1 Introduction

> But it is this way – risky as it may be, you see, I must attempt to speak the truth, especially since I am speaking about the truth. *Phaedrus* 247c4–6

1 Truth in the *Sophist*

Truth has remained a central topic in philosophy from at least Parmenides' vision of the "unshaken heart of persuasive Truth" through the myriad of modern perspectives on truth ranging from Nietzsche's "mobile army of metaphors, metonyms, and anthropomorphisms"[1] to the biconditional simplicity of the deflationary T–schema, and beyond. The persistent debate over truth itself is testament to its recalcitrance to attempts at conceptual clarity and precision.

Regardless of the differences among theoretical approaches, two important questions to ask about truth are these: *What is the nature of truth?* and *What is the value of truth?* This book is primarily about Plato's response to the first. Not surprisingly, his response travels with a company of exacting concerns.

My project is motivated by my interest in understanding the following two passages from Plato's *Sophist*. In the first passage, the so-called Stranger from Elea presents Theaetetus with an account of true and false statement. In the second, he relates that account to thought and judgment, although my project concerns only that aspect of it that is an extension of the first.[2] He describes thought as "discourse without voice" (*dialogos aneu phônês*) and judgment as the end result of thought. Statement and judgment involve *doing something* with words and thoughts, respectively, namely asserting or denying, and assertions and denials are either true or false:

> **[I]** And the true [one] of them states of the things that are that they are about you. . . . But the false [one states] other [things] than the things that are. . . . Therefore, it states of the things that are not that [they are] beings. . . . But [it states] things that are different from

[1] Nietzsche (1873) in Kaufmann (1982), 46. See too *Will to Power* (1885), sec. 493.
[2] So, for example, I will not be discussing Plato's account of concept acquisition and cognition.

the things that are about you. For we said, I dare say, that about each [thing] there are many things that are but many [things] that are not. (263b4–12)

[I] Λέγει δὲ αὐτῶν ὁ μὲν ἀληθὴς τὰ ὄντα ὡς ἔστιν περὶ σοῦ. [. . .] Ὁ δὲ δὴ ψευδὴς ἕτερα τῶν ὄντων. [. . .] Τὰ μὴ ὄντ' ἄρα ὡς ὄντα λέγει. [. . .] Ὄντων[3] δέ γε ὄντα ἕτερα περὶ σοῦ. πολλὰ μὲν γὰρ ἔφαμεν ὄντα περὶ ἕκαστον εἶναί που, πολλὰ δὲ οὐκ ὄντα.

[II] [Isn't it that] thought and statement [are] the same; except the discourse without voice that comes-to-be within the soul in relation to itself, is what for us has the name *thought*? . . . Whereas the flow from that through the mouth with voice has been called statement? . . . Then since there was true and false statement, and of these thought showed itself as the discourse of the soul relative to itself, [264b] and judgment [as an] end result of thought, and what we say "appears" is a mixing together of perception and judgment, necessarily also of these [things], which are akin to statement, some of them are also sometimes false. (263e3–264b4)

[II] Οὐκοῦν διάνοια μὲν καὶ λόγος ταὐτόν· πλὴν ὁ μὲν ἐντὸς τῆς ψυχῆς πρὸς αὑτὴν διάλογος ἄνευ φωνῆς γιγνόμενος τοῦτ' αὐτὸ ἡμῖν ἐπωνομάσθη, διάνοια;[4] [. . .] Τὸ δέ γ' ἀπ' ἐκείνης ῥεῦμα διὰ τοῦ στόματος ἰὸν μετὰ φθόγγου κέκληται λόγος; [. . .] Οὐκοῦν ἐπείπερ λόγος ἀληθὴς ἦν καὶ ψευδής, τούτων δ' ἐφάνη διάνοια μὲν αὐτῆς πρὸς ἑαυτὴν ψυχῆς διάλογος, [264b] δόξα[5] δὲ διανοίας ἀποτελεύτησις, "<φαίνεται>" δὲ ὃ λέγομεν σύμμειξις αἰσθήσεως καὶ δόξης, ἀνάγκη δὴ καὶ τούτων τῷ λόγῳ συγγενῶν ὄντων ψευδῆ [τε] αὐτῶν ἔνια καὶ ἐνίοτε εἶναι.

