Practically, difference enables the sophist's expertise of appearance-making as he knowingly confuses things with words. This paper then quizzes the concept of difference in all these guises in the two dialogues.

INTRODUCTION

In *Theaetetus*, Plato (1997a, 210c) explores the nature of what we know by asking the question "What is knowledge?" The question and answer exchanges mainly between Socrates and Theaetetus, a bright young mathematician (and also Socrates' double²), concludes in an impasse.³ We do not, in the end, have an answer to the question of the dialogue but we do come to know a few examples of what knowledge is not.

Rejecting both that "knowledge is perception" and that "knowledge is true judgment" about perceptions (see Modrak 1981, 151d-e and 187b), Socrates and Theaetetus explore a third possible theory of knowledge. This is when Theaetetus (Plato 1997a, 201d) recalls vaguely something that he heard a man say once:

He said that it is true judgment with an account⁴ that is knowledge; true judgment without an account falls outside of knowledge. And he said that the things of which there is no account are not knowable (yes, he actually called them that), while those which have an account are knowable.

Socrates (Plato 1997a, 201d-202d) offers a version of an account through a “dream” he had that claims knowledge can be accounted by analyzing complexes into their elements—those parts which can no longer be broken down and only perceived. Reviewing and then rejecting this version, Socrates then turns to consider, and then reject, three further suggestions of what an account is. The third and last proposal (see Fine 1979 and Haring 1982, 208c-10a) contains the relevant passages in the dialogue on which basis I begin a reading and an analysis of the concept of “difference” (and consequently, of “identity”) in the *Theaetetus* and the *Sophist*.

The third proposal claims that the account that can justify knowledge is, “being able to tell some mark by which the object you are asked about *differs* from all other things.”⁵ For example, “take the sun, if you like, [y]ou would be satisfied, I’d imagine, with the answer that it is the brightest of the bodies that move round the earth in the heavens.” To those who hold this version of account, this demonstrates a principle:

...that if you get hold of the *difference* that distinguishes a thing from everything else, then, so some people say, you will have got an account of it. On the other hand, so long as it is some common feature that you grasp, your account will be about all those things which have this in common. (Plato 1997a, 208c; emphasis mine).

The above principle of difference states what is required of it to be sufficient as an account of the claim that we know. *Difference* is what makes a thing distinct, so that we see it as something that is other from all other things. The first part of the principle does not specify whether difference is in the thing—that is, a property of a thing; or is of the thing—that is, an attribute of (something we say of) a thing; or is a relation between things—that is, difference arises from the connection amongst things. The fact that things relate to each other points to their distinctiveness in the sense that they must be separate or discrete in order to interact with each other. This simply means that things are not identical. Difference as a relation between things may also be attributed to them, when we actively search for it; for example, by comparing things and as such differentiating them. The second part of the principle clarifies the first by indirectly stating a somewhat stringent and untenable standard by which difference becomes sufficient: if it is not “some common feature” that we grasp. If it is only some common feature that we find then we come to know all things that this feature applies to and not the specific thing that we seek to distinguish. This requirement seems stringent because it says that difference must be unique and must apply only to the thing being distinguished. It seems untenable because language does not normally work this way—that is, create unique terms for singular features, or specify unique predicates applicable only to specific subjects. The few instances that we do this, for example, involves predicating the subject to itself, when we state that A is A. We may utter this or something like it to stop a conversation, by indirectly saying that elaboration is not needed. But, on the whole, statements like this are superfluous and alien to ordinary language. Nevertheless, there seems to be two things that are asserted here that appear to be contradictory: first, difference is identity—it applies only to the thing that is being differentiated; and second, difference is a feature, something that we predicate—something we say of/in a thing and, consequently, of/in other things.

We can understand Socrates' apparent rejection of difference as an account for knowledge if we understand it as an inflexible and contradictory, and as such untenable, justification. And, as it will turn out, it is always inadequate. For to fail to have this somewhat impossible account is to merely judge and to never know:

“Suppose I have formed a correct judgment about you; if I can grasp your account in addition, I know you, but if not, I am merely judging you.”

“Yes.”

“And an account was to be a matter of expounding your differentness?”

“That is so.”

“Then when I was merely judging, my thought failed to grasp any point of difference between you and the rest of mankind?”

“Apparently.”

