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*Beatriz Bossi,
Thomas M. Robinson (Eds.)*

**PLATO'S ›SOPHIST‹
REVISITED**



TRENDS IN CLASSICS

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Plato's *Sophist* Revisited

Trends in Classics – Supplementary Volumes

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Preface

This book consists of a selection of papers presented at the *International Spring Seminar on Plato's Sophist* (26–31 May 2009, Centro de Ciencias de Benasque 'Pedro Pascual', Spain) with the financial support of MICINN, CSIC, Universidad de Zaragoza and Gobierno de Aragón. The Conference was organized by the editors, under the auspices of the Director of the Centre, Prof. José Ignacio Latorre, who provided invaluable assistance at every stage of the Conference, up to its close with a lecture on Quantum Physics for Philosophers.

The aim of the conference was the promotion of Plato studies in Spain in the framework of discussions with a number of international scholars of distinction in the field, whilst at the same time looking afresh at one of Plato's most philosophically profound dialogues. Readers will find papers by scholars from Spain (Bernabé, Bossi, Casadesús, de Garay, Monserrat, Solana), France (Cordero, Narcy, O'Brien), Italy (Frontotta, Palumbo), Portugal (Mesquita), Mexico (Hülsz), Chile (Sandoval) and the Anglo-Saxon orbit (Ambuel, Dorter, Robinson).

The papers included fall into three broad categories: a) those dealing directly with the ostensible aim of the dialogue, the definition of a sophist; b) a number which tackle a specific question that is raised in the dialogue, namely how Plato relates to Heraclitus and to Parmenides in the matter of his understanding of being and non-being; and c) those discussing various other broad issues brought to the fore in the dialogue, such as the 'greatest kinds', true and false statement, difference and *mimesis*.

The volume opens with a paper by T. M. Robinson which argues that the final definition of the *Sophist* might well reflect the (very negative) views of the later Plato on sophists, but is unlikely to reflect the views of Socrates, who would almost certainly have wished to exclude Protagoras from so drastic a portrayal. F. Casadesús lays stress on Plato's description of sophists as slippery Proteans, who, though greatly skilled in evading capture, can still be captured in the end by dialectic. J. Monserrat and P. Sandoval argue that the search to define a sophist leads tangentially but very fruitfully to a description of what a *philosopher* is, i. e., an endless enquirer into Being. And A. Bernabé offers evidence to show that religious concepts anchor the whole argumentation of the sixth def-

inition of the sophist (26b–231c); a sophist is at base ‘a false prophet of a false religion who promises a false purification’.

A paper by M. Narcy offers a careful description of the first five attempts to define a sophist, concluding with a strong statement of how Socrates might meaningfully have considered himself a sophist (as he apparently was by some Eleans), though with the *caveat*, voiced by the Stranger, that his own sophistry, unlike that of others, is ‘faithful to its lineage’. The idea that there might be different types of sophistry is further pursued by J. Solana, who, like Bernabé, examines the famous sixth definition of a sophist, where sophistry is said to purify the soul by a maieutic method which seems remarkably if not indeed uniquely Socratic, and he contrasts the (epistemological) catharsis brought about by such genuine sophistry (characterized as that of ‘noble lineage’) with that of the other forms of sophistry which Plato scrutinizes. A final paper in this section, by K. Dorter, examines the question of the peculiar technique of division employed by Socrates to reach a definition of the sophist, that of bisection, by contrast with the method of natural joints between species which we find in the *Phaedrus* and *Philebus*.

In the book’s central section, E. Hülsz argues that a brief but significant reference in the *Sophist* to Heraclitus offers evidence that Plato was aware of the intimate relation between being, unity and identity in Heraclitus, and that this serves as a useful counterweight to the stress on his doctrine of flux which we find in the *Cratylus* and *Theaetetus*. On the question of whether Parmenides’ doctrine of non-being is destroyed by Plato in the *Sophist*, D. O’Brien argues colourfully and at length that no such thing happens; B. Bossi that something is indeed demolished, but that *what* is demolished is in fact a caricature of Parmenides’ thought put together by the Eleatic Stranger; and A. P. Mesquita that Parmenides’ doctrine of non-being is merely *re-fashioned* in the *Sophist*, i. e., as something ‘other’; it is never refuted. In this re-fashioning, he maintains, Plato sets out to show that one can talk without contradiction of being either absolutely and ‘in itself’ or relatively and ‘in relation to something other’. The section concludes with a paper by N. L. Cordero which discusses at length the centrality of the doctrine of separation of Forms and sense-world in Plato, and shows how, in the *Sophist*, the ‘relative non-being’ of each Form makes it constitutively ‘other’ than any and all other Forms, and how this opens up the possibility of meaningful thought and speech.

