SOPHISTRY AND METAPHILOSOPHICAL APORIA:
A CRITICAL ACCOUNT OF THE ANALYTIC CONTINENTAL DIVIDE

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This thesis presents an investigation of the divide between analytic and continental philosophy alongside a reading of Plato’s *The Sophist*. *The Sophist* serves to elucidate what I will call the ‘metaphilosophical dimension’ of the discourse of the divide by drawing attention to how this discourse is informed by assumptions regarding the nature of philosophy (in particular its divisibility, and the attributes and limits of philosophical ‘types’). *The Sophist* invites readers to question these assumptions and revisit issues at the kernel and origin of the divide, such as the relationship between the philosophical and the political, the quarrel between philosophy and poetry, and our obligations to the ‘foreign’ philosopher. These themes verge upon a problem perennial to philosophy and, as I will argue, central to the discourse of the divide: the difference between philosophy and sophistry.

In chapter one of this thesis I argue that metaphilosophical problems (and in particular the problem of sophistry) are relevant to contemporary scholarship on the divide, but also obscured therein. In chapter two, I show that these problems are also present in historical examples of ‘divide discourse’. The central example I employ is Russell’s *Mysticism and Logic, and Other Essays*. This text prefigures many of the tropes we still associate with the divide and betrays apparent parallels with the aims and methods of *The Sophist*.

While chapter two looks to particular attempts to negotiate the problem of sophistry through the divide, chapter three is concerned with the conditions, consequences and limitations of such a negotiation (as gleaned through *The Sophist*). I argue that although the divide can be understood as a response to the threat of sophistry, the nature of this response is such that the divide, as a means of representing philosophies, also forecloses further thinking on the question of philosophy’s nature and its difference from sophistry even when this foreclosure can be understood to be a symptom of sophistry. In contrast I conclude that it is only by maintaining this question as a question that philosophy differentiates itself from sophistry.
STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

Except where reference is made in the text of the thesis, this thesis contains no material published elsewhere or extracted in whole or in part from a thesis submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma.

No other person’s work has been used without due acknowledgement in the main text of the thesis.

The thesis has not been submitted for the award of any degree or diploma in any other tertiary institution.

Signature: ................................

Date: 21 - 01 - 2013
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INTRODUCTION

Philosophy is that conversation essentially given to controversy with respect to its own conception. This is manifest in its persistent need to question its own nature or vocation, its limits or scope, even the possibility of its intellectual legitimacy or its right to an intellectual ‘jurisdiction’. It is not only a recurring question, but also a paradigmatic one, to ask: what is philosophy? In what follows, I will argue that any and all philosophies are necessarily metaphilosophical. ¹ By ‘metaphilosophy’ I do not solely mean philosophical accounts of philosophy, I also use the term to refer to the way any philosophical discourse answers to fundamental questions regarding the nature and limits of philosophy. To engage in philosophy, to think ‘philosophically’, is to already be engaged (however implicitly, even if explicitly disavowed) in responding to questions regarding what philosophy is and how it ought to proceed.

If metaphilosophy is an inseparable dimension of philosophy, it becomes implausible to suggest that there could be ‘final answers’ to metaphilosophical questions even when those questions concern philosophy’s end. Metaphilosophy tends to paradox and performative self-contradiction. Attempts to answer metaphilosophical questions are notorious for undermining their own claims in the act of responding to their own questions.

This thesis is concerned with perennial, metaphilosophical questions and the ways in which philosophers come to negotiate them. If this topic seems initially too large or too vague for a Master’s thesis it is important to note that we will not venture upon such a discussion from within a vacuum. Rather, the topic shall

¹ Of course, ‘fundamental’ questions arise both within and with regard to other intellectual disciplines. However, it is arguably the case that such questions occur in other disciplines both less frequently (such that they are often taken as moments of ‘crisis’ for the discipline), and at a greater distance, from the perspective of the natural sciences, from what we might call the ‘productive centre’ of the discipline (the ‘ordinary’, in Thomas Kuhn’s sense, activities of researchers or teachers in a non-philosophical field). Also, it should be noted that in other disciplines, questions regarding the meaning, possibility, or nature of the discipline itself are typically adjudged overly ‘philosophical’, meaning they are in some sense irrelevant, or supererogatory, to the ordinary activities and practices of the discipline in its actuality as a discipline.
emerge organically with respect to a specific historical context and contemporary problem both in and for philosophy: the so-called ‘Analytic - Continental divide’.

Today, and for some decades, academic philosophy has been institutionally split according to the rhetoric, nomenclature, partisan self-descriptions, and competing self-conceptions of these two apparent traditions or tendencies: ‘analytic’ and ‘continental’. I will contend that this polemical strain, running internal to philosophy departments (as well as within and between various other departments within the humanities), should be understood through what we might describe as the ‘fundamental polemics’ of philosophy: i.e. the controversies regarding its self-conception and its ‘metaphilosophical register’. Our talk of a ‘divide’ is replete with assumptions regarding the nature of these apparently separable philosophies (the divisibility of philosophy itself) and their relative limits, respective traits, methods and concerns – what identifies them as separable, as indeed distinct kinds.

In this thesis I shall seek to understand the divide in terms of what I take to be the metaphilosophical presumptions concealed within its own discourse to ask how we, employing the language of a divide, delineate philosophical types (tendencies or traditions) and determine the relative limits of philosophy. To ask whether we could do so conclusively. And, finally, to reflect upon the consequences and effects, philosophical or otherwise, of this discourse of division: what are its uses? What ends are served by its continuing existence and, indeed, self-proliferation? Do the many attempts to analyse, evaluate, transcend or entrench the divide (attempts which I will examine in greater detail in the first chapter of the thesis) adequately negotiate the problems and paradoxes of metaphilosophy? Are these attempts properly philosophical?

My hope is that once the metaphilosophical dimension of the divide is acknowledged, it can be debated and discussed philosophically, even where metaphilosophical questions cannot be simply absorbed into current scholarship, because they both persistently and fundamentally question the aptness of referring to and studying the divide as such.

The purpose of this thesis is not only to give an account of the analytic-continental divide, but also to challenge what I consider to be a lack of self-critique in much of the current scholarship. I believe that this is due to a constitutive
blindness to the metaphilosophical commitments implicit within the arguments that pertain to and constitute the discourse of the divide. These commitments are obscured as a result of employing the categories of the divide in attempts to analyse the genesis of those categories and their deployment. My argument is that where these commitments go unnoticed and thus unanalysed, they not only hinder our understanding of this extraordinary academic phenomenon, but also lead us into a special kind of philosophical failure. We are led into a philosophical sterility that, by blinding us to where, when, and how, the philosophical action takes place in the constitution (philosophical, historical, institutional, or otherwise) of categories like ‘analytic’ and ‘continental’, creates an inherited naïveté regarding the way we ourselves approach (and thus contribute to) philosophy.

In contrast, I shall argue that any account of the divide must attend to the metaphilosophical question of what it means for philosophy to speak the discourse of the divide. This is necessary if the account is to have philosophical significance as opposed to merely producing a sociological artefact or, worse, uncritically reinforcing certain common presumptions about philosophy or its place within the academy. If we are to understand the divide, rather than simply replicate it, then it becomes imperative to attend to the metaphilosophical commitments that precede, suffuse, govern and constitute, the divide in its institutional and philosophical expressions, and thus to attend to our own inheritance of this divide.