“What I had in mind, it seems, was some common characteristic—something that belongs no more to you than to anybody else.” (Plato 1997a, 209a)

But there must be something that we do not see in this exchange, for Socrates (Plato 1997a, 209b-209c) exasperatedly asks: “Then tell me, in Heaven’s name how, if that was so, did it come about that you were the object of my judgment and nobody else?” It is easy to sympathize with Socrates here. Even when we designate Theaetetus as human, list his facial features, even count off his limbs, the same problem as above arises. The problem does not go away even if we describe and qualify Theaetetus’ facial features with “snub” for his nose and “prominent” for his brows or eyes. For the same description also applies to Socrates. Do we need then to give an account of difference as well? To Socrates,

...we already have a correct judgment about the way a thing differs from other things; and we are then directed to add a correct judgment about the way it differs from other things...[t]o tell us to add what we already have, in order to come to know what we are judging about, bears a generous resemblance to the behavior of a man benighted. (Plato 1997a, 209d-209e)

This effectively leads to infinite regress for what is being required is for us to give an account for each account that we give for knowledge, which goes on without end (see Fine 1979).⁶ Further, it is redundant to give an account for knowledge “if ‘adding an account’ means that we are required to get to know the differentness, not merely judge it...[f]or getting to know of course is acquiring knowledge, isn’t it?”

And so Socrates (Plato 1997, 210b) finally declares:

And it is surely just silly to tell us, when we are trying to discover what knowledge is, that it is correct judgment accompanied by knowledge, whether of differentness or of anything else? And so, Theaetetus, knowledge is neither perception nor true judgment, nor an account added to true judgment. In saying that what Plato requires of difference is stringent or severe, and as such

untenable or impossible, I qualify my claim with “somewhat,” “seems,” and “appears to be.” This is because Plato did not discard the concept of difference with finality in *Theaetetus*.⁷ It returns in many different guises in the subsequent dialogue of the *Sophist*. And I claim a continuity⁸ between the variations in the interpretation of difference in the two dialogues. This will be the focus of the succeeding sections. But for now we can generally state a few things about difference: First, it is a feature of or in things (the ambivalence cannot be resolved at this point). Second, it appears to be insufficient as an account of knowledge. Third, “insufficient” because difference may be asserted (but not categorically in the dialogue) to be identity.

The concept of difference, of course, has greater implication and application than Plato’s treatment of it in terms of the problem of knowledge. But it can be argued that the problem posed by difference (and identity) in contemporary philosophy has its roots in the persistent epistemological imperative to be certain about what we know, or in Plato’s formulation, to give an account about what we know (see Haring 1982 and Wheeler 1984 for the position that Plato did not fully reject this). We find this demand in both the *Theaetetus* and the *Sophist* as Plato tries to define and account for knowledge. At first, it appears that this forces difference into the essential and thereby fixing identities, which precisely what contemporary philosophy criticizes. But as we find out, things are not that simple in the two dialogues attributed to the later period of Plato’s writing. For despite the pressing demand for certainty, there is a sense in Plato that difference is not some simple passive and unchanging feature waiting to be identified or attributed when he rejects the definition of knowledge as true judgment with an account based on difference. And even if eventually rejected, there is a sense in Plato that to give an account based on difference is to point towards an active difference (or differentiating). And thus, in the *Sophist*, we find this active difference in the method of dividing and gathering (or collecting) that the visitor uses in order to “hunt” for the identity of the sophist. Further, it turns out that difference is one of the great kinds that “associates,” “blends,” and “shares” with other kinds and in things. This active difference is also present in the sophist’s expertise of appearance-making as he knowingly confuses (real) things with “words”—also copies or appearances standing in for the world.

DIFFERENCE IN THE METHOD OF DIVIDING AND GATHERING

In the *Sophist*, Plato (1997b) quizzes the name *sophist* in relation to what different people mean when they use the name. The usual Socratic method of the question and answer is made, this time, between a visitor from Elea and the same Theaetetus of the earlier dialogue. Socrates is in the background and is silent for most of the conversation.⁹ The goal of the inquiry is to find a common meaning for the term *sophist*, so that when the name is used one does not make the mistake of applying it indiscriminately. This requires agreement about the thing and the kind to which we assign the name “*sophist*” and the pursuit for the “verbal explanation” that holds true to all applications of the name. The verbal explanation or definition explains why any instance is a case of the name. In this regard, the visitor makes clear their goal and points to the difficulty that they face:

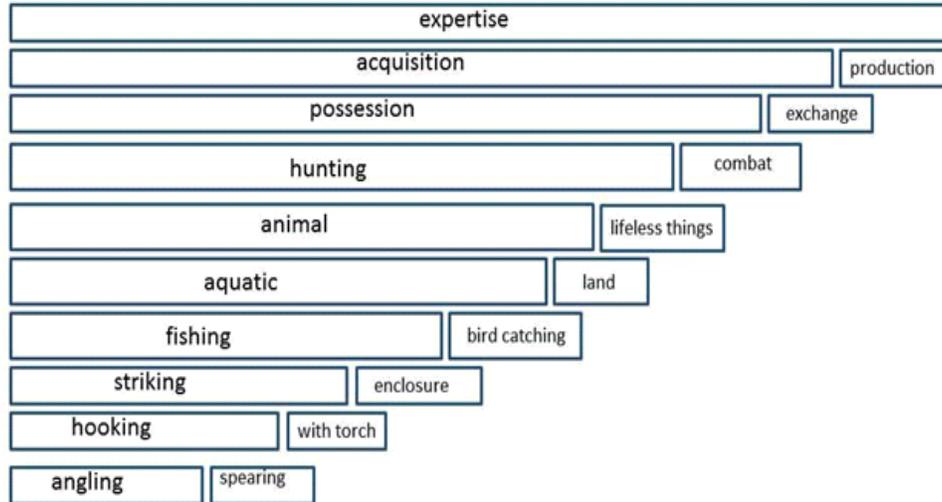
But with me I think you need to begin the investigation from the sophist —by searching for him and giving a clear account of what he is. Now in this case you and I only have the name in common, and maybe we've each used it for a different thing. In every case, though, we always need to be in agreement about the thing itself by means of a verbal explanation, rather than doing without any such explanation and merely agreeing about the name. But it isn't the easiest thing in the world to grasp the tribe we're planning to search for —I mean, the sophist—or say what it is. (Plato 1997b, 218b-c)

The inquiry to grasp the sophist begins with a model. According to the visitor, a model involves an ordinary example in which one may demonstrate the inquiry—its method, and maybe, in the process, one may find a feature relevant to the real inquiry. An angler, identified as a kind of hunter, serves as the model for the sophist, who is likewise seen as a kind of hunter. And it is noted, the inquiry led by the visitor itself is also asserted to be a kind of hunting. The angler, thus, is analogous to both the inquiry and the object of the inquiry (Plato 1997b, 218d-e, 221d). The method of inquiry for the angler illustrates the method of inquiry for the sophist. This consists in a process of branching or dividing¹⁰ that is followed by further divisions until the final description of the object is reached, and the collection or gathering of all the relevant divisions-descriptions that then makes the verbal explanation or definition of the object of inquiry (Ackrill 1997b, Brown 2010). What is interesting in the method is that it appears to be a kind of differentiation. For to divide or bifurcate a concept is to identify a difference between the resulting divisions. For example, when the visitor divides “expertise” into “acquisition” and “production,” he identifies a difference based on the acts of taking and making—that is, expertise in acquiring takes and expertise in producing makes (Plato 1997b, 219a-c). The collection of the relevant division-descriptions then is also the collection of differences that, put together, generates a definitive verbal explanation—that is, a definitive difference that then defines the object of the inquiry. Does this make a sufficient account,¹¹ in the sense of “account” in the dialogue *Theaetetus*, for the claim to know the sophist? Let us see.

The method as applied to the angler can be thought of as a decision tree,¹² or it can be graphically represented as a table hierarchy for simplicity and legibility. The hierarchical table then starts with expertise, as both the visitor and *Theaetetus* agree that the angler is a kind of expert. Expertise then divides into production and acquisition, in which the angler is determined to take, rather than someone who makes. Acquisition divides further into the activity of exchanging or taking something into possession, and so on. Thus, in the case of the angler (Plato 1997b, 219a-21c) we get the following figure showing the whole analysis graphically (see Figure 1).