The final section of the book begins with a closely-argued discussion, by F. Fronterotta, of ontology, predication and truth in the *Sophist*,

which emphasizes the importance of separating falsehood from what-is-not and situates it in the connection of subject and predicate. J. de Garay, writing on a topic closely germane to this, discusses falsehood and negation in the *Sophist*, but this time as understood by Proclus. D. Ambuel, in a broad ranging discussion of the *megista gene*, argues that the analysis by which the *gene* are differentiated in the dialogue is an exercise in studied ambiguities informed by an Eleatic logic of strict dichotomy that was underpinning of the *Sophist's* method of division. By this dialectical drill, Plato shows that the metaphysics underlying the Visitor's method fails to adequately distinguish what it means to be a character, and therefore remains inadequate to track down the sophist or to distinguish him from the philosopher: Eleaticism, as critically examined by Plato, proves to be means to disguise, not to discover the sophist. The section (and the book) concludes with a wide-ranging paper by L. Palumbo which sets out to show that in the *Sophist* falsity is closely linked to *mimesis*, all falsity being for Plato mimetic though not every *mimesis* false.

During the Conference there was a video presentation by C. Kahn which provoked a fruitful debate with D. O'Brien and N. Notomi. After the sessions, informal meetings gave young researchers the opportunity to discuss ideas with A. Bernabé, N. Cordero and T.M. Robinson.

Finally, we should like to thank Prof. Germán Sierra for his aid and encouragement from the very beginning; without his support the Conference would have never taken place. We are also deeply grateful to Tracey Paterson, David Fuentes and Anna Gili for their warm hospitality and for their valuable help with the overall organization of the Conference, including a visit to the waterfalls, which took us out of the 'Academy' for a memorable afternoon in the woods.

The editors, Spring 2012

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Mimesis in the *Sophist**

Lidia Palumbo

Mimesis is the production of images (*Soph.* 265b1–3). These cover a very wide semantic field, including the meanings of “opinion” and “viewpoint”. A false image is a wrong opinion that says the things that are not: in believing, we imagine; in thinking, we represent what we think. The false belief is therefore a mental scene, an image that possesses neither a corresponding reality nor a model, although it is perceived as a real scene. The virtue of an image (the *arete eikonos*) lies in its being similar to what is true, whereas the similarity between false and true can produce a deception similar to that caused by a dream or by poetry.

The aim of this paper is to show that in the *Sophist* falsity is closely linked to *mimesis*. This is not because every *mimesis* is false, but because all falsity is mimetic. That not every *mimesis* is false is shown at 235c–236c. The crucial distinction between *eikastike* and *phantastike* must be understood as the distinction between true and false *mimesis*. That every falsity is mimetic is a far more complex issue, which I shall be discussing in this paper. I shall claim that falsity does *not* consist in confusing something for something else, but, more specifically, in confusing an image for its model.

Plato illustrates his theory of perceptive deception by recalling the confusion between image and model. This happens at 234e–236c, where the production of false representations of ‘things which are’ is addressed. In my opinion Plato’s accounts of false statement can be understood only by focusing on the production of such false representations. Unlike a number of scholars¹, I claim² that the *Sophist* possesses a deep unity. This unity is not acknowledged in their interpretations of the dialogue, which see either no link, or only a very loose one, between the section on image and that on false statement. I will try, therefore, to

* I am very thankful to Alessandro Stavru for helping me with the reviewing of the English text of this paper as well as for a number of useful suggestions.

1 Owen (1971); Frede (1992).

2 Following Notomi (1999).

demonstrate that all statements are images. There are true and false images; the same cause is responsible for the falsity of statements and all other images, and consists of an intermingling with 'what is not' (*to me on*). 'What is not' is not the other, but only that part of the other which is opposed to the reality of each thing (258e2)³. In the *Sophist* the genus of 'what is' (*to on*) represents reality: "to participate in 'what is' means therefore 'to really be'", "to really have a given nature". 'What is not' is by no means difference in general, but only what is different from 'what is'⁴. Only a thing's image can represent the difference from 'what is'. The image *is* this difference, but sometimes it *conceals* it, passing itself off as the thing it is the image of. When this happens, *and only when this happens*, is the image 'what is not'. When the difference between a thing and its image is not displayed, 'what is not' is generated. This is the *mimema*, and more particularly that specific form of it which is called *phantasma*.