In keeping with this project, I will situate the divide in relation to a series of metaphilosophical issues elucidated in that obligatory reference point for philosophers of any persuasion: Plato. In particular, I look to The Sophist, which I will read as a study of the conditions for the possibility of a philosophical metaphilosophy.

The Sophist serves as a backdrop for my analysis because – once it is grasped in terms of the unity of its narrative elements – it becomes possible to see how the dialogue both anticipates and elucidates a number of metaphilosophical themes that are inescapable in any serious discussion of the divide. Among these are our obligations to the ‘foreign’ philosopher (or foreign ‘philosopher’), the relationship between the philosophical and the political, the quarrel between philosophy and poetry, the nature of the sophist as the philosopher’s paradigmatic opponent, and
our tendency to draw divisions within philosophical discourse akin to Pascal’s distinction between the *esprit géometrique* and the *esprit de finesse*. The Platonic dialogue will help contextualise these themes by revealing their relevance to the metaphilosophical task. To this end, this thesis weaves the narrative structure of *The Sophist* into an exploration of the divide.²

This tactic might be considered unusual, particularly for those who would maintain that the arguments of the dialogue are separable from its narrative structure.¹ However, my intention is to show that the narrative is directly relevant to the metaphilosophical questions raised by *The Sophist*. For example, the narrative invites us to reflect upon arguments as ‘arguments’ by locating them within a dramatic and socio-political, context which in itself serves the metaphilosophical purpose of critiquing the abstracted representation of arguments as such, or of critiquing the assumption that the way in which we presume to answer a philosophical question is appropriate insofar as that is how we have agreed to do so. The narrative dimension of the Platonic dialogues is thus essential to understanding their metaphilosophical import, for it is through this dimension that their self-evidence, even as it is explicated through argument, is questioned once more with regard to the form and necessity of its explication. A guiding theme of this thesis will be the metaphilosophical relevance of what is taken to be self-evident.

A pertinent example: in response to my ‘metaphilosophical’ approach to the divide, a reader might protest that the divide itself is self-evident, and therefore only requires description, not interrogation, by such oblique means. Here, our imagined interlocutor propounds what I see as an attitude common in current scholarship: that the categories of the divide are not controversial, such that it would be egregious or even perverse to dispute them. The divide, our critic might conclude, is evident to those with eyes to see.

² I will focus upon narrative interpretations of *The Sophist*. In particular, I will rely upon Stanley Rosen’s *Plato’s Sophist: The Drama of Original and Image* (henceforth, *Plato’s Sophist*) and Seth Benardete’s *The Being of the Beautiful: Plato’s Theaetetus, Sophist, and Statesman* (henceforth, *The Being of the Beautiful*). I will use Rosen’s and Benardete’s translations of the dialogue where necessary, but where I do so I will indicate this. All other citations from *The Sophist* will be from the 1962 Alfred Edward Taylor translation *The Sophist and The Statesman* (henceforth, *The Sophist*).

¹ This complaint has some traction with regard to *The Sophist*, which is often noted to be the least ‘dialogic’ of Plato’s dialogues, and which many read as essentially a treatise on *non-being*. However, *The Sophist* is still a dialogue with a narrative: the apparent lack of dialogic elements is in itself a dialogic element – in fact, one that will assume importance in the following discussion.
In response to our interlocutor, let us carefully consider the opening sequence of *The Sophist*. This sequence cautions that the mere identification and description of philosophies are inseparable from philosophical judgement and thus require self-reflection. *The Sophist* begins with the founding figure of Western philosophy, Socrates, encountering a stranger from a foreign land who has a competing understanding of philosophy. This encounter is mediated by Theodorus, who introduces the two philosophers. I want to think about the nature of his introduction, for this will bear upon the function of the divide to name and introduce philosophers, mediating the reception of texts as familiar or foreign—a mediation that is often thought to be merely descriptive.

The Polonius-like Theodorus, a teacher of mathematics, and his prodigious student, Theaetetus, have kept their engagement to meet with Socrates. They have brought with them a companion, “… a kind of stranger, who in birth (genos) is from Elea”. Theodorus introduces this stranger as a ‘genuine philosopher’, boastfully informing Socrates that he belongs to the society of Parmenides and Zeno. In his flattery, Theodorus forgets to provide the name of our new acquaintance (he will henceforth be known as ‘the Stranger’).

Socrates accepts the anonymity of the Stranger but seeks further information with regard to Theodorus’ introduction. For Socrates, the identification of philosophy involves philosophy— that is, it presupposes prior metaphilosophical decisions: for example, with respect to the criteria by which we recognise a philosopher. One might imagine Theodorus embarrassed before his honourable guest and exasperated by this interrogation; after all, he was only giving an introduction! But Theodorus’ dismissive responses reveal that he sees no philosophical difficulty in identifying the Stranger as a philosopher: for him this is indeed merely a matter of identifying the Stranger’s philosophical heritage and then grouping the Stranger with the family to which he belongs, a family which Socrates

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4 They made this arrangement at the close of the dialogue the *Theaetetus*, which, we are to believe, took place the previous day.
5 Plato, *The Sophist*, 216a, Tr. Benardete in *The Being of the Beautiful*, II.3
6 Plato, *The Sophist*, 216a
7 We are invited to speculate about the identity of the Stranger. Stanley Rosen tells us this question is not “… who is this historical figure," but “… what is the Stranger?” (Rosen, Plato’s Sophist, 62). That is, the question is whether the Stranger is a philosopher.
8 Plato, *The Sophist*, 216a-b
would, if he were not being so troublesome, revere as a class of philosophers. Theodorus may not recognise that in broaching a metaphilosophical discourse, Socrates attempts to introduce ‘the genuine philosopher’ more appropriately.

I will argue, in chapter one (‘Diaerésis: Definition by Division’), that scholarship on the divide often displays Theodorus’ impatience, in that the divide is typically treated as a mere tool to introduce, describe and identify philosophies (indeed, often by appealing to an esteemed philosophical lineage). However, to the extent that this involves metaphilosophical assumptions it also calls for their interrogation. For example, if we were to take ‘philosophical lineage’ as a criterion for identifying different types of philosophy, this would require further reflection: we would have to ask about the philosophical status of the ‘traditional’, and we would have to ask what constitutes or legitimates a philosophical ‘lineage’. Furthermore, we would have to ask what kind of relationship a philosopher should have to such traditions and lineages. Of course, such questions cannot be settled by the mere capacity to identify a tradition.

To treat the existing discourse on the divide as merely descriptive risks naturalising the metaphilosophical decisions that underpin the identification of philosophical tendencies in terms of the divide. If we begin by assuming the divide to be applicable to philosophy, and then apply its categories to the philosophies we encounter, we are in danger of falling into a kind of dogmatism whereby an initial prejudice frames the evidence by which that same prejudice is continually reinforced. If we were, by contrast, to ratify the divide as a philosophical means of representing philosophy, we must first consider the metaphilosophical relevance of the divide.