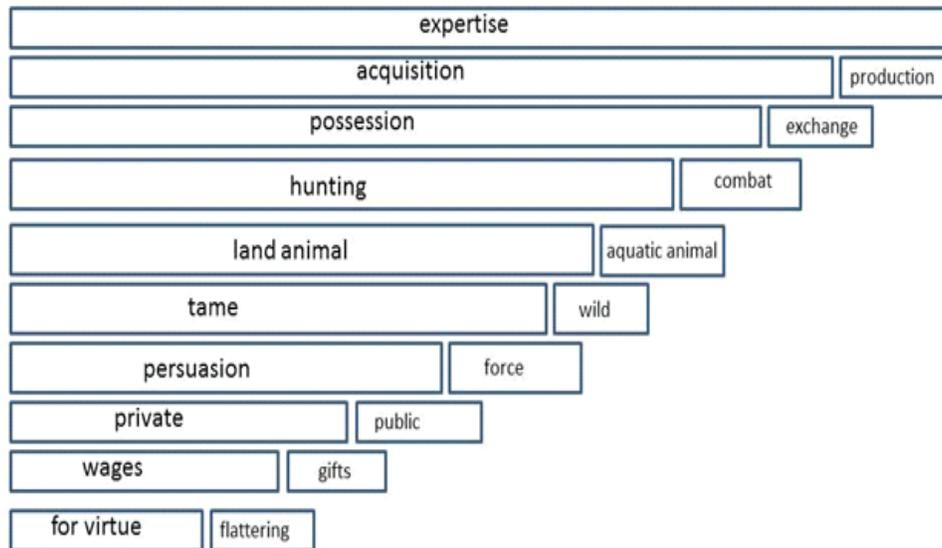
Collecting all the relevant divisions (that are descriptions) in the analysis of the angler yields: expertise, acquisition, possession, hunting, animal-hunting, aquatic hunting through the method of striking, hooking, and angling. And so, an angler has expertise in acquisition by taking possession, through hunting of animals that are of the aquatic kind, through fishing by striking with hooks in a drawing-upward manner, also called angling (Plato 1997b, 221b-c).

Figure 1. The Angler



Using the same method as applied to the sophist, we get Figure 2, which illustrates the whole analysis of the sophist that is similar to the angler. Here, the angler also serves as a metaphor for the sophist as the sophist also appears to be a hunter, albeit interested in a different prey:

Figure 2: The Sophist, Version 1



Collecting all the relevant division-descriptions yields: acquisition, “taking possession, hunting, animal-hunting, hunting on land, human hunting, hunting by

persuasion, hunting privately, and money-earning.” Or as the visitor summarizes it, the expertise of the sophist (Plato 1997b, 221b-c) is “the hunting of rich, prominent young men.”

Yet the hunt for the sophist does not end with this definition as the visitor and Theaetetus find, through repeating applications of the method, other versions or appearances of the sophist (Plato 1997b, 226a), which shows that “the beast is complex and can’t be caught with one hand, as they say.” By the time that the hunt for the sophist is waylaid by the pressing problem of “that which is not,” the sophist has appeared as “a wholesaler of learning about the soul” (Plato 1997b, 223c-24d), “a retailer of the same things” (Plato 1997b, 224d-e), “a seller of his own learning,” “an athlete in verbal combat, distinguished by his expertise in debating” (Plato 1997b, 225a-26a), and arguably as someone who “cleanses the soul of beliefs that interfere with learning” (Plato 1997b, 26b-231b=verify?)—this last version makes the sophist almost like Socrates (Plato 1997b, 231d-e) himself.

The conundrum that is the sophist is in view of his many expertises that end up not in a single category or definition but in many definitions. As already noted in the beginning of the inquiry, the sophist is one name that applies to many kinds (or the sophist is one kind that applies to many names, see Stough 1990).¹³ Does this mean that difference and differentiating, as dividing and collecting, has failed to define the sophist? It turns out, at the end of the dialogue, that there is something about the sophist that explains these many faces or appearances, and this points to something vital in the sophist’s expertises. But before this, the more urgent question for the inquiry is: how is it possible for the sophist to be many things (see Clanton 2007)?

DIFFERENCE AS “THAT WHICH IS NOT”

Despite the recognition that the sophist is complex and puts on multiple faces, the visitor and Theaetetus proceed to hunt him anyway as “neither he nor any other kind will ever be able to boast that he’s escaped from the method of people who are able to chase a thing through both the particular and the general” (Plato 1997b, 235c). This steadfast confidence on the method of dividing and collecting, also called dialectic,¹⁴ is after all an expertise, which when applied fully resolves confusion: “not to think that the same form is a different one or that a different form is the same”—that is, not confuse identities by misrecognizing differences arranged in hierarchies, or wholes and parts, or in relations (Plato 1997b, 253d-e). Thus, even if the sophist is an expert of many faces, the proper use of dialectic is precisely that expertise that has the potential to unmask him.