In the *Sophist* the issue of 'what is not' is highlighted because the dialogue addresses the difference between reality and appearance⁶. This link between 'what is not' and appearance is missing in analytical interpretations of the dialogue.

The difference between reality and appearance is introduced together with the *mimema* and its deceptive similarity to what it is the *mimema* of. The relationship between true and false images can be understood only through an analysis of this deceptive similarity: both the true and the false image are *mimemata*, but only in the case of the true image does the soul receive a *mimema* that *corresponds* to reality, i. e., a representation that 'tells how things are as they are'. A closer look at the *mimema* will clarify the meaning of the expression 'corresponds to reality'.

A *mimema* is an image which generates a perception similar to that caused by the object which is represented through it. For instance, a depicted image of a house is a *mimema* because the image of the house taking shape in the soul of the spectator is *similar* to that arising in the soul

3 Cf. Cordero (1993) 270 n. 338; O'Brien (1995) 66–71; Fronterotta (2007) 454, n. 252.

4 This reading meets the requirement of 'Parity Assumption' between the two concepts of 'what is' and 'what is not' (cf. Owen [1971] 229–231), because it shows that 'what is not' (*to me on*) represents appearance, i. e., non-reality. See Palumbo (1994) 203.

5 Dixsaut (1991) 205.

6 Notomi (1999) 122.

of the spectator looking at a genuine (and not simply at a depicted) house. Even the dream is a *mimema*, since dreaming of a house means looking at it as one would look at a house made of bricks (266b–c)⁷.

In all of these cases the images of the objects take shape in the soul even if the objects themselves are absent. These images take shape in the soul and mingle with other images which also arise in the soul, but the latter follow the perception of something real, not of an image. Every image taking shape in the soul following a perception generates an opinion – both if the perception is that of an image and that of a real object. If a person perceiving an image of a house believes he is looking at a real house and not an image he is mistaken.

The thought, the *phantasia*, and the opinion of the mistaken perceiver are in touch with ‘what is not’ (260c, 261a). It is very important to observe that when Plato dwells on falsity he refers to *phantasia* (260e), *phantasia* being the seat of mental images.

In my opinion, in the *Sophist* there is no falsity other than that which indissolubly links opinion to representation, and which consists in looking at a *mimema* believing it is what it is the *mimema* of. There is no ‘what is not’ other than the confusion between the original and the image, between reality and appearance.

The *mimemata* pose the issue of truth. Each of them raises the question whether we are facing ‘what is’ or ‘what is not’. The *Sophist* allows us to understand whether the *mimemata* are true or not in the following way: if we notice that the *mimema* is different from what it is the *mimema* of, it is true, and is a ‘what is’; if instead we mistake it for the object it is the *mimema* of, it is false, and is a ‘what is not’.

The first *mimema* is the *eikon*, while the latter is the *phantasma*. To prove the strong link between *mimemata* and falsity, Plato states:

“Since the existence of false statement and false opinion has been proved, it is possible for the ‘representations of the things which are’ (*mimemata ton onton*) to be, and for a deceptive art to come to be from this disposition” (264d).

This passage is decisive. It maintains that demonstrating the existence of the false is equivalent to demonstrating the existence of *mimemata*. Usually this passage is interpreted as if the Stranger were stating that all *mimemata* are false⁸. I disagree with this view. Plato is stating here that the

7 Sörbom (2002) 21.

8 Rosen (1983) 151.

existence of the false entails a gap, a difference, a distance between things as they actually are and the way they appear; only within this difference can something like an image exist. If there were no difference between the way things are and the way they appear, images would not exist, since they are nothing but the way things appear, by contrast with the way they are. This distinction is absolutely crucial in Platonic gnoseology. If images did not exist, all perceptions would be perceptions of realities, and therefore true (this is what the sophist claims at 260c1–d3). However, falseness exists, and along with it the possibility that things can appear different from how they are. So they can be represented by an image not only truthfully, but also falsely.