Together these passages stand as what I consider to be the quintessential expression of Plato's account of truth and falsehood, yet they do not by themselves constitute a complete account of his *conception* of truth. I am interested in that conception and its relation to Plato's semantics and metaphysics.

This project aims to fill several gaps in the current scholarship on ancient Greek conceptions of truth, meaning, and language. What is missing is a detailed investigation into how the development of Plato's understanding of the metaphysical foundation of meaning plays an integral role in his conception of truth in the *Sophist*. The two aforementioned passages follow on the heels of a discussion of language and signification that emerges, I argue, from a systematic approach to semantics that Plato commences in the *Cratylus* and continues through the *Parmenides* and *Theaetetus*, each of which is commonly taken to precede the *Sophist*. The *Sophist* supplies something of an explanation of how *being* grounds meaning and truth. However, more needs to be said about the mechanism of *being*, its relation to meaning and truth, the relation between

[3] 'ὄντων' is Cornarius's emendation of the mss. 'ὄντως'. See Cornarius (1561, 159, 194. Burnet (1905) and Duke, et al. (1995) retain 'ὄντων'. This tradition goes all the way back to Stephanus (1578), 263. I follow Robinson (1999), 159 and Crivelli (2012), 234 n. 44, 247. Contra Frede (1967), 57–58; de Rijk (1986), 206–207; Crivelli (1990), 82, 93; Szaif (1998), 475–78; Hestir (2003), 3 n. 4.

[4] Cf. *Tht.* 190a4–7.

[5] For a discussion of the fine-grained senses of this word, see Vogt (2012), 9–24, 82–85.

the latter two, and what sort of conception of truth emerges from all this. It is also the case that more could be said about how this conception of truth complements the account of *truth as being* in "middle-period" dialogues such as the *Phaedo* and *Republic*. Moreover, there has not been a detailed treatment of the striking parallels between Plato's and Aristotle's conceptions of meaning and truth. This book contributes to the developing scholarship in these areas.[6]

2 An introduction to truth

The ancient Greeks have several different ways of thinking about truth. In English the noun 'truth' can refer to what someone believes or says (as in "what you say is the truth"), or it can pick out some fact of the matter (as in, "this story paints a picture of the truth such as it is"). The statement 'what you say is the truth' is tricky since *the truth* could be construed as the words uttered, the proposition expressed, or the fact or "reality" picked out by them. So, the use of 'truth' in these sorts of statements is frequently ambiguous, plus propositions themselves are variously understood and their nature lacks transparency, only frustrating aims at conceptual clarity.

The adjective 'true' is attributed to statements, beliefs, stories, and theories, but is also used to describe things such as directions ("true north"), people ("true friend," "true leader"), motives and character ("true intention," "true grit"), and so forth.[7] Some things are said to be "true of" and "true to" other things. Sometimes we are simply interested in the plain old *truth*. One can find similar usages of '*alêtheia*,' '*alêthês*,' and '*alêthinos*' within the texts of the ancient Greeks, and certainly within those of Plato.

I see my project as doing a bit of *philosophical archaeology*:[8] attempting a reconstruction of Plato's views requires assembling and parsing various remarks about truth from relevant texts, looking for conceptual uniformity and logical consistency, and fitting the pieces accordingly.

However, there are some missing pieces. Surprisingly, Plato dedicates little discussion specifically to an analysis or explication of the nature of truth.

[6] Although the trend in ancient scholarship is away from broad thematic discussions, the passages across the dialogues I discuss are uniquely unified in their critical attention to a combination of epistemological, metaphysical, and semantic issues. I find Plato in the *Cratylus* through *Sophist* "tinkering" with his metaphysics and semantics. I am not arguing that the progress made in these dialogues is Plato's final word. I have avoided delving into the *Timaeus* and *Philebus* only because this would have expanded the scope of the book well beyond its means, and there is a lengthy scholarly debate on Plato's philosophical "development" (for example, note the contrasts in Shorey [1903] and Ryle [1966]) and the placement of the *Timaeus* that I do not have space to consider here. Thanks to a reader for encouraging me to speak to this issue.

[7] See, for example, Williams (2002); Haack (2008), 20–35.