A new line of inquiry, offered as a new model, is introduced by the visitor to help them understand the nature of the sophist’s expertise (Plato 1997b, 233d). Consider a person who can make many things by means of a single skill. The one skill that makes this possible is imitation. The confusion that this presents is that we usually call the copies by the same names as the originals (Plato 1997b, 234b; see Muckelbauer 2001). The sophist is like “an appearance-maker who alters the true proportions of the original, so that the image appears beautiful from a distance” (Plato 1997b, 235e-36c). Like a magician, then, the sophist imitates by using words (Plato 1997b, 234e-35a).¹⁵ What

connects all the versions of the sophist above is his skill at imitating experts who truly know the things that the sophist claims to know.

The sophist of many appearances is an expert in making appearances—or more precisely, false appearances. This makes the task of grasping the sophist doubly hard. As the visitor (Plato 1997b, 236e) laments:

This appearing, and this seeming but not being, and this saying things but not the true thing—all these issues are full of confusion...[and it is] extremely hard, Theaetetus, to say what form of speech we should use to say that there really is such a thing as false saying or believing, and moreover to utter this without being caught in a verbal conflict.

What is at stake is a larger philosophical issue that sets into opposition the world and the void, the one and the many, being and non-being, change and rest, etc. (see Lee 1972; Curd 1988; Kahn 2007). Precisely, these are the concerns of the ancient philosophical greats who precede Socrates. Immediately, to the visitor (Plato 1997b, 236e-37a), this issue stumps their inquiry “[b]ecause this form of speech of ours involves the rash assumption that that which is not is, since otherwise falsity wouldn’t come into being.” The problem of the sophist and his false appearances, then, must confront the problem of non-being or that which is not—whose impossibility is initially identified as the foundation for falsity. This sets the visitor’s and Theaetetus’ inquiry against Parmenides’ dictum to stay away from the thought that “that which is not may be.” Or putting it a different way, “Never shall this force itself on us, that that which is not may be; while you search, keep your thought far away from this path” (Plato 1997b, 237a).

But to go against Parmenides is to confront multiple contradictions. First, the expression “that which is not” appears to name, impossibly, nothing. Second, when we say ‘that which is not’ or “those which are not,” we appear to be, again impossibly, attributing numerical value to nothing. Third, even in articulating these seeming impossibilities we do the impossible; that is, talk about nothing (see Curd 1988, 238a-39c). What makes talking or thinking about that which is not or nonbeing impossible is the supposition that negation requires the opposite of the thing negated (Lee 1972). We suppose that that which is and that which is not are contrary, that they exclude each other. Thus, the visitor (Plato 1997b, 241b, 241d) complains that they are “forced to attach that which is to that which is not, even though [they] agreed...that that’s completely impossible.” In fact, they recognize later, that this is precisely what they must do—they must “insist by brute force both that that which is not somehow is, and then again that that which is somehow is not” without contradiction.¹⁶

Another supposition about being and nonbeing made by “young people and old late-learners”—that a name names just one thing and that a thing has just one name—confounds the efforts of the visitor and Theaetetus (Plato 1997b, 251b-c). This leads to the problem already encountered with the sophist: that it is a name that refers to many things or that it seems to be a thing that has many names. But having already insisted on the beingness of non-being, they resolve to transcend the difficulty by accepting it. They resolve to “give an account of how we call the very same thing, whatever it may be, by several names” (Plato 1997b, 251a)

To do these, the visitor suggests a way of looking at kinds: that some kinds can share, blend, or associate with other kinds, while other kinds cannot. There are also kinds that make possible the blending of kinds; just as in language, vowels determine the fitting together of consonants. Dialectic is precisely the expertise that determines which kinds can or cannot blend, which kind enables other kinds to blend, and how blending happen or not happen¹⁷ (Plato 1997b, 251d-53e). Here, the visitor introduces the five great kinds that are, at the same time, a way to delimit the scope of the discussion:

We've agreed on this: some kinds will associate with each other and some won't, some will to a small extent and others will associate a great deal, nothing prevents still others from being all-pervading—from being associated with every one of them. So next let's pursue our account together this way. Let's not talk about every form...let's choose some of the most important ones. (Plato 1997b, 254b-d)