To better understand the metaphilosophical backdrop assumed in the representation of philosophies as ‘analytic’ or ‘continental’ we turn, in chapter two (‘The Problem of Sophistry’) to the use of the divide. That is, to the ways in which

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9 One might interpret Theodorus’ introduction as supplying the fact of ‘philosophical heritage’ as evidence, or as a sufficient condition, for being a philosopher. While there is no doubt that Socrates admires Parmenides as a philosopher, this does not mean that his companions are also philosophers in Socrates’ eyes. It would be foolish to think that citing the Stranger’s heritage would guarantee that the Stranger speaks philosophically; nor is knowledge of the fact of his heritage going to assist in the philosophical evaluation of his speech. The dubiousness of this criterion for the identification of philosophy is further emphasised when the Stranger comes to oppose his own tradition in The Sophist. Praise of philosophy is also not itself philosophical (refer to the opening scene of the Lesser Hippias where Socrates remains silent while all venerate philosophy).
the divide has been employed historically to divide philosophy (such that philosophers might identify themselves with one group, or engage with one tradition, while dissociating themselves from what is assumed to be a rival tradition). I show that reasons for division prefigure traits now used merely to identify and describe philosophical types. That is, original reasons for dividing philosophy into two tendencies or camps are now used as a rhetoric for discovering philosophical types that one can then associate with ‘analytic’ or ‘continental’ philosophers. Their status as reasons seems forgotten and they are now remembered as features of the divide.

In investigating the metaphilosophical motives for division we take our lead from Bertrand Russell. Russell’s influence in shaping the popular understanding of analytic philosophy, often through opposition to philosophy on the continent (and the ‘idealist tradition’ in particular), cannot be underestimated. Because Russell’s accounts are paradigmatic, I will show their continuity with the discourse of division dominant in Russell’s period by referring, more generally, to the most urgent articulations of the discourse of the divide, in the context of the break from idealism that in William W. Tait’s words marks the “… creation myth of analytic philosophy”.10

I have chosen to focus on Russell’s *Mysticism and Logic, and Other Essays* (henceforth *Mysticism and Logic*), because, as will be shown, this text deals directly with the act of dividing philosophy as a philosophical task (rather than a merely descriptive one), a task that bears upon the question of the nature and limits of philosophy per se. We are then to ask what conception of metaphilosophy this division implies, and how we might negotiate problems that arise in giving accounts of philosophies. Socrates in *The Sophist* is in the process of warning us about these very problems.

Let us now consider Socrates’ warnings more closely. At *The Sophist*, 216a, he quips that if Theodorus is correct in calling the Stranger a ‘philosopher’ it may then be the case that Theodorus has brought him, unwittingly, not a human visitor, but a god. For, according to Homer, Socrates tells us, sundry gods (and especially the god of hospitality or the god of strangers) “… do take on all sorts of

10 Tait, *Early Analytic Philosophy: Frege, Russell, Wittgenstein*, 40. I chose this period as the focus, because at this early stage the divide had not yet become ‘naturalised’; this means that arguments and justifications are more likely to be given for the divide. Nonetheless, these arguments will be shown to inform contemporary representations of the divide.
transformations, appearing as strangers from elsewhere, and thus they range at large through the cities”.  

As a stranger, this new acquaintance is also potentially Socrates’ judge; Socrates says: “[p]erhaps this one who follows you may be one of the powerful, a kind of refuting god who comes to watch over and refute us who are weak in discussion”.  

Socrates fears that the Stranger may be a ‘god of philosophical refutation’ who has come to judge him and his capacity in argument.

It is no surprise that Socrates places the Stranger in the position of a divine judge (or that Socrates will pose the problem of sophistry as a subject for the Stranger’s consideration), for it seems that Socrates has been judged a sophist. Just the day before Socrates went to King Archon to receive the indictment from Meletus. The charges include criminal meddling, inquiry into natural phenomena, speaking against the norms of the polis, speaking against its gods, the invention of new deities, corruption of the youth, and allowing the weaker argument to defeat the stronger. In a few days Socrates will be convicted and sentenced to death.

Socrates implies that in taking the position of the judge, to determine philosophical kinds or philosophy as a kind, one also determines the scope and limits of philosophy, demarcating the legitimate from the illegitimate. Like gods, those who would determine philosophical types distinguish hybris from righteousness, punish sins and give rewards. The Stranger will act as a judge of philosophy, will seek to separate legitimate from illegitimate features and define that which is and should be essential to philosophy.

I will argue that the imperative to divide philosophy by determining analytic and continental types may also be considered a species of the metaphilosophical imperative: one whose purpose is to define the proper nature of philosophy against sophistries. I will seek to show that the Stranger’s first definitions and accounts of
sophistry set a precedent for judgements associated with the divide. Through these definitions of sophistry the Stranger may succeed in indicting Socrates. As we shall see, it is, in fact, Socrates’ concerns, those that are implicitly expressed through his response to the introduction of the Stranger, which will need to come under further scrutiny, for these would seem to prevent philosophy’s final differentiation from sophistry.

Socrates implies that to judge philosophy per se is to assume a divine perspective.\textsuperscript{16} However, one cannot know whether the Stranger possesses such a vantage point: in the reference to Homer the divine (or ideal) perspective is disguised to human viewers. In saying that the Stranger might be a god, I take it that Socrates is warning him that his sovereign or legislative conception of metaphilosophy may so inoculate him from critique that it becomes impossible to determine whether he is a ‘divine philosopher’ (or one of the ‘wise’) or is himself a sophist.\textsuperscript{17}

In recounting this argument from \textit{The Sophist}, I intend to level Socrates’ criticism of the Stranger against the very idea of the divide, arguing that it too implies an understanding of metaphilosophy as the pre-philosophical identification of \textit{kinds}. However, such a form of identification risks sophistry. That is, it risks an elevation of what we might think of as prior, ‘\textit{thumotic} images’ of what is good or bad to a position where these same images come to over determine the analysis, and thus discourage philosophical reflection.\textsuperscript{18}

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between groups of philosophers, so that metaphilosophical argument does not proceed by normative discussion (about what should define philosophy), but ultimately finds expression in description, in a concern with how philosophy is done in this way or that, and with which philosophers proceed legitimately or not.

In this regard \textit{The Sophist} is doubly instructive, since the Stranger will assume such a procedure in his characterisation of the sophist. This invites us to question why this procedure is common to both the divide and \textit{The Sophist}. I will argue that the procedure seeks to avoid accusations of sophistry. We might say that the divide does not merely recall the avoidance of the threat of sophistry in its content, that is, in familiar divisions between features such as rhetoric and argument, the aesthetic and scientific, but in its very form: the way in which philosophical interpretation is negotiated though it and the way in which its application has us imagine the metaphilosophical task.

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\textsuperscript{16} Socrates, in referring to the Stranger as divine, is perhaps signaling that we should, as philosophers, doubt whether such a perspective is possible; he is warning us that we should not presume either way, prior to a philosophical enquiry about philosophy itself.

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\textsuperscript{17} I take this to be implied in the reference to Homer at \textit{The Sophist}, 216a-b. For Socrates, either the Stranger’s accounts are divine, or they’re sophistical. This is because only gods and sophists attempt to determine facts via their prior prejudices. Recall also that word ‘sophist’ translates to ‘wisdom’.

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\textsuperscript{18} By ‘\textit{thumotic} images’ I mean images that rouse the \textit{thumotic} (spirited) part of the soul, the part that is capable of feeling indignation and which in one reading of the \textit{Republic} is the opposite of philosophical
In chapter three (‘Metaphilosophical Aporia’) I follow the Stranger’s account and defence of metaphilosophy, and I also appropriate arguments from *Mysticism and Logic* as possible ways in which to defend the idea of the divide against Socrates’ warnings. However, I will argue that Socrates’ concerns do not dissipate in the face of these ‘resolutions’ and that, further, we must consider the consequences of Socrates’ concerns. Let us look at Socrates’ forewarnings further, since our task will be to bring them to bear upon both the dialogue and the divide.