[8] Kant interestingly seems to have coined the expression '*philosophische Archäologie.*' See *Nachlass*, vol. 20 (1895), 278. No need to read anything into my use of the expression beyond what I say.

Socrates never asks *What is truth?* In fact, even in the *Sophist* the account of truth occurs almost as an aside to the real target, the account of falsehood, and that account is required for isolating the nature of the sophist.

Plato and Aristotle are traditionally credited with inventing[9] the *correspondence theory of truth* because both generally think of truth as a feature of those statements and thoughts that, roughly speaking, get things right about the world, *the things that are*. 'Truth' in this respect is used like 'rightness' or 'correctness' (*orthotês*).

The *locus classicus* for Plato's account (or, loosely speaking, "definition") of truth is the *Sophist* passage quoted above:

P–T_{df}: The true [statement] states of the things that are that they are about you [i.e., about some subject].

Aristotle's "definition" (*horisamenois*, 1011b25) of truth occurs at *Metaphysics* Γ.7, 1011b26–27:

A–T_{df}: [To state of] that which is [that] it is and of that which is not [that] it is not [is] true.

Given that in both cases *the things that are* are treated as something independent of language and cognition (i.e., as extralinguistic and extramental "beings"), truth reasonably looks to capture the basic "correspondence intuition" that a statement is true only if there is something in the world *in virtue of which* it is true.[10] In his commentary on the *Sophist*, Cornford takes Plato's account of truth to involve correspondence: "The [true] statement as a whole is complex and its structure corresponds to the structure of the fact. Truth means

[9] See, for example, Kirkham (1992), 119–20.

[10] Dummett (1978), 14; Horwich, (1990), ch. 7. This account of truth also reasonably looks to capture the basic "truthmaker intuition" expressed by either of these two formulations:

TM–A: Necessarily, if S is true, then there is something in virtue of which S is true, (cf. Rodriguez-Pereyra [2009], 228), or

TM–B: For every S: S is true if and only if there is something x such that x is a truthmaker for S (cf. Rami [2009], 3).

Neither TM–A nor TM–B makes any commitment to what a truthmaker is, what S is, or whether there is a type of truthmaking relation between S and x. Commitment to truthmakers may also involve a commitment to a truthmaking *relation* between truthmakers and truthbearers. See Rodriguez-Pereyra (2009), 234–39. For an overview of how some have filled these variables, see Künne (2003), 154–65; Rami (2009), 1–36. Armstrong claims, "The notion of truthmaker may be traced right back to Aristotle": see Armstrong (2004), 5. See also Armstrong (1997), 14–15, 128–29. There *may* be precedent for this interpretation since Aristotle claims at *Cat.* 14b11–22 that the "*pragma*" is "*pôs*" an "*aitia*." On this matter, see ch. 9, secs. 3.3–4. Truthmaker theory may or may not commit one to correspondence. See David (2009a), 137–57. If Plato's and Aristotle's views are consistent with a truthmaker view, TM–B would be the more likely candidate since they think a statement is true bi-conditionally with what it is about. Cf. Armstrong (2004), 4, on asymmetry.

this correspondence."[11] And Crivelli argues that "Aristotle's theory of truth can be regarded as taking the truth of an assertion to amount to a relation of isomorphism [i.e., a robust correspondence relation] to reality."[12]

Interestingly, though, Plato also follows Parmenides in thinking that truth is associated at its core with *being*, or, as we might colloquially put it, "reality." For example, in the *Republic* Socrates claims that each of understanding, thought, belief, and imagination "partakes of clarity (*saphêneias*)[13] to the degree that the [portion of the world] it is set over partakes of truth (*alêtheias*)" (511e2–4). These portions or components of the world are Forms, images of Forms, ordinary things, and images of ordinary things, respectively. And later Socrates advocates that the education of the philosophers should include the study of subjects that turn the soul away from what is becoming and toward "truth and being," namely the Forms (525b11–c6).[14] Aristotle associates truth with being, too, though with less frequency than Plato.[15]

So, on the one hand, Plato seems to think that truth simply *is* being – that is, truth has an ontological dimension.[16] But by predicating truth of those statements, thoughts, and judgments that correctly assert or deny something about the world, he also seems to think that truth is a property of those privileged statements, thoughts, and judgments that get things right about the world. This apparent "dual conception" of truth is in some ways puzzling since one might assume that Plato would be disinclined to hold that truth in its very nature is *many* even while accepting that there are many truths and that truth can be said in many ways – for example, that there are true people, true pleasures, true statements, true things, and so forth. Yet he does not posit a specific Form *Truth* that would explain why truthbearers have the property of being true.[17] Suffice it to say that the property of truth begins to look very . . . *atypical*.

