

In both the text of Musaeus is defective, ending with line 245; this confirms that *Hero and Leander* stood at the end originally, and that Hesiod is additional. In Par. 2763 folios 135–42 are left blank, to allow for the completion of the missing text; in 2833 it would seem that the need to fill a similar gap was seen as an invitation to preface the Hesiodic *Prolegomena* with the (highly appropriate) Orphic Hymns 76–7, to Mnemosyne and the Muses. But, despite all the other affinities of the two MSS, it is clear that the hymns were not copied from 2763, whose text of them (e Quandt) derives from the π -subgroup of the emended hyparchetype ϕ , and omits part of 77.4–5. The context, and the divergent MS tradition, raise the possibility that the position of these Hymns before the Proclan *Prolegomena* is owed to Proclus himself, whose familiarity with these poems is well known;¹³ yet such is the extent of the earlier tradition for Hesiod, wherein they are never found, that this seems most improbable.¹⁴

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¹³ Cf. M. L. West, *Hesiod, Works and Days* (Oxford, 1978), p. 68.

¹⁴ Cf. Pertusi, *op. cit.*, with references to earlier studies. I am most grateful to Professor D. Harlfinger for his generous response to my enquiries.

ON WHAT IS NOT IN ANY WAY IN THE *SOPHIST*

To ensnare the sophist of the *Sophist* in a definition disclosing him as a purveyor of images and falsehoods Plato must block the sophistical defence that image and falsehood are self-contradictory in concept, for they both embody the proposition proscribed by Parmenides – ‘What is not, is’. It has been assumed that Plato regards this defence as depending on a reading of ‘what is not’ (*to mē on*) in its very strongest sense, where it is equivalent to ‘what is not in any way’ (*to mēdamōs on*) or ‘nothing’. Likewise, the initial paradoxes of not-being (237b–239c) are seen as requiring that *to mē on* be understood in this way, that later designated by Plato (257b, 258e–259a) as the *opposite of to on* or ‘being’. On this interpretation, Plato’s counter-strategy is to recognise a use of *to mē on* which is not opposed in this strict sense to being, but is indeed a part of it and is ‘being *other than*’.

In a stimulating article,¹ R. W. Jordan challenges this account.² I shall briefly attempt to show that his objections are not decisive and that his own interpretation is open to question.

Jordan makes the interesting suggestion (p. 120) that a distinction between two senses of *not-being*, where one is equivalent to *nothing* and one is not, dates from the middle dialogues – particularly from *Republic* V, where objects of *agnoia* are *mēdamē onta* and objects of *doxa* are both *onta* and *mē onta*. He concludes (p. 121), ‘Malcolm’s view, then, seems to amount to this: that Plato is now extending the moral he draws about objects of belief (i.e. particulars) in the *Republic* to cover forms. Forms too now are seen to be both being and notbeing.’

Jordan is right in so far as *to mēdamōs on* in the *Sophist* is being read in the same way as the *mēdamē onta* of *Rep.* 477a. But there is, I submit, no real connection between the manner in which particulars are and are not in the *Republic* and that in which Forms are and are not in the *Sophist*. Whereas in both dialogues to say ‘X is F’ is to predicate F-ness of X, in the *Sophist* (for 255e–257a at the very least) to say

¹ R. W. Jordan, ‘Plato’s Task in the *Sophist*’, *CQ* 34 (1984), 113–29.

² Referred to by Jordan as ‘Malcolm’s view’. Though flattered by the appellation, I can claim to be but an adherent and not the initiator (see Jordan, p. 120, notes 14 and 15).

'X is not F' is to deny identity between X and F-ness. This in no way challenges X's being fully, completely and in every way F, i.e. fulfilling what, for the middle dialogues, would be a necessary condition for *epistēmē* and not *doxa*. In the Republic, in contrast, to say 'X is not F' is to deny that F-ness is predicated of X. The result is to deprive X of any absolute claim to F-ness and place it in the realm of *doxa* – an outcome not relevant to the *Sophist*.

A minor objection of Jordan's (p. 121) is that, on the reading I support, Plato is 'mislead[ing] the unwary reader about what he intends to prove'.

This charge is based on the fact that at 241d the Stranger will rehabilitate falsehood by showing that not-being *is* in a certain respect whereas at 240c, according to Jordan, he 'is set the quite impossible task' of showing that what is in no way, is in some way.