Theodorus tells us that the Stranger does not seem to him to be a god; nevertheless, as a philosopher the Stranger is no doubt divine. Socrates approves of Theodorus’ veneration of philosophy and admits that the philosopher is not a god. That is, we do not need access to a privileged ‘god’s eye perspective’ from which to judge philosophies. Yet Socrates cautions “[t]his genus, however, is in all probability scarcely easier to discern than that of the god”. Philosophers may ‘roam the streets of our cities’ disguised as sophists, statesmen or madmen due to the ignorance of the public in matters divine – or rather, philosophy may seem to be equivalent to these from the public perspective.

Socrates’ comments concern again the question of the ‘visibility’ of philosophy, our ability to distinguish the philosopher from the appearances which he may assume. In keeping with the Homeric reference, the philosopher is disguised to the public, who seek to judge him. I take Socrates to be raising the suspicion that there may be no public, pre-philosophical, perspective upon philosophy that does not also disguise it (as sophistical, political or mad). One may have to be a

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19 Plato, *The Sophist*, 216b
20 Ibid., 216c
21 Plato, *The Sophist*, 216c, Tr. Benardete in *The Being of the Beautiful*, II.3
22 Plato, *The Sophist*, 216c-d. Socrates refers again to Homer, saying that philosophers may assume “… all sorts of fantasies, because of the ignorance of the others … looking down from above on the lives of those below. To some, they seem to be of no worth; but to others, they are most worthy of all” (Plato, *The Sophist*, 216c). The reference ‘roam the streets of our cities’ is to Homer, *Odyssey*, XVII, 486 and occurs in *The Sophist*, 216c.
23 Significantly, Socrates will be ‘invisible’ for the remainder of the dialogue, and the dialogue on philosophy is absent from the promised ‘trilogy’ (we are promised in *The Sophist* accounts of the sophist, the statesman and the philosopher, but there is no dialogue specifically on the nature of philosophy). It may be noted that Socrates typically retreats when the topic of the sophist is advanced in conversation.
philosopher in order to recognise a philosopher – or, better put: *the question of philosophy is itself a philosophical question.* If the very demarcation and identification of philosophy is a philosophical question then philosophy is radically unlike an *epistêmê,* which, for Aristotle, can be defined by the fact that its *arkhe* delimits its domain.\(^{24}\) For example, we can define biology as the study of ‘life’: there is no biology of biology, though there is a philosophy of biology. It seems to be the case that philosophy is without a pre-given and definitive domain of research or social end. If the question of philosophy’s own nature is a philosophical question, this gives rise to a number of paradoxes, or *aporias,* at the kernel of the metaphilosophical task:

> We seem left in metaphilosophy with Aristotle’s uncomfortably question-begging argument. Either we should do philosophy or we shouldn’t. If we should, we should. If we shouldn’t, we should, just to find out why we shouldn’t. And, pushing an older paradox to its greatest generality, we would still not know how we should, unless, again, we already know, just in order to properly define how.\(^{25}\)

There may not be a sense in which we can identify philosophy *per se* or assess its transgressions, for we would also be, in so doing, transgressing, by placing final limitations on philosophy, which are in fact subject to further philosophical consideration.\(^{26}\)

Though Aristotle never uses the term, it is conventional to take what he says about the *logos* he is describing in the book that we now call the *Metaphysics* to be a description of ‘metaphysics’. If so, for Aristotle, metaphysics has no domain – it proceeds through *aporia.*\(^{27}\) The question of philosophy’s own nature, I would argue,

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\(^{24}\) Aristotle says, “… none of the others [sciences] contemplates Being generally qua Being; they divide off some portion of it and study the attribute of this portion, as do for example the mathematical sciences” (*Aristotle, Aristotle in 23 Volumes, Vols. 17, 18, 1003a*).

\(^{25}\) Robert Pippin, ‘Critical Methodology and Comprehensiveness in Philosophy’, 197. In ‘Thales: The Beginnings of Philosophy’ Rosen argues that philosophy begin *ex nihilo,* because philosophy can only be identified philosophically. In ‘Wisdom: The End of Philosophy’ Rosen extends this to philosophies end. He argues that “… in order for philosophy to be present its end must be visible and that this visibility constitutes the illumination within which we see every particular philosophical issue, but that the visibility of end is not identical with the achievement of that end” (*Rosen, Wisdom: The End of Philosophy*, 182).

\(^{26}\) To elucidate, one could think of ‘philosophy’ as an ‘essentially contestable concept’ so that any definition would be dogmatic given the ‘open’ and ‘dialogic’ nature of ‘philosophy’, c.f. Walter Bryce Gallie’s ‘Essentially Contested Concepts’.

\(^{27}\) See book Beta of the *Metaphysics.* For Aristotle, an aporetic question is not a *problem* with two paradigm solutions, each with equal reasons, suggesting that what is needed is a *choice* between them: “[m]oreover, people who define *aporia* in this way [i.e. who define aporia as an equality of opposite reasonings] … put effect for cause, or cause for effect … Rather it would seem that the equality of opposite reasonings is the cause of aporia” (*Topics*, 145b).
is an aporetic question, one that commits us to metaphilosophical reflection, while prohibiting a final ‘metaphilosophy’.

Socrates, through his reference to Homer, implies that the ‘divinity’ of philosophy might mean that philosophy is ‘hidden’ from perception (this ‘hiddenness’ we will call philosophy’s ‘ideality’), but that this therefore necessitates and indeed obligates hospitality. I interpret ‘hospitality’ as meaning taking up the question of philosophy as a question which obligates us to treat the other (our philosophical interlocutor) as a philosopher; a hospitality which exists precisely in the name of and for the sake of philosophy. The point here is that if we are to be philosophers (lovers of wisdom exposed to the erotics of the question), we must renounce being gods (those who can a priori distinguish philosophers from sophists) in order to avoid being sophists (those who claim god-like knowledge precisely for the purposes of closing off metaphilosophical questions by equating their ‘knowledge’ with ‘truth’).

In the concluding chapter (‘Diaeresis in Dialogue’) I shall consider the consequences of these Socratic principles for the contemporary philosophical divide. I will argue that although the divide can be understood as a response to the question of philosophy, and to the threat of sophistry, the nature of this response is such that the divide, as a means of representing philosophies, also forecloses further thinking on these very topics, thus rendering us insensitive to the divide’s significance for philosophy itself. I will argue that, perhaps ironically, it is only by placing the question of philosophy and its difference from sophistry at the heart of philosophy, as a question for philosophy, that philosophy distinguishes itself from sophistry

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28 See Plato, The Sophist, 216b
Socrates’ opening questions in *The Sophist* were about how one might identify or learn the nature of philosophy, questions that seemed to depend upon prior answers to metaphilosophical questions. This questioning thus induced and pointed to an initial circularity (which irritated Theodorus). At *The Sophist*, 216d, Socrates now challenges the Stranger to give a representation of philosophy. Theodorus impatiently asks Socrates what he is getting at, what his problem is with the nature of philosophy. Socrates must formulate a question that meets the mathematician’s approval! Socrates now asks whether in Elea they consider sophistry, statesmanship and philosophy as one *kind* (*genos*), or as two, or if they distinguish three *kinds* to which each is assigned a name. It is apparently possible to answer Socrates’ formulated question in a non-circular, non-controversial manner.