What is equally puzzling is whether Plato (and Aristotle, for that matter), despite the aura of the "correspondence intuition" in his account, really thinks of the truth of statements and thoughts as somehow defined or explained by a type of correspondence relation.

[11] Cornford (1935/1957), 311, 314–15.
[12] Crivelli (2004), 129 and ch. 4 generally. See too Ackrill (1963/1994), 140.
[13] Clarity seems to be primarily an epistemic notion, whereas truth seems to be tied to semantic content. Possibly that is also true of correctness, in which case there would be some difference between truth and correctness.
[14] In the *Sophist*, the Stranger describes the Friends of the Forms as arguing that "true being (*alêthinên ousian*) is certain intelligible and bodiless forms" (246b7–8).
[15] See, for example, *Met*. A.3, 983b2–3 (cf. *Met*. E 4 and Θ 10).
[16] And for Heidegger it is the locus of misguided thinking about truth.
[17] There is some indirect evidence that Plato allows a form for *truth*. For example, in the *Parmenides*, Parmenides asks Socrates, "so too knowledge itself, what knowledge is, would be knowledge of what truth is, of that itself." Cf. also *Phd.* 115a1; *Rep.* 487a5, 511e1, 526b1–2; *Phlb.* 65a1–5.

There are a variety of contemporary challenges to correspondence theories. Two figure prominently: (A) Whether truth requires or is defined by a truthmaking condition or some type of "seriously dyadic"[18] dependence *relation* between mind-independent entities and true statements or thoughts, and, if so, what that relation amounts to, whether it be a matter of congruence or correlation between truthbearer and truthmaker, or an agreement relation between true statements or thoughts, a view like one finds not only in Aquinas[19] but also in Proclus, Ammonius, and Philoponus;[20] or (B) Whether there must be some *entity* or truthmaker (and I use this term and its derivatives loosely) like a fact or state of affairs that obtains or an object to which a truth corresponds.[21] In other words, correspondence theories are committed to the *ideology* of correspondence and the *ontology* of facts[22] in addition to the dependence of truth on the world.[23]

But is this *Plato's* ideology and ontology? In Chapters 8 and 9, I argue that, contrary to the orthodox interpretation, it is *not* (nor is it Aristotle's) because he does not think his conception of truth requires an affirmative answer to either condition (A) or, qualifiedly, (B). To maintain that truth depends on the world does not entail that truth must be defined or explained by correspondence to fact or object.[24]

My project involves showing how Plato's understanding of the metaphysical foundation of meaning and truth motivates a conception of truth that is consistent with a more minimal vision of truth that avoids difficulties with the *inflated* correspondence conception. Yet this is not to deny that his (or Aristotle's) view of truth captures the "correspondence intuition" that a statement is true if and only if there is something in virtue of which it is true.

The result is a conception of truth that is remarkably innovative. The consistency of Plato's realism with his account of truth is one that some philosophers may find more attractive and intuitive than strict minimalist or other deflationary views that eschew metaphysics altogether and deny that

[18] Wright (1992), 83. See also Künne (2003), 93.
[19] Though Aquinas does not have his sights set on Plato *per se*. 'Agreement' ('*adaequatio*') is one of Aquinas's words in the *Summa contra gentiles* (I, c. 59) for the correspondence relation.
[20] Each of whom employs variations on '*epharmosein*' ("agreement"). Proclus, *In Platonis Timaeum commentaria*, II.287: 3–5; Ammonius, *In Aristotelis De Interpretatione commentarium*, 21:9–13; Philoponus, *In Aristotelis Categorias commentarium*, 81: 29–34. See helpful outline in Künne (2003), 94, 102.
[21] See David (1994), 6, and ch. 2; Alston (1996), 32–33; Merricks (2007), chs. 1, 8 and Merricks (2009) 29–30, 41–42; Künne (2003), 93 ff.
[22] Quine (1951), 11–15; adopted by David (1994), 20 ff.
[23] Or something like mind-independent proposition-like entities such as states of affairs. See Crivelli (2004).
[24] Or object or event; see Künne (2003), 107–10, 145–48.