In Plato's account of the mimetic image the similarity⁹ between image and model is particularly important. At 235d–236c Plato says that, among the *mimemata*, the *eikon* is faithful to the proportions of the model (i. e., of what the *mimema* is the *mimema* of), while the *phantasma* is not. It is however important to point out that the *phantasma* is not faithful to the proportions of the model because it aims to create an impression of reality: it alters the proportions of reality not in order to be different from it, but to be as much as possible similar to it: the alteration of truth aims at establishing the paradoxical possibility of being “mistaken for true” (235e–236a): in order to appear natural the upper and therefore more distant segments are made bigger, whereas the lower and nearer ones are made smaller.

Only what is mistaken for true is false. But what exactly does ‘to be mistaken for true’ mean? What does this expression mean when it refers to a non-pictorial *mimema*? The cases reported by Plato in the *Republic* (598d–602c) are very interesting: he mentions the poet as being capable of making everyone believe that he is *truly* an expert in all the fields his poetry deals with: medicine, the art of strategy, and the education of mankind. In Plato's opinion the poet is by contrast only *falsely*, and not *truly* expert in those fields. We could say that ‘he is an expert only in poetry, not in life’, which has the same import as ‘only in image, not in reality’. The point of Plato's interpretation is that the poet tries to appear an expert without being one, exactly as the sophist does¹⁰. He is like an image trying to resemble the reality it is the image of.

9 Pradeau (2009) 138.

10 Notomi (1999) 129–133; Palumbo (2008) 50.

At 233b the sophists are described as those who have the skill to raise in their listeners the belief that they are the wisest of all in every field. At 234b1 *to mimetikon* is defined as a “mockery” (*paidia*), and two examples of it are provided: the first involves someone who shows a number of depicted *mimemata* to mindless children so as to make them believe that “he is capable of making everything”. The second involves someone who seduces inexperienced young people by pointing to statements which he calls “spoken images” (234c5–6) and makes them believe that those spoken images tell the truth. The passage describes the first case as a visual, the second as an auditory piece of deception. Their common feature is that in both cases the false *mimemata* are passed off as true, and it is precisely this being passed off as true which makes them false.

We might ask in what sense the *mimemata* are passed off as true. The first case is clear: pictures of realities are passed off as realities, which means that the spectator believes he is looking at realities not at pictures. He therefore believes that whoever is making them is capable of making “anything he wants” (234b10). In order to render the example plausible, Plato says that these spectators are children, and moreover mindless.

As for the second case (to which the definition of sophist pursued throughout the dialogue will be applied), we must ask: how exactly does the deception work? The passage in question says that the false statements are believed to be true. If we examine the text more carefully, however, we discover what the first and the second example have in common: in both cases the *mimetes* tries to create an opinion in someone’s soul. In the first example the opinion is that the viewer is facing a creator (the images are believed to be realities), in the second that the audience is facing a wise man (the speeches are believed to be true). He tries to create these opinions through *mimemata*, i. e., through images, the point being that such *mimemata* are “that which makes an opinion come to be”¹¹.

The *mimema* exists in order to bring about a certain opinion in the observer. When this opinion is such that it takes the *mimema* to be not a *mimema* but a reality, the *mimema* is a *phantasma* (this happens in both of the above mentioned examples). The creations of the sophist live on in the souls of those who listen to him. Such creations are opinions¹², all of them related to the opinion that he, the sophist, is the wisest of all in

11 Benardete (1984) II, 101; Notomi (1999) 126; Pradeau (2009) 138.

12 Pradeau (2009) 335, n.4.

every field. This opinion is the *phantasma* of the sophist, that is, his false appearance, the subjective and objective side of his technique of deception.

Both examples can therefore be paraphrased as follows: the mindless children believe, not that they are looking at something fake, shallow or insubstantial (i. e., at an image created in order to *be similar* to reality), but at the reality *itself*. In the second case the young people who listen to the sophists are seduced. In fact, seduction prevents them from getting *directly in touch* with reality: they don't make contact with reality, but only with its prefabricated images. They do not form their opinion by perceiving reality. They build their belief on illusion, i. e., on images they believe to be realities. This reminds us of the famous example of the cave, but also of all the examples of images located in the first section of the divided line (*Resp.* VI).