The question Socrates now asks is constrained by tradition: Socrates asks what the Eleatics think on this matter. He thus moves from the question of ‘how one might know in general’ to the question of ‘what a group knows’. One can respond by drawing out (but also elucidating) what passes for common knowledge (*endoxai*). Secondly, when the question had been ‘how one might recognise philosophy’ we had remarked that if philosophy is required in order to determine philosophy there might not be a domain of philosophy (a given definition or defining feature). But now Socrates asks whether philosophy is commonly thought to constitute a *kind*. ‘Kind’ is a translation of ‘*genos*’, which can also mean ‘category’, ‘type’, ‘class’ or ‘sort’. The term recalls Theodorus’ own tacit criterion of ‘lineage’ for being a philosopher, since it would be used primarily to refer to a ‘race’, ‘stock’, ‘kin’, ‘breed’, ‘clan’,
‘family’ or ‘nationality’.33 If philosophy were a kind in these senses it could then be given a non-question-begging definition or description.

Socrates’ question is similar to one that informs scholarship on the divide. Wherever the divide is discussed, the question arises as to whether ‘analytic’ and ‘continental’ philosophy are kinds, in the sense of referring to two separate types, classes, lineages or families of philosophy.34 The most straightforward answer to this question would simply be to appeal to convention, from which we might draw the conclusion that, indeed, ‘analytic’ and ‘continental’ philosophy are typically used to refer to two separate kinds (or why would they be talked about as such?). In this sense, many studies of the divide, replicate the beginning of The Sophist: insofar as a question about the existence of kinds is first referred to a convention that will then either be challenged or reinforced.

In this chapter we will examine current scholarship on the divide insofar as it might be understood to provide answers to the question of kinds that are in keeping with convention. We will consider family resemblance accounts of the divide, accounts of analytic and continental philosophy as traditions and endorsements of either group that seek to explicate the norms that govern and separate them. We will ask by what means, with what criteria, and under what conditions philosophy is divided. The overriding concern is to ascertain the consequences that employment of the divide might have for metaphilosophical questions: for our understanding of the nature of philosophy and its limits in general.

The examination is set against the backdrop of The Sophist, in particular the method of division (diaerésis) adopted by the Stranger. We will consider how

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33 It is from ‘genos’, through Latin, that we get the term ‘genus’. ‘Genos’ also has the sense of ‘descent’, ‘posterity’, ‘age’ and ‘generation’ (‘Genos’ in Liddell and Scott, Greek-English Lexicon, Ninth Edition). The privileged small kinship groups that dominated Athenian politics, and fought for political power (particularly with regard to succession in priesthood), were referred to as ‘gene’ (see Conner’s The New Politicians of Fifth-Century Athens, 11). As a verb, it means ‘to produce’, as in the production of followers or kin (‘Genos’ in Liddell and Scott, Greek-English Lexicon, Ninth Edition). I will, following Alfred Edward Taylor, translate ‘genos’ into ‘kind’, but these meanings should be kept in mind, for they are all implied.

34 According to James Chase and Jack Reynolds in the introduction to Analytic Versus Continental: Arguments on the Methods and Value of Philosophy, scholarship polarises into two positions in answer to this question: ‘essentialism’ and ‘deflationism’ with regard to the divide. According to Chase and Reynolds, essentialists hold that there is a fundamental difference, or a set of necessary and sufficient conditions, by means of which philosophy is divided into the ‘analytic’ and ‘continental’ camps. While deflationists hold that the different names ‘analytic’ and ‘continental’ do not correspond to a difference in kind.
Socrates’ fundamental philosophical questions might relate to both *diaerésis* and scholarship on the divide, thereby situating ourselves amidst the very problems that Socrates foreshadowed in the introduction.

One might speculate that it is because the formulated question Socrates has asked seemingly excludes metaphilosophical aporias that it meets with Theodorus’ immediate approval. The Stranger, speaking for the first time, seconds Theodorus’ approval of Socrates’ question, and then supplies us with an immediate answer: Eleatics take the three names to correspond to three *kinds*. Though the Stranger admits what Theodorus cannot: the difficulty of the task. Perhaps Theodorus does not recognise that metaphilosophical problems are still implicit. For example, even if the Stranger succeeds in explicating the Eleatic account, a stranger to *his* tradition might still ask whether *this* traditional account is true or whether it in fact occludes the truth of philosophy. In other words: if we begin with common knowledge how can we ensure that we transcend opinion and arrive at something like knowledge of the *kinds* themselves? If nothing guides our inquiry apart from conventional representations, we may merely be imposing conventional (and perhaps false) images upon reality such that the truth is obfuscated rather than illuminated, just as we can imagine a conventional division that, despite being ubiquitous, fails to carve nature ‘at the joints’.

Moreover, if “… Socrates is right about philosophers …” and if representations of philosophy are also potential disguises “… then if the stranger is a philosopher …” he might “… present apparitions of himself as sophist and statesman”. “If the place from which the stranger is to speak is above the apparitions, the stranger would speak as a stranger, and the apparitions would not look the same to him as they do to us”. We are brought back to the question of how we might know or recognise philosophy in general – it may be the case that representations of philosophy are not themselves philosophical. In the first section of this chapter ‘The Problem of Images and Division by Resemblance’ we will see

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35 Plato, *The Sophist*, 217a
36 Ibid., 217b
37 Ibid., 217b
38 Benardete, *The Being of the Beautiful*, II.72
39 Ibid., II.74
this problem arising in consideration over accounts of the divide as family resemblance concepts and traditions.

A further ulterior dimension to Socrates’ question is the relationship between tradition-specific understandings of philosophy and philosophy per se. Socrates has asked the Stranger for the Eleatic conception of philosophy – that is, whether philosophy is there understood as singular.40 If that tradition-specific conception of philosophy is of philosophy as one singular kind and Socrates is not included in that tradition, then either Socrates must appear as other to the philosopher and the other of the philosopher is presumed to be the sophist (statesman or madman), or philosophy is multiple (many kinds). But upholding the plurality of philosophy, as we will see, is a sophistic position. In the second section of this chapter ‘The Philosophical Tradition and Division by Family’ we will pose this topic as relevant to scholarship on the divide that endorses the norms governing one of the two groups. We will ask whether there can be two sub-types of philosophy and what this might entail for the nature of philosophy per se.

It seems that metaphilosophical difficulties, although obscured, are still implied by Socrates’ question. In what follows I will evaluate the way in which the Stranger’s method of division and the method by which we divide philosophy into ‘analytic’ and ‘continental’ kinds serve to negotiate these difficulties.

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40 Plato, The Sophist, 217a
1.1 THE PROBLEM OF IMAGES AND DIVISION BY RESEMBLANCE

The problem of the relationship between ‘convention’ and *kinds* will prove crucial to both the argument and to the dialogic structure of *The Sophist*. Significantly, *The Sophist* will address this problem via an extended methodological investigation whose primary focus is the concept of *division* itself.

The Stranger is emphatic that one comes to *kinds* by means of argument, specifically the method of *diaerésis* or division by opposing traits.\(^{41}\) The term *‘diaerésis’* can mean to ‘divide in two parts’ or ‘divide a genus into its species’, and has the general sense of ‘taking apart’, ‘cleaving in twain’, ‘cutting open’, ‘tearing away’, ‘pulling down’, ‘distinguishing’, ‘determining’, and ‘deciding’.\(^{42}\) As a method, *diaerésis* bears a close resemblance to a traditional conception of analysis: one begins with a shared or common name, a compound or ‘whole’, which is then divided according to its constitutive parts. Division takes the form of dividing the potential attributes of that under discussion with opposing attributes, until no more features can be elaborated and an indivisible *kind* has been reached.\(^{43}\) “The ‘taking-apart’ is followed by a bringing-together … a compounding [or synthesizing]”.\(^{44}\) We end with a taxonomic, classificatory definition that makes explicit the internal divisions of the compound, while differentiating its traits from opposing traits.