there is anything significant or interesting to say about truth beyond the platitude *'p' is true if and only if p.*[25]

3 The metaphysical foundation of meaning and truth

Since Plato's conception of truth is tied to his conception of meaning, I approach the above project first by a detailed examination of the foundation of Plato's semantic views. I argue that Plato employs a style of argument to establish the ontological, cognitive, and semantic conditions of *stability* and *combination*,[26] each of which is necessary for meaningful discourse and truth.

The direct expression of this argument occurs during an exchange at *Parmenides* 135bc. Parmenides claims that if one does not allow that "for each of the things that are there is an idea that is always the same (*idean tôn ontôn hekastou tên autên aei einai*) [135c], . . . in this way he will destroy (*diaphtherei*)[27] the *dialegesthai dunamin* in every way (*pantapasi*)." In Chapter 5, I argue that by '*dialegesthai dunamin*' Plato means the capacity for meaningful discourse.[28] Parmenides' argument takes the following form:

(1) Forms are necessary for the possibility of meaningful discourse.
(2) Meaningful discourse is possible (as we witness in the *Parmenides*).
(3) So, there are forms.

Stripped of the specific content, the argument looks like this:

(1) A certain condition(s) Y is necessary for the possibility of X.
(2) X is possible (because x is actual).
(3) So, Y obtains.

Some might see this inference as taking the form of a transcendental argument.[29] I am hesitant to call it that since Kant (or Austin[30]) was not present

[25] Where 'p' = statements and thoughts or propositions, but not propositions as tertiary entities independent of thought, language, and the world.

[26] Here broadly construed to include separation since for Plato the mechanism of separation also involves a combination of kinds, most significantly *being* and *difference*.

[27] Cf. *Tht.* 157b1: "τὸ δ' εἶναι πανταχόθεν ἐξαιρετέον." [28] Cf. *Tht.* 179e6–7 (*dialechthênai*).

[29] For example, Moravcsik (1982), 138; Teloh (1981), 138; Peterson (2000), 19–20. Teloh and Peterson do not use the expression, but see the form. Thomas (2008b), 360 and generally, has an excellent discussion of the use of this type of argument in the *Cratylus*. The same argument form has been spotted in the *Republic* (see Hestir [2003], 142), the *Theaetetus* (Silverman [2000], 110–12), and the *Sophist* (Shields [2013], 213), as well as in Aristotle (see Irwin [1988], §8, §24, §90, §92; Allen [1993], 20.) Heidegger seems to find something like it. See Heidegger (1967) = (1998), 175. Dancy (1991), 447–54, has raised some doubts about the use of transcendental arguments in Aristotle. Thomas (2008b), 349, rightly notes that this type of argument can only make so much progress and is by no means airtight.

[30] Austin is sometimes mentioned as having been the first to actually use the term. See Austin (1939) = (1961), 32–54. It is unclear whether Kant himself actually used the term to refer to this specific form of argument. He uses it at A627/B655, but our use of the term refers to what Kant is describing at A84–95/B116–129. For more on this, see Stern (1999), 112 n., 155, 180 n. 8, 271 n. One of the definitive features of what now are labeled transcendental arguments is that they proceed from the following type of premise:

to denominate it – and of course Kant's project is different from Plato's – but it has the characteristic markings of such an argument. Plato's version will simply go by the "Grounding Argument" (GA).

In Part I on stability and Part II on combination, I argue that the version of GA at *Parmenides* 135bc embodies a pattern of argument that Plato systematically employs at key places in the *Cratylus, Theaetetus*, and *Sophist* in order to establish primarily the requisite conditions for meaningful discourse and/or thought, which are themselves necessary conditions for dialectic and knowledge. For example, in the *Sophist*, Plato offers a version of GA that aims to establish the conditions necessary for the possibility of statement. The Eleatic Stranger claims,

> Taking apart (*dialuein*) each [thing] from all is the most complete destruction (*teleôtatê* [. . .] *aphanisis*) of all statement (*logôn*); for through the interweaving of forms (*dia* [. . .] *tôn eidôn sumplokê*) with each other statement has come-to-be for us. (259e4–6)

Unpacked, the argument looks like this:

(1) The combination of forms (specifically *kinds*) is necessary for the possibility of statement.
(2) Statement is possible (as we witness in the *Sophist*).
(3) So, the forms (kinds) combine (and the Stranger proceeds to show how).