The five great kinds are change, rest, being, sameness, and difference. Change and rest are contraries that exclude each other and, as such, do not partake of each other. Being applies to both, since change and rest are; that is, both are those which are. But being is a separate kind, for as it applies to both change and rest, we cannot say that it is the same as one of them, for then when it applies to other it will impossibly make the opposites partake of each other (Plato 1997b, 249e-50c vis-a-vis 254d). Each of these three kinds is “different from two of them, but is the same as itself.” At this point, the visitor then asks “what in the world are *the same* and *the different* that we've been speaking of?” (Plato 1997b, 254e)

According to the visitor, with Theaetetus agreeing each time, “the different is always said in relation to another.” This is possible because of the distinctiveness of both being and the different, although being applies to it. Moreover, as the last of the five great kinds, difference pervades the rest of them, “since each of them is different from the others, not because of its own nature but because of sharing in the type of the different.” (Plato 1997b, 255c-e)

Thus, the two problems of that which is not or nonbeing, associated with the conundrum of the sophist—that of nonbeing being and the application of a name to many things—are transcended through difference. For “it seems that when we say that which is not, we don't say something contrary to that which is, but only something different from it” (Plato 1997b, 257b). That which is not, nonbeing, is difference. Being and nonbeing are not contraries but indicate difference, as other names prefixed with “not” or “non” indicate something other than the things to which the names following the negation are applied” (Plato 1997b, 257b-c). The negation of a name indicates the relation of difference that the named thing has with other things.

The power of the great kinds, especially of difference—which pervades and weaves all kinds as the relation between them, is the power of speech. For “to dissociate each thing from everything else is to destroy totally everything there is to say” (Plato 1997b, 259e). The power of the kinds also makes possible “false belief and false speech, since falsity in thinking and speaking amount to believing and saying those that are not” (Plato 1997b, 260b)

To clarify this, the visitor distinguishes between names and verbs. A verb is a sign for actions, a name is a sign for the things that perform actions (Plato 1997b, 261e-62a). A statement must minimally fit a name together with a verb in such a way that they make a claim about the world (Plato 1997b, 262a-c).¹⁸ The true statement “says those that are, as they are.” The false statement “says things different from those that are,” so that “it says those that are not, but that they are” (Plato 1997b, 263b).

As there is falsity, there is deception. As there is deception, “then necessarily the world will be full of copies, likenesses, and appearances” (Plato 1997b, 260c). With falsity being explained, the sophist can, now, be finally defined.

DIFFERENCE AND THE SOPHIST’S FINAL FACE

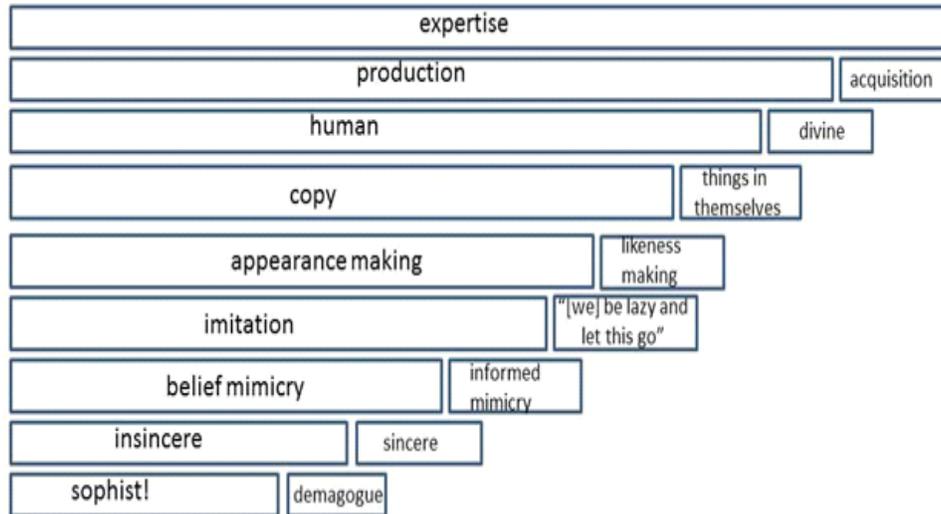
After getting at the reasons how it is possible that the sophist come to appear in many guises by providing an explanation of how kinds blend or associate to enable language—thus also enabling false speech which is what the sophist makes and purveys, the visitor from Elea and Theaetetus, attempt to provide a definition for the sophist with finality.