To acquaint us with his method the Stranger proposes to give a *diaerésis* of a trivial example, of a *kind* well known: the angler.\(^{45}\) The angler is defined, first, as a professional, as opposed to an amateur.\(^{46}\) All professions, the Stranger tells us, can be separated into two opposing types: they either possess an art of production or one of acquisition. The Stranger gives the examples of agriculture, craftsmanship and manufacture, for productive or imitative arts. Examples of acquisitive arts are

\(^{41}\) Plato, *The Sophist*, 218b

\(^{42}\) ‘Diaerésis’ in Liddell and Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*. As a verb, ‘diaerésis’ can be used to speak of ‘raising up’, ‘metaphorically exaggerating’, ‘making prominent’ and ‘opening’ (‘Diaerésis’ in *Greek-English Lexicon, Ninth Edition*).

\(^{43}\) By ‘opposing traits’ I do not mean strict logical opposites, but mutually exclusive, qualitative traits, such as ‘hot’ and ‘cold’, ‘day’ and ‘night’.

\(^{44}\) Jacob Klein, *Plato’s Trilogy*, 10

\(^{45}\) Plato, *The Sophist*, 219d-e. The example of the angler runs from *The Sophist* 219d to 221c.

\(^{46}\) Ibid., 219a
learning and knowing, moneymaking and capture.\textsuperscript{47} The angler is held to belong to the acquisitive class as he captures his prey rather than producing it.\textsuperscript{48} Further oppositions are given to determine the various attributes of angling.\textsuperscript{49}

The most striking similarity between the Stranger’s procedure and many attempted explanations of the divide is that definition takes the form of division into opposing traits. Thus one is usually introduced to the idea of the divide as containing numerous familiar divisions of style, doctrine, method and topic. To select but a few examples: analytic philosophy is said to be clear, and continental philosophy obscure (Kevin Mulligan); the divide is said to be a division between ‘doing’ philosophy and merely learning the history of philosophy (W. V. O. Quine), between realism and anti-realism (Lee Braver), methodological constraint and metaphysical speculation (Hans Reichenbach), logic and mysticism (Russell), argument and rhetoric (Dagfinn Føllesdal).\textsuperscript{50} Simon Glendinning provides the following list of oppositions that are customarily associated with the divide:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analytic</th>
<th>Continental</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Argument</td>
<td>Rhetoric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Literature and Art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>Speculation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear</td>
<td>Obscure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Precise</td>
<td>Vague</td>
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<tr>
<td>Logic</td>
<td>Metaphysics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason</td>
<td>Passion\textsuperscript{51}</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Even the division between the productive and acquisitive will assume importance, as we will see that continental philosophy is often thought productive – continental philosophy “… is inherently obscure and obscurantist …” while analytic philosophy aims to be clear (Mulligan, ‘Introduction: On the History of Continental Philosophy’, 115-120). Quine is quoted as making the distinction between ‘doing’ philosophy and learning the history of philosophy in Alasdair MacIntyre’s ‘The Relationship of Philosophy to its Past’, 39-40. For Braver’s argument that the analytic continental distinction could be replaced by the distinction between realism and antirealism see his book \textit{A Thing of This World: A History of Continental Anti-Realism}. In \textit{The Rise of Scientific Philosophy}, Reichenbach continually uses the distinction between speculation and methodology to explain the analytic revolution. In the next chapter we will consider Russell’s opposition between mysticism and logic in the essay of that title and, in this chapter, we will also look at Føllesdal’s essay ‘Analytic Philosophy: What is it and Why Should One Engage in it?’ for the distinction between argument and rhetoric.\textsuperscript{52}

\textsuperscript{47} Ibid., 219a-c
\textsuperscript{48} Ibid., 219d
\textsuperscript{49} The Stranger divides the angler according to his quarry, the time of day he is active and the instruments and methods of his activity. These attributes are determined by means of a division into ‘opposites’: we ask whether the angler hunts the ‘animate’ or ‘inanimate’, whether it is a chase by ‘land’ or ‘sea’, whether its quarry are ‘birds’ or ‘fish’, whether angling is a ‘diurnal’ or ‘nocturnal’ activity, whether it involves striking from ‘below’ or ‘above’.
\textsuperscript{50} For Mulligan continental philosophy “… is inherently obscure and obscurantist …” while analytic philosophy aims to be clear (Mulligan, ‘Introduction: On the History of Continental Philosophy’, 115-120). Quine is quoted as making the distinction between ‘doing’ philosophy and learning the history of philosophy in Alasdair MacIntyre’s ‘The Relationship of Philosophy to its Past’, 39-40. For Braver’s argument that the analytic continental distinction could be replaced by the distinction between realism and antirealism see his book \textit{A Thing of This World: A History of Continental Anti-Realism}. In \textit{The Rise of Scientific Philosophy}, Reichenbach continually uses the distinction between speculation and methodology to explain the analytic revolution. In the next chapter we will consider Russell’s opposition between mysticism and logic in the essay of that title and, in this chapter, we will also look at Føllesdal’s essay ‘Analytic Philosophy: What is it and Why Should One Engage in it?’ for the distinction between argument and rhetoric.
\textsuperscript{51} Glendinning, ‘Analytic Philosophy’ in \textit{A Dictionary of Continental Philosophy}, 27
philosophy ‘produces’ stories, perspectives and new ways of thinking. While analytic philosophy is thought acquisitive insofar as it ‘acquires’, makes explicit, and provides definitions.52

Before considering further overlaps between the Stranger’s methodology and methods employed to determine the divide, I want to foreground some prima facie worries regarding the process of defining kinds by opposing traits. This will allow us, when considering the methodologies in greater detail, to speak to those worries.

We might start by asking whether it is appropriate to determine philosophical kinds. Socrates has warned us against applying mathematical ratios to some things: might philosophy be so unsuited? Philosophy may not be axiomatic in the sense that any foundational distinction that one proposes is itself open to enquiry. Socrates maintained that the description of philosophies involves philosophical decisions that bear upon those very descriptions. To take an example, it is not clear that the opposition between productive and acquisitive arts can be maintained: surely the process of hunting is not merely acquisitive, but also adapts and changes those involved, or produces a hunter and hunted. The Stranger suggests that farming is a form of making, but Socrates had once likened his own maieutics to farming, and by adopting this metaphor he had tried to show that he, unlike Protagoras, was engaged in an acquisitive activity.53

Likewise, when we divide ‘analytic’ and ‘continental’ philosophy according to dichotomies like those listed by Glendinning, we assume answers to suppressed, yet contentious, questions. For example: the criteria for recognising something as clear, the appropriateness of the division between practice and history with respect to philosophy, the significance of the division between realism and anti-realism for the philosophers appropriated into that debate, and the alleged lack of metaphysical assumptions in communal problem-solving activities.54 We must also suppose that the community of oppositions makes sense, that we should, for example, associate

52 Continental philosophy is also typically said to be interested in productive disciplines – politics and aesthetics, while analytic philosophy is said to be interested in acquisitive disciplines – science and mathematics. Continental philosophy is thought to take the mind as productive of reality, while analytic philosophy is closely aligned with naturalism.