Let us observe the *phantasmata* more closely. They are images which are not dissimilar from their originals (as scholars commonly hold)¹³. In fact, according to Plato the false is such not because of its dissimilarity from the true, but rather because of its determination to appear true without being so. If the false did not resemble the true, it could not be mistaken for it; on the contrary, the true and the false are actually mistaken for each other. So it is necessary to distinguish between two kinds of similarities: a real similarity, which is shared by realities of the same genus, and which I shall call similarity I, and apparent similarity, which associates the originals with their false images, and which I shall call similarity II¹⁴.

In the *Cratylus* Plato says that “images are far from having the same qualities as the originals of which they are images” (432d). However, the *Sophist* shows that in certain conditions the originals and their images can appear *more than similar*: they can appear identical.

This appearing “more than similar” (= similarity II) is possible because it is linked to perception. In fact, this similarity exists only at a perceptual level. For this reason Plato's account of the genesis of *phantasmata* at 235e–236c focuses on the “viewpoint” of the observer, which is presented as the objective of the production of such images. The peculiar feature of *phantasmata* (i. e., the images produced by a *mimetes* who aims at deceiving the observer, making him believe they are identical to reality) is that they are arranged *to be seen*: all their proportions have cer-

13 Fronterotta (2007) 303 n.105.

14 Cf. *Soph.* 231a 7–8; Palumbo (1995) 175–183.

tain features because they must *appear in a certain way to the eye of the observer*. The insistence with which Plato sticks to this point (which is noticeable in other dialogues as well) enables us to differentiate between the two above-mentioned similarities: the first, which is real, pertains to the similar features of realities belonging to the same genus; the second, which is apparent, concerns the ontologically dissimilar features of a reality and its image. The first is a true similarity (which can be grasped through *logoi*)¹⁵, since it relates to the set of features *objectively* belonging to similar realities; the second is a false similarity because it does not belong to the objects of its perceptions, but to the relationship occurring between a subject and those objects.

The relationship between a subject and the objects of its perceptions is manipulable, and this manipulability is the cause of falsity. According to Plato, the reason why the cause of falsity lies in human ignorance is because ignorance is nothing other than the incapacity to distinguish an object from its false images.

Beginning with the *Cratylus*, the issue of truth is posed in terms of the pattern of similar images, and already at *Crat.* 433a Plato is pointing out the difference between the way images and words are similar to the things they represent.

While discussing visual art, the Stranger maintains that there are some *demiourgoi* who “dismiss what is true, and work at producing in their images not the proportions that *are* but those that *seem* beautiful” (236a5–6). This is how *demiourgoi* produce *phantasmata*. The *phantasma* is a *phainomenon* that appears to be similar to the beautiful (ἐοικέναι τῷ καλῷ, 236b5) because it is seen from a non-beautiful viewpoint (b4–5); once observed properly it “would not even look similar to what it says it resembles” (μηδ’ εἰκὸς εἶναι φησὶν εἰοικέναι, b6–7).

This statement is not immediately clear. If on the one hand it is obvious that the crucial point of the argument about false appearance concerns the issue of similarity, on the other hand it is less clear what type of similarity it is which is at issue. In other words we must ask: what resembles what? Probably the similarity Plato is talking about when he maintains that a properly observed image “would not even look similar to what it says it resembles” is not similarity to the original (as scholars commonly hold)¹⁶, but rather similarity to the beautiful¹⁷.

15 Cf. *Pol.* 258 A2–3.

16 Meinhardt (1990) 83.

17 Cordero (1993) 122.

We can assume that, according to Plato and his contemporaries, the question whether a body was beautiful or not was not a matter of mere appearance and opinion, but rather something depending on accepted measures and proportions for the composition of parts into a harmonious whole. Thus, if someone believed that an object was beautiful and well proportioned, those proportions and relations could be measured in order to find out whether that object was actually beautiful or just appeared to be such¹⁸.

In my opinion, all these references to measures and proportions show that to Plato it is all about verifying the similarity of the *phantasma* to the beautiful. This is proved by a passage in which Plato says that if someone saw the *phantasma* as it is and not as it appears, it would look not in the least *similar to what it pretends to resemble* (236b7). I want to make clear that a *phantasma* in no way declares its similarity to the original, but rather its identity to it. What it declares that it resembles cannot therefore be the original, but only the beautiful, as explicitly stated at 236b5.

Obviously, the *phantasma* is also similar to the original, but this similarity is never *declared*. What is declared instead is that the *phantasma* is exactly what it appears to be, i.e., the original itself (see *Resp.* 476c5–7). Once seen, it resembles the original because it produces the same impressions as the original itself would produce once seen. For this reason the *phantasma* is said not to be what it appears to be (*Soph.* 236b7).