First they divide productive expertise by two: the divine and the human. Human production, just like that of the gods, make things in themselves and also copies (Plato 1997b, 265b). One kind of copy-making is likeness-making, the other kind is appearance-making as it is the making of false things (Plato 1997b, 266d-e). Appearance-making is then divided into two again, “one sort that’s done with tools and one that uses one’s own self as the tool,” that is, when the appearance-maker uses his “own body or voice to make something similar to [another’s] body or voice.” The visitor calls this imitation. He allows the other to remain unnamed (“let’s be lazy and let the other part go”) (Plato 1997b, 267a-b). Now, those who imitate know what they imitate or they do not. This corresponds to the division between ignorance and knowledge. The visitor (Plato 1997b, 267b) distinguishes them “by calling imitation accompanied by belief ‘belief-mimicry’ and imitation accompanied by knowledge ‘informed mimicry’.” (check the quotation mark) As the sophist is not one of the people who know but is one of the people who imitate knowing, he must be in the later—which is then divided further to the kind that is foolish but sincere and the kind that “has been around a lot of discussions, and so by temperament he’s suspicious and fearful that he doesn’t know the things that he pretends in front of others to know.”

There are two kinds of insincere imitators: the demagogue (“one sort can maintain his insincerity in long speeches to a crowd”) and the one who “uses short speeches in private conversation to force the person talking with him to contradict himself.” As this last one imitates the wise man, he must “have a name derived from the wise man’s name.” The visitor and Theaetetus have found the sophist! (Plato 1997b, 267e-68c; see Figure 3 for a graphical representation of the inquiry.)

Gathering everything together, we can say with confidence that the sophist’s expertise is the “[i]mitation of the contrary-speech-producing, insincere and unknowing sort, of the appearance-making kind of copy-making, the word-juggling part of production that’s marked off as human and not divine” (Plato 1997b, 268d).

Figure 3: The Sophist, the Final Version



CONCLUSION

At the beginning of this essay, I claimed that Plato did not discard the concept of difference with finality in *Theaetetus*. Just like the elusive sophist, we see it return in different guises in the *Sophist*. The continuity between the varied interpretations of difference in the two dialogues is clear. In the discussion of the earlier dialogue, I made a few general claims about difference: that it is a feature of or in things, that it appears to be insufficient as an account of knowledge, and that this is because difference is asserted to be identity. In the discussion of difference in the *Sophist*, we find that difference is a relation between kinds, and that it can be an account of what we endeavor to know in the form of dialectic-differentiating kinds into bifurcations and collecting all the resulting division-descriptions into a verbal explanation that defines what we seek to know. Difference, as such, is not identity. But it constitutes identity.

In this later Plato then (see Zuckert 2000), difference is not the effect of a mere epistemological demand to know. It is a way to knowing. It is active differentiating in the dialectic. Difference is a great kind that enables the weaving of kinds that, in turn, enables speech. The sophist (the prey of the inquiry, the expert in false speech) and the philosopher (the expert in dialectics), both, depend and are enabled by difference.

NOTES

1. The texts of the *Theaetetus* and the *Sophist* that were consulted for this essay are found in Plato (1997a and 1997b).

2. The dialogue also offers accounts of how we think. Considering the resemblance between Socrates and Theaetetus, we can think of their conversation as a literary device, as exchange between Socrates and himself (albeit a younger version)—like thinking, a

conversation in one's mind. See Seth Benardete (1993, 747-48) for a discussion of thinking as the "silent conversation of the soul with itself" in relation to the more complicated situation of Socrates in dialogue with the young Socrates (who shares with Theaetetus the feat of developing a classification of two kinds of numbers. See also David Barton (1999, 179-180) who claims that the arguments deployed by Plato against false beliefs in the *Theaetetus* is mainly to reject the idea of thinking as mental grasping, which is unable to give account to false identity judgments.

3. Some scholars insist that the *Theaetetus* only appears to end inconclusively. Ellen S. Haring (1982, 510-12), for example, asserts that the dialogue's seeming failure should not be taken at face value. Its convivial and productive discussions, its "singularly well disposed" and gifted speakers, and that fact that the dialogue itself holds so much promise point to a "partly hidden successful ending" that is left for readers to discover. Samuel Wheeler (1984, 365), on the other hand, argues that the way Plato insists on strict conditions on how we acquire knowledge, the way he sets up the impossibility of knowledge through perception, appear to indirectly argue at the end that only with Forms can there be knowledge. Thus, the *Theaetetus* ends with a clear conclusion:

...the grounds for the rejection of the analysis of knowledge as true judgment with a *logos* should not be taken as final. The point of the last section of the dialogue is that real judgment requires an account and by itself is in fact the same thing as knowledge, since a concept adequate for judgment contains every element of the nature of the object.