53 See Plato’s Protagoras for an extended discussion on the metaphor of agriculture.

54 The simple opposition between precision and imprecision may be imprecise, if as Hao Wang says of Carnap and Quine, a “… preoccupation with local … and mostly formal precision …” might be accompanied “… by a surprising willingness to tolerate or even celebrate global indefiniteness” (Wang, Beyond Analytic Philosophy, 11).
obscurity with a concern for the history of philosophy, but not with realism. Assuming answers to these philosophical issues serves to over-determine the seemingly neutral act of description without these issues having ever been — explicitly — posed. And if these questions are not posed, they never become subject to philosophical inquiry or dialogue.

This is certainly a problem in *The Sophist*, for in place of a discourse or debate about the oppositions that proliferate in his account of the sophist, the Stranger consistently provides examples or illustrations common to a pre-theoretical grasp of the subject matter. Likewise, in the context of scholarship on the divide, we often see an opposition upheld by the procedure of showing that the opposition is applicable to the conventional understanding of the subject matter. This is a dubious procedure insofar as this conventional understanding was constituted by the very opposition that it subsequently serves to ‘confirm’.

55 Hans-Johann Glock in *What is Analytic Philosophy?* subjects ‘essentialist’ accounts of analytic philosophy to this test. Accounts must refer to the right people; and include those figures we wish to consider analytic and exclude those not so considered, while showing borderline figures to be borderline (see the introduction and chapter eight of *What is Analytic Philosophy*). Many of the oppositions cited in the literature fail this ‘test’. In 1992 Peter Strawson wrote that the “… kind of more or less systematic reflection on the human situation which one finds in the work of, say, Heidegger, Sartre, and Nietzsche …” would not be a goal of analytic philosophy (Strawson, *Analysis and Metaphysics: An Introduction to Philosophy*, 2). However, of course, analytic philosophers (that is, philosophers who consider themselves analytic) may have such a goal, just as analytic philosophers may use rhetoric, be interested in the history of philosophy, and engage in metaphysical speculation. If Strawson has in mind a particular way in which that goal is pursued (as in a Heidegger-Sartre-Nietzsche-like way) then the opposition alone, as an explanation, is trivial.

56 ‘Applicability’ may also be contested. For example, we will see, Dagfinn Føllesdal in ‘Analytic Philosophy: What is it and Why Should One Engage in it?’ confirms that analytic philosophy can be called ‘argumentative’, for continental philosophers are concerned with rhetoric. He supplies the examples of Heidegger and Derrida (Føllesdal, ‘Analytic Philosophy: What is it and Why Should One Engage in it?’, 204). However, Derrida once responded to a paper by Adrian Moore as follows:

> … at the beginning of your paper, when you were defining … analytic philosophy … I thought: well that’s what I am doing … So I am an analytic philosopher … my “style” has something essential to do with the motivation that one also finds in analytic philosophy, in conceptual philosophy. (Derrida, ‘Response to Moore’ in *Arguing with Derrida*, 382)

Derrida also invoked the family resemblance model, saying that he sees a resemblance between “Frege’s problematic” and his own concerns (Ibid., 382). Upon whose authority are we to decide whether to assign the judgement of analyticity or of non-analyticity to Derrida? To Føllesdal, or to Derrida himself? Without further discourse, we are left to appeal to authority (itself a rhetorical move). This raises the suspicion that *diaeresis* may not be a merely acquisitive activity, but may — as I will argue — involve the distinction between better and worse.

Glock takes Derrida’s insight (of his analyticity) as symptomatic of the honorific nature of the ‘analytic’ term, commenting that Derrida is here surely committing “… some mistake, especially if analytic philosophy is an inherently rational pursuit. Still it is a mistake that supports the suggestion that ‘analytic philosophy’ is first and foremost a coveted label, just like democracy, if sometimes on equally flimsy grounds” (Glock, ‘Could Anything Be Wrong with Analytic Philosophy?’, 229).
Faced with such procedures, we might also recall Socrates’ chastisement of Theaetetus for providing examples of knowledge in place of an account of knowledge \textit{per se}.\textsuperscript{57} An example (or set of examples) does not serve as a definition. We might raise a similar concern with regard to the divide: how do we know that the differences outlined are not superficial and arbitrary, but extend to a significant distinction? Indeed it seems that we have no single rationale that can act as a principle of differentiation. Nor is the divide akin to other exegetical terms in philosophy that refer to philosophical positions or debates, such as Rationalism and Empiricism, which would yield a more transparent difference.\textsuperscript{58} Without this it is difficult to maintain that the divide is a division between \textit{kinds}. It is not clear that the division between analytic and continental philosophy is based upon a principle of differentiation, yielding two coherent, comparable groups, with mutually exclusive features. Bernard Williams writes that:

The contrast between ‘analytic’ philosophy and ‘continental’ philosophy means neither an opposition in terms of content, of interest, or even of style. Indeed, there are some differences, some of which are important, between typical examples of philosophical writing to which these terms could be applied, but these differences do not rest upon any significant basic principles.\textsuperscript{59}
Randall Collins observes that the divide between analytic and continental philosophy is unprecedented in that the vehemence it has provoked has “… outlasted virtually every other substantive feature …” of the division, which may have otherwise provided criteria for differentiation. Is vehemence the only true criteria of the divide? With Simon Glendinning, we might say that the division is without a principle of classification, or rather the only principle is mutual exclusion (an exclusion necessitated by vehemence), so that:

… efforts to find an internal unity to the Continental collection [of philosophies] will always either underpredict or overpredict because the only perfect predicator is the one that acknowledges that the set comprises the distinctive ‘not-part’ part of analytic philosophy: it is a unity of exclusion, not a unity of inclusion.

We may be left with a proliferation of differences considered better and worse through which we construct images of ‘analytic’ and ‘continental’ philosophy. In *The Sophist* it is the sophist (and not the philosopher) who divides by better and worse, rather than by *kind*.

Having considered initial concerns with regard to the method of division by *kind*, I would like to examine that method in more detail, both in the context of scholarship on the divide and in the context of *The Sophist*. In *The Sophist* the (philosophy, sophistry and statesmanship). In fact, he will only define two of these kinds (sophistry in *The Sophist*, and statesmanship in *The Statesman*). There is, famously, no dialogue on the philosopher. What then is the difference between philosophy and sophistry or philosophy and statesmanship? If there is not a distinction in *kind*, we may be left only with a distinction between better and worse (philosophy may be ‘noble sophistry’).

Collins, *The Sociology of Philosophies*, 751. It is worth observing that the metaphors Williams and Searle chose (see footnote 39) do not merely serve to show that the divide is asymmetric, but reveal that it also has an evaluative component. Williams and Searle both compare, mimicking the terms themselves, a place (which, as a place, is passive) with a power or capacity. Indeed, the terms carry a value judgement and recall other generalisations (between the romantic and scientific, the irresponsible and responsible).

Glendinning, *The Idea of Continental Philosophy: A Philosophical Chronicle*, 116. Elsewhere Glendinning writes: “… analytic philosophy is essentially not-continental-philosophy” (Glendinning, ‘Analytic Philosophy’ in *Dictionary of Continental Philosophy*, 26). It could be the case that assuming either identity one partakes in a method of division that the Stranger, in *The Statesman*, admits as unfounded, that is, to:

... separate the Hellenic race from all the rest as one, and to all the other races, which are countless in number and have no relation in blood or language to one another, they give the single name ‘barbarian’; then, because of this single name, they think it a single species. Or it was as if a man should think he was dividing number in two classes by cutting off a myriad from all the other numbers, with the notion that he was making one separate class and then should give one name to all the rest, and because of that name should think that this also formed one class distinct from the other (Plato, *The Statesman*, 262d-e).
Stranger gives a defence of *diaerésis* that also, I think, sheds light on a similar defence of method that can be found in much of the scholarship on the divide and which prefigures adoption of the family resemblance model, which I would like to go on to discuss. After this discussion, we will raise again many of our prima facie worries about division into *kind*.