Mimetike is a *poiein*, a “making”, a “bringing to being”. More specifically, it brings to being the series of *eidola* that accompany every perception. At the end of the *Sophist* a distinction occurs between the perceptions of *eidola* and the perceptions of realities. This ultimate *diairesis* (265b etc.) begins by distinguishing divine from human production: natural realities are a divine production, artificial ones a human production. Both are subject to *diairesis*: we have, therefore, within divine production, 1) realities and 2) images. The same happens within human production: 1) realities and 2) images. It is worth noticing that this opposition between real things and their images is the most important one in the whole dialogue.

In reference to divine production of realities the stranger mentions the example of “ourselves”; in reference to divine production of images he mentions the images of ourselves which appear in our dreams (or are

18 Sörbom (1966) 158.

reflected in water, or by shadows). In reference to human production of realities he mentions a house built with building skill; in reference to human production of images he mentions a house painted with painting skill (i. e., a sort of man-made dream produced for non-sleeping men, according to the famous definition of 266c). At this point the text explicitly recalls the previously mentioned *diareseis*, and the Stranger asserts that within the technique of the production of images two parts could be discerned (one producing *eikones* and the other one *phantasmata*), provided falsehood comes to light as it really is and reveals itself as one of the things that are (266e).

After these words, which seem to me the clearest statement of the link between *phantasmata* and falsity, the stranger proceeds to divide *only* the false images. The technique for producing *phantasmata* (*phantastikon*) – false images – is divided into two types: that performed by those who create the representation using tools different from themselves and their bodies, and that performed by those who use themselves and their bodies. An example of the latter type are those who make use of their own body in order to make it look similar to the way someone else looks, or of their own voice in order to make it sound similar to the voice of someone else. It is interesting to notice that Plato emphasizes how it is this specific aspect of *phantastike* “above all” (*malista*) which is called *mimesis* (267a8–9). In my opinion this means not only that there are other aspects of the *phantastike* that are called *mimesis* which can be described and understood as “imitation”, but also that there are *mimeseis* which are not aspects of *phantastike*, and which are not false¹⁹.

However, these true *mimeseis* are not discussed in this section of the *Sophist*²⁰, and since the definition being sought is that of the sophist, room is made only for false *mimeseis*. The stranger asks his interlocutor to define as *mimetikon* only that part of the mimetic genus which consists in using ourselves as a tool for a false representation (267a10–11). The following *diarexis* further defines the *definiendum*: the mimetic falsifier who introduces himself under a fake identity has no knowledge at all of the reality he tries to simulate (267b–e). He is aware that he does not know it, and he fears that the ignorance he strives to keep hidden will be discovered (268a). He is a specialist in short, private statements, whose aim is to bring the interlocutor to contradict himself. The sophist

19 Pradeau (2009) 139: “il existe une espèce non sophistique de la *mimesis*”.

20 Palumbo (2008) 21, n.31.

wants to appear as a *sophos* to his interlocutors. He is the image of a *sophos*, and since every image is a kind of derivative reality, his name too is derived from that of the *sophos*.

This proves that the section on images at page 240 is closely linked to the final one on the last *diairesis*. Between the two sections the analysis of false statements occurs. It provides an explanation of falsity which can be understood as the ‘substitution of the original for the image’.

At this point we can draw the conclusions the whole argument has led to. False statement represents not ‘what is’, but ‘what is not’, i. e., not ‘what is’ as it really is, but as it falsely appears to be. It is an image that passes itself off for the original.

“Theaetetus sits” is a true statement because Theaetetus is actually sitting and the statement (which is a *mimema*) depicting him while sitting is a true image, an *eikon* corresponding to reality (Theaetetus is just sitting there). “Theaetetus flies” is a false statement because Theaetetus does not fly, and the speech depicting him flying is a *mimema* which presents an image of something that does not exist, a *phantasma* that does not correspond to reality.

As a dream is a representation without reality, the representation of Theaetetus flying is false because it represents the image of something which does not have any reality except within the spoken image of which the statement is composed. It is a representation that does not represent anything but itself, a representation that has no original. As I said in the beginning of this paper, the false is the image of an object taking shape in the soul while the object itself is absent. This false representation is similar to what is true, since it has the capability of generating a mental scene similar to that which can be generated by a real object.

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