4. In Footnote 38 of *Theaetetus*, the translator notes that "account" translates to *logos*, which can also mean "statement," "argument," "speech," and "discourse."

5. Gail Fine (1979, 366) points out that although one may trace the modern epistemological formulation "*S* knows that *p* if and only if *p* is true, *S* believes that *p*, and *S* has adequate justification or grounds for believing that *p*" to Plato, we must note that while "[i]n the modern account, the *definiendum* concerns one's knowledge that a particular proposition is true. Plato tends instead to speak of knowing things..."

6. Fine (1979, 396) claims that Plato avoids this with his interrelation model of knowledge, which she says "is one of Plato's significant contributions to epistemology...to have seen that we do not possess bits of knowledge in isolated, fragmented segments."

7. Haring (1982, 511) argues that the descriptive terms "dream," the "golden dream," and the "scene painting" that refer to the three proposals for *logos* or accounts indicate a progression in terms of adequacy of the proposals. Kenneth Dorter (1990, 343-45) makes the same claim for all the definitions of knowledge provided by Theaetetus in the dialogue. This makes the third proposal, of *logos* as difference, the best among those considered. As we shall see, Plato (1997b) returns to it in the *Sophist*.

8. For a full account of the continuities between the two dialogues, see Charles Kahn (2007). R. S. Bluck (1963) makes the same claim that the *Sophist* is a sequel to the *Theaetetus* four decades earlier.

9. J(FN) Caleb Clanton (2007, 53) claims a deeper meaning to this Socratic silence. It is a setting aside (he calls it a kind of parricide) of "logos rooted in determinacy" or

determinate discourse—associated with Socrates, in order to open up philosophy to what lies beyond (to indeterminacy) and thus ultimately save the philosophy that Socrates represents.

10. See J(FN) L. Ackrill (1997b) for his defense of this method from Gilbert Ryle's (1965) "scathing remarks" against it—that it is not philosophy. See also Lesley Brown (2010) for an early version of the method of division in the dialogue *Phaedrus* vis-a-vis the method of division in the *Sophist*.

11. The difference between the differences in the two dialogues is, of course, relevant; that is, simple difference as mark of distinction as opposed to difference in the form of a method.

12. The method, when illustrated this way, almost looks like the taxonomic representation in biology based on morphology (now integrating differences in DNA); that is, it looks like a branching tree. This is the case when all the versions of the sophist are mapped out in one illustration. This is possible as they all start from the same beginning: expertise, and then branch out into different divisions. All the relevant divisions (the branches) in the tree, usually located on the same side for clarity and order, the collection of these divisions that are descriptions then identifies the sophist. In the same way, a specific biological species can be described through its collected division-descriptions. Or it looks like "Linnaeus-type genus-species trees" (Ackrill 1997b, 93).

13. Charlotte Stough (1990, 372-375) identifies at least two kinds of naming in the *Sophist*: naming a kind or form and naming participants in a form (or things in a kind).

14. Ryle (1965), according to Ackrill (1997b, 93), differentiates dividing from actual dialectic where hard reasoning "leads to truths about the powers and interrelations" of concepts.

15. John Macklebauer (2001, page?) connects the *Sophist's* concept of "copy" to the contemporary idea of the simulacrum.

16. Edward Lee (1972) resolves this by identifying two kinds of not-being in the *Sophist*: being other or different (other-being) and "not being that specified item" but not itself specified (no-being).

17. "Well then, we've agreed that kinds mix with each other in the same way. So if someone's going to show us correctly which kinds harmonize with which and which kinds exclude each other, doesn't he have to have some kind of knowledge as he proceeds through the discussion? And in addition doesn't he have to know whether there are any kinds that run through all of them and link them together to make them capable of blending, and also, when there are divisions, whether certain kinds running through wholes are always the cause of the division?" (Plato 1997b, 253b-c)

18. There are many commentaries on Plato's "discovery" of the copula (or predication) as seen in the *Sophist* (see Ackrill 1997a, 238a-39c and Roberts 1986, for example).

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