By establishing the grounding conditions for language, GA justifies the foundation for a semantic theory, but because language and thought are necessary for the possibility of knowledge and dialectic, GA also works to justify the foundation for a particular conception of those.[31]

In the *Cratylus* (the subject of Chapter 3) and the *Theaetetus* (the subject of Chapter 4), GA is used critically against Heracliteanism but nevertheless indirectly entails positive results for Plato's conception of meaning, namely that (a) there must be stable "semantic objects," viz. entities that possess the requisite formal attributes of *oneness* and *sameness*, and (b) these semantic objects must have the ability to combine because statement (*logos*) and truth require "interweaving" (*Soph*. 259e4–6, "combination") at both the ontic ("being") and noetic-linguistic ("thought-language") levels. These semantic objects serve as the meanings of terms.[32]

(1) A certain condition Y is necessary for the possibility of X.
This sort of claim is intended to be metaphysical and a priori, rather than natural and a posteriori. (1) aims for content that makes it true in all possible worlds. For discussion of this, see Stern (1999), 3. It is pure fantasy to think Plato knew about possible worlds. Plus, whether GA is a transcendental argument is unclear, yet it certainly resembles one.

[31] Cf. Keyt (1969), 13; Castagnoli (2010), 225–36, *pace* Denyer (1991), 162–63.

[32] For evidence that Plato thinks kind terms have forms as their meanings, see, for example, *Men.* 74d2–e2; *Phd.* 78c1–79a5, 102b1–2, 103b5–c2; *Rep.* 596a6–8; *Phdr.* 266b3–5; *Parm.* 130e5–131a2, 133c8–133d5; *Tim.* 52a4–7. My interpretation only commits Plato to the view that forms serve as meanings for at least some names, but not to the view that for every predicate expression there is a corresponding form. For example, in *Rep.* X Socrates suggests that there a form of *bed*. But it is unclear whether he is there committed to the inference from

Where the *Parmenides* (the subject of Chapter 5) shows that certain entities are necessary for the possibility of language and thought, the *Sophist* (the subject of Chapters 6 through 9) makes the case for the combination of those entities. This in fact is what Socrates said in the *Parmenides* would "amaze" him and what the Eleatic Stranger argues is required for statement. Meaning and predication are saved across these dialogues by a defense of a dynamic metaphysical structure to the world.

Plato thinks these sorts of semantic objects are forms because forms are the only entities that satisfy the stability conditions of *being one and always the same*, so in that respect forms can serve as the foundation for Plato's semantic "theory."[33] But the details of this point are complex and controversial.

I argue that these texts implicitly commit Plato to the following set of dependence relations or "priorities":

(A_1) dialectic → (B_1) discourse/language →
(A_2) knowledge (B_2) thought
(B_3) $\text{truth}_{\text{ling/cog}}$

(C_1) stable semantic objects[34] → (D_1) stable ontology → (F) forms
(C_2) $\text{combination}_{\text{ling/cog}}$ (D_2) $\text{truth}_{\text{ont}}$

In other words, (F) is necessary for (or prior to) the possibility of $(D_{1–2})$, $(D_{1–2})$ is necessary for the possibility of $(C_{1–2})$, and so forth.[35]

Some have suggested that at least in the *Parmenides*, Plato employs something like GA to get (F) and that (F) embodies *strong Platonism*, which is best illustrated by the metaphysics of the *Phaedo* and *Republic*. In these dialogues, a *F*orm is a being that *is completely* and is one and the same *in every respect*. In Chapter 2, I provide further detail on strong Platonism. In Chapters 3 through 7, I argue there is nothing from the *Cratylus* through the *Sophist* that directly supports interpreting Plato as defending anything like strong Platonism. In the *Parmenides*, for example, Plato employs GA to justify the move specifically from $(B_{1–2})$ to (C_1), and (D_1). The move from $(B_{1–2})$ to (C_1) primarily establishes (i) which ideal attributes an entity (or property) must have in order to serve as a semantic object that fixes meaning

there being beds to the existence of a form *bed*. Aristotle thinks not: *Met.* A.9, 991b3–9; *Peri Id.*, 79.22–80. See Cherniss (1944), 243–44; Fine (1993), 81–88; Broadie (2007), 232–53. Cf. White (1992), 281–82, 304 n. 6; Crivelli (2008), 218–22.