But I do not see why we would be thought to present Plato as misleading anyone if we interpret him as using a strong sense of 'what is not' (i.e. taking it as equivalent to *to mēdamōs on* or 'what is nothing') in order to generate paradoxes and render (241a) *to mē on* totally inexpressible, inconceivable, etc. This protects the sophist by making the definition of falsehood (saying what is not, is and what is, is not) fall victim to Parmenides' prohibition. And, in order for it to be so liable, 'is' and 'is not' must be taken as opposites, where *to mē on* is to be read as *to mēdamōs on* or 'absolutely nothing' (assuming, with Jordan (p. 123), that existence/non-existence is not relevant to the *Sophist*). Plato has Theaetetus readily agree to this unduly strong interpretation of the being of falsehood in order to render it paradoxical. But, having presented this paradox, Plato then (241cd) suggests that the way to catch the sophist and challenge Parmenides (as well as Theaetetus' hasty version of falsehood) is to use 'what is not' in a way compatible with 'what is' – in other words, in a way which would preclude taking it as 'what in no way is' and so would amend what had been Plato's sophistical practice in the dialogue to this point.

Jordan also finds two more serious difficulties in the view I endorse. The first (p. 121) concerns *Sophist* 258e–259a. Here the Stranger insists that the sense in which he has redeemed 'what is not, is' cannot involve the sense of 'what is not' which is the *opposite* of being. He adds that he will not ask whether this sense of not-being (the opposite of being) *is* (or is not) or whether it has a *logos* (or not). Jordan seems to think that someone who holds that this opposite of being is to be understood as *to mēdamōs on* would have to admit that Plato would have answered these questions. But this is not so. It would make perfect sense for Plato to say here that he will not ask whether *to mēdamōs on* 'is' or has a *logos*. In fact, only if you understand 'the opposite of being' in the way I have taken *to mēdamōs on* do you see why Plato would not ask these questions. Utterances such as '*to mēdamōs on esti*' and '*to mēdamōs on estin alogon*' lead, as we saw in 237a–241a, to an intolerable paradox as do their denials, which, though not obviously self-contradictory, involve the inadmissible expression '*to mēdamōs on*'. Only on this reading is (*sic*!) *to mē on* completely *alogon*, in fact so much so that it makes no sense to ask whether it is *alogon* or not. For *this* reason we get the paradoxes at 237a–241a and the later dismissal at 258a–259a after Plato has turned with relief to an alternative reading of *to mē on*.

The second alleged major difficulty (p. 121) appears to me to be equally misdirected. The text reads, 'Then there is the further very serious problem for Malcolm's view, that Plato does not offer us a distinction between different ways of being F, when he resolves his problems in 257–9. We would expect him to mention here at least (a) what is being, (b) what is in some way notbeing and (c) what is in no way being; and that our original mistake was to identify (b) with (c), which is indeed incompatible with (a). But Plato says none of these things.'

My interpretation, however, requires none of these things to be mentioned. At 258b Plato explicitly says that the not-being they were looking for (that which makes being and not-being compatible) is only the other of being, not the opposite of being. What is this opposite of being, the not-being that is incompatible with being? That which in no way is – *to mēdamōs on*. There is no call for Plato to make the point more patent. It follows from the very meaning of the terms involved.

Jordan would reject this line on the grounds that he reads (p. 124) *to mēdamōs on* as *to mēdamōs on* (F). He sees Plato's task, therefore, as one of showing that what is in no way (F) is (G). But this construction comes to grief on the principle I have already mentioned more than once. The generation of the original paradoxes (237a ff.) and the relevance of Parmenides' prohibition depend on our taking not-being, explicitly given as *to mēdamōs on* at 237b, as equivalent to 'nothing' or 'what is not in any way *simpliciter* (*auto kath'hauto*)' (238c).

Now both and only *to mē on* and *to mēdamōs on* are used as the opposite of being (i.e. as equivalent to 'nothing') in the establishment of the paradoxes (a fact Jordan cannot be allowed to ignore). If, then, he is to reject the suggestion that the resolution of these paradoxes depends on separating *to mēdamōs on*, as opposition, from *to mē on*, as otherness, and includes both *to mē on* and *to mēdamōs on* in otherness, he must be committed to a four-fold reading with a *to mē on* and a *to mēdamōs on* in strict opposition to being and one of each as merely other than being and hence part of it. Or, if these are to be reduced to two by equating *to mē on* in each case with *to mēdamōs on*, he is left with a two-fold use of *to mēdamōs on* in the *Sophist* and there is no textual evidence for such a complexity. In all of 236e–264d the expression '*to mēdamōs on*' is never used in any context where it would be compatible with being. It is Jordan, not I, who needs the support of a forthright endorsement by Plato of his interpretation.

In addition, the use to which Jordan puts his misreading of *to mēdamōs on* is mistaken. He contends (p. 123) that Plato wishes to refute Parmenides' prohibition on saying 'what is not, is' by showing that not being F in any way (his *to mēdamōs on* (F)) is not opposed to being G. This, however, is not what Plato needs for the *Sophist*. The Stranger, in his role of sophist, invokes Parmenides to support the claim that falsehood is impossible (236e–237a) because of its very definition, which is (241a) 'saying things that are, are not and things that are not, are'. One will think or speak falsely when one holds that what is (F) is not (F) or what is not (F) is (F). The resolution of this is the identification of the relevant sense/use of 'not being' as 'being different from' (257b). The definition of falsehood now becomes³ 'saying what is (F) is different from (F) or saying what is different from (F) is (F)'. There is no 'G' involved. 'Saying things that are (G) are not (F) or things that are not (F) are (G) is *not* the sense of the problematic definition of falsehood.

Symptomatic of Jordan's confusions about falsity is the following. On p. 114, n. 4, he claims that the investigation (260b–264b) as to whether not-being combines with belief and language is otiose since Plato has already shown (by 257) that whatever is being is also not-being. He asserts (p. 114), 'It would therefore be a mistake to see the discussion of falsity in 263 as a direct answer to the problem of falsity as expounded in 237 and 240–1. By 263 there is no longer thought to be any difficulty in the nature of notbeing; and so the original problem expounded in 237 and 240–1 has been resolved.'

³ As is ably expounded by Jordan (p. 126), this rendition of Plato's revised account may run into trouble if it is read as stating that anything different from a given predicate truly predicated of a subject would be falsely attributed to that subject. But this does not change the fact that in the basic definition of falsehood, which Plato must salvage, 'is' and 'is not' have to be completed by the same predicate.

I believe this to be mistaken. What we have by 257 is a use of 'X is not' which may be replaced by 'X is (other than)'. This must now be applied to the definition of falsehood to show it is not self-contradictory. Falsehood is taken to be 'saying what is not' and how this is possible has not yet been established. The only way in which 'saying' can partake of 'not-being' which we are given by 257 is that found in such cases as 'Saying is not sneezing' or 'Saying is other than snoring', and such are hardly sufficient for the purpose at hand. After the distinction between nouns and verbs (the names of entities about which things are said and the things said about these entities – 262a–263a), Plato (263b–d) returns to the definition of falsehood as 'saying, about a subject, things that are not, i.e., are other than, what is the case'.

Finally, Jordan tries (p. 124) to introduce a contrast between F and G by suggesting that in the puzzle about images (239c–240c) what has to be resolved is how something can be F (a cat) and not be G (an image). But such an interpretation misses the basic point at issue, which is not the unproblematic question as to whether something can be a cat without being an image, but how there can be images. *This* is what the sophist denies (239d, 240c) on the grounds that an image both is not (F), yet is, in a way, (F).

I conclude that both Jordan's objections and his positive thesis are inconclusive.

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CECROPIDS IN EUBULUS (FR. 10) AND SATYRUS (A.P. 10.6)

Ζῆθον μὲν ἐλθόνθ' ἀγνὸν ἐς Θήβης πέδον
οἰκεῖν κελεύει· καὶ γὰρ ἀξιώτερους
πωλοῦσιν, ὡς ἔοικε, τοὺς ἄρτους ἐκεῖ,
ὁ δ' ὀξύπεινος. τὸν δὲ μουσικώτατον
κλεινὰς Ἀθήνας ἐκπερᾶν Ἀμφίονα,
οὐ βῶσ' αἰεὶ πεινώσι Κεκροπιδῶν κόροι
κάπτοντες αὔρας, ἐλπίδας σιτούμενοι.

Eubulus, fr. 10

ἤδη μὲν Ζεφύροιο ποητόκου ὕγρον ἄημα
ἡρέμα λειμώνος πίτνει ἐπ' ἀνθοκόμους,
Κεκροπίδες δ' ἡχεύσι, γαληναίη δὲ θάλασσα
μειδιάει κρυερῶν ἄτρομος ἐξ ἀνέμων.
ἀλλ' ἵτε θαρσαλέοι, πρυμνήσια λύετε, ναῦται,
πίτνατε δ' εὖ πτερύγων λεπταλέας στολίδας.
ὦ ἵτ' ἐπ' ἐμπορίην πίσυνοι χαρίεντι Πιρήπῳ,
ὦ ἵτε δὴ λιμένων δαίμονι πειθόμενοι.

Satyrus (A.P. 10.6)

Cecropids, grammatically masculine in one case and feminine in the other, occur in each of these pieces of poetry. I believe that the second passage can shed some light on the meaning of the term as it is used in the fragment from the *Antiope* of Eubulus. The question of the significance of the Cecropids in Eubulus has previously been discussed by E. K. Borthwick.¹ A. B. Cook, noting the similarity of *κερκώπη* (a term designating a type of cicada) to the name of Cecrops and seeing their associations with dew as a link between the insects and the names (Herse, Pandrosus) of Cecrops' daughters, had posited a connection between the autochthonous Athenian family of Cecrops and the earth-born cicadas, those symbols of Athenian autochthony.² Borthwick applied Cook's theory to the passage from Eubulus and concluded that

¹ 'A Grasshopper's Diet – Notes on an Epigram of Meleager and a Fragment of Eubulus', *CQ* 60 (1966), 107–12.

² A. B. Cook, *Zeus* (Cambridge, 1940), iii. 246–61.