[33] I agree with Thomas (2008a), 635, that for Plato semantics answers to metaphysics, but not vice versa.

[34] Aristotle would add that these are the sorts of entities that conform to law of non-contradiction.

[35] The relation between thought and knowledge is interesting but one I do not discuss here. The conception of that relation is different in light of developments in the *Theaetetus* and *Sophist* than it is in, say, the *Phaedo* (74e–76e) and *Republic* (507 ff) where on some readings there is knowledge of Forms by some sort of direct contact. See Silverman (2001), 26.

(viz. being one and the same *in at least one respect*), and (ii) that there must be such entities.[36]

If Plato were to think that meanings are conceptual, then (C_1) and the content of (B_2) would collapse into one.[37] That picture is one of semantic internalism: the view that meaning is completely determined by features that are internal to the speaker.[38] However, on my interpretation Plato maintains in these dialogues a type of semantic externalism: the view that the meanings of terms are determined *primarily* by extralinguistic, extramental entities. The move to ($D_{1–2}$) is the move to external realism. Since (D_2) is truth understood as stable being, and the semantic objects constitute stable being, ($D_{1–2}$) and (C_1) can be taken together. (F) is that stable being, so ($D_{1–2}$) and (F) collapse into one: forms are the stable semantic objects that serve as the meanings of terms – they are the metaphysical foundation for meaningful discourse and thought.

Plato's commitment to externalism does not entail that the conceptual content of thought does not play a role in meaning.[39] His view is that the primary locus of meaning is with the forms, and he proceeds in the dialogues I consider by operating with a "direct signification" model of meaning. The move to ground meaning in forms is a significant argumentative leap Plato makes that stretches the grounding argument beyond what it can reasonably be expected to establish, though in context the motivation for such a move is understandable. Moreover, as the narrative unfolds over these dialogues, it is not that Plato is not concerned with knowledge, but that he realizes that without stable thoughts (concepts), there is no possibility of being in a position to acquire knowledge. Without stable objects (forms) that ground the semantic content of thought, everything all the way up to knowledge and dialectic would be impossible.[40]

Where some find Plato in the *Parmenides* salvaging[41] the theory of Forms, I find Plato systematically employing across the *Cratylus*, *Parmenides*,

[36] Given the form of GA, (i) and (ii) stand or fall together.
[37] Specifically the content of thought is the locus of meaning, not the faculty of thought *per se*.
[38] Kallestrup (2012), 2. [39] Cf. Evans (2011), 345–47.
[40] Aside from concerns about Plato's appeal to forms to ground meaning, one might also be concerned about the fact that even after the modifications to his ontology, Plato has offered too robust an account of stability since a plausible competing view is that concepts that are stable for at least some time are sufficient to ground meaning. Plato has not ruled out being stable for some time; however, recall that Plato's occasional model for stability lies in mathematics, and mathematical entities he thinks retain stability eternally, as one might expect to hear from a realist about numbers. Thanks to a reader for pressing me on this issue.
[41] A term used by Ackrill (1955), 79. Cf. Rickless (1998), 501–54; and (2007). However, note that Rickless also sees qualifications placed on the theory of Forms, and so is not supposing that what emerges from the *Parmenides* is a radically strong version of Platonism. Rickless argues that forms' "radical purity" (RP) is rejected in part two of the *Parmenides* (see p. 511), but maintains RP throughout the middle dialogues. My reading of the second part of the *Parmenides* is different from his. Sayre (1996) sees Plato revealing in the second part of the dialogue how Socrates' theory can be modified, too. See Sayre (1998), 92–97. Silverman (2002a) argues that Plato knew the criticisms in the *Parmenides* were ineffective. The *Parmenides* finds Plato