In introducing his method, the Stranger says to Theaetetus that they are pursuing a living quarry.62 If “… Theaetetus and the stranger are hunters … they can proceed on the basis of the sophist’s name alone without verifying his existence”.63 The hunt begins with what they apprehend in common – the name of their object of enquiry and their associated prejudgements. The Stranger’s analysis begins not with a deduction, but with a reference to the everyday. There is never any argument over where to find the object of analysis, of how we might know it – as hunters and analysts we are charged with finding it. The background presumptions here are that the name stands for a *kind* and agreement over the name can lead to agreement over the *kind*: “[t]he assumption may be restated as follows: ‘to be’ is to be the member of a tribe, hence to be hutable and capturable.” 64

Their quarries are “… not simply passively perceived; they are not the ‘sense data’ of the epistemologist. They impress themselves upon the senses and intellect, they both shape and are shaped by our cognitive faculties”. 65 Likewise, it is widely recognised that the division between analytic and continental philosophy is not a division akin to one between natural kinds, or one that would yield necessary and sufficient conditions. The division is rather recognised to be between living and changing subjects “… in which they are seen as united by networks of overlapping but discontinuous features”. 66 It has become the task of the interpreter to provide a descriptive account of those features, features that are commonly associated with the names.

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62 Plato, *The Sophist*, 221c. The Stranger practised his method by defining a species of hunter, the angler. The definition of this hunter serves to introduce the Stranger’s method – it is not merely a paradigm instance of division, but a metaphorical account of division itself.
63 Rosen, *Plato’s Sophist*, 84
64 Ibid., 90
65 Ibid., 86
66 Chase and Reynolds, *Analytic Versus Continental: Arguments on the Methods and Value of Philosophy*, 7
The method of diaeresis is employed to move past mental or tradition-specific images to provide a public representation including only those features by which the Eleatics refer to kinds in the use of the names. Benardete writes:

Theaetetus and the stranger are to replace the name they now have in common, sophist, with a speech which they are to arrive at in common through speeches. The matter itself or the deed is to be a jointly held agreement or common speech. The stranger opposes the name apart from speech to the thing itself through speeches. Through speeches the name is transformed into the thing.

Likewise, scholarship on the divide aims to move from images and pre-judgements to a representation of features that allows the division to be used to ‘pick out’ or ‘capture’ those groups. The assumption is that common use of the divide is likewise a form of hunting (an acquisitive activity that aims to ‘catch’ its referent).

Analyses of the divide often begin with common usage of the terms. If the division were between kinds – families or lineages – they would seem to be identifiable and describable, albeit not by means of necessary and sufficient conditions, but according to the changing, discontinuous and overlapping features that characterise traditions generally and to which we appeal in order to successfully ‘pick out’ a tradition and distinguish it from others. As Peter Hylton writes:

I do not think that it is possible or useful to give a strict definition, with necessary and sufficient conditions, for being an analytic philosopher. Our understanding of the idea proceeds from certain paradigmatic figures and works and ways of conceiving philosophical problems. In all of this we have, as Wittgenstein said of games, overlapping strands, rather than one (or two or three) continuous threads.

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68 Glock prefaces his account thus:

While there is an honorific use, the descriptive use is more widely spread and more firmly entrenched. Understanding of the term ‘analytic philosophy’ is tied to the ability to specify certain figures, movements, texts and institutions, and perhaps some of their prominent features. It does not require the belief that analytic philosophy is at any rate a jolly good thing (Glock, *What is Analytic Philosophy?* 209).

69 For example, Hans Sluga writes:

Following common practice, I take analytic philosophy here as originating in the work of Frege, Russell, Moore and Wittgenstein, as encompassing the logical empiricism of the Vienna Circle, English ordinary language philosophy from the post-war period, American mainstream philosophy of recent decades, as well as their world-wide affiliates and descendants (Sluga, ‘Frege on Meaning’, n. 17).

Brian Leiter and Michael Rosen also take this “[a]s a first approximation …” for defining continental philosophy, they write “… we might say that philosophy in Continental Europe in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is best understood as a connected weave of traditions, some of which overlap, but no one of which dominates all the others.” (Leiter and Rosen, *The Oxford Handbook of Continental Philosophy*, 2)

70 Hylton, ‘Analysis in Analytic Philosophy’, 54. Or as Peter Hacker writes:
One might define a concept as a representation under which other representations can be subsumed by means of a rule. In the case of a family resemblance concept there may not be a singular rule, but multiple rules, just as the Stranger in his *diaeresis* provided multiple features of method, instrument and object, none of which would alone be sufficient, and which together do not form an exhaustive account, but nonetheless are used in the process of referring. That there are multiple rules leads to problematic and paradigmatic cases of subsumption; in order to argue for or against problematic cases we appeal to how those rules are typically used.\(^71\) We appeal to the common use of the concept or the background conditions that govern use.

If analytic and continental philosophy can be understood as family resemblance concepts then accounts that provide some of the features of those concepts do not beg the question ‘but what is analytic or continental philosophy really?’ or ‘what is common to those features, such that they are aligned with these concepts and placed in opposition to those?’ Ray Monk asks what a “… Wittgensteinian answer to the question ‘what is analytic philosophy?’ [would] look like?” He writes:

> … it would consist of little more than the enumeration of things correctly described as analytic philosophy – let’s say, Russell’s *Lectures on Logical Atomism*, Carnap’s *Der Logische Aufbau der Welt*, Quine’s “Two Dogmas of Empiricism”, Strawson’s *Individuals*, Ryle’s *Concept of Mind* and Timothy Williamson’s *Vagueness* – and adding “and similar things”.\(^72\)

We can provide a list of examples, without asking what is common to those examples.\(^73\) To Socrates’ chastisement of Theaetetus for providing examples of

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\(^71\) For example, an angler may choose to fish at night, yet we might still argue that he should still be called an angler if he satisfies the majority of the other features.

\(^72\) Monk, ‘Definitions, Characterisations … “and similar things”: Hans-Johann Glock on Analytic Philosophy’, n.p. I raised the concern that the broad oppositions associated with the divide may be inadequate as defining features, since they do not accompany a non-controversial account by means of which they could be said to be applicable, but are instead supplemented by examples. This complaint seems mostly irrelevant if those features are thought to be family resemblance features. If an opposition fails to ‘pick out’ the proposed referent, it is sufficient to say that the referent need not partake of every feature, but that a group of overlapping oppositions are used in the process of referring. Those oppositions could now be employed as overlapping and discontinuous features.

\(^73\) Wittgenstein in *Philosophical Investigations* writes:
knowledge, Wittgenstein might reply “[b]ut our answer consists in giving such an enumeration and a few analogies”. 74

The Stranger can also forgo the demand for a single rationale or principle of differentiation. One is not trying to give an account of knowledge or philosophy per se, but referring to a tradition of using concepts in order to represent to oneself, and others, (instances of) philosophy. One is answering the question which Socrates formulated: ‘how do people use these concepts to recognise x?’ not ‘how do we know that we are correct about x?’

If we assume that the names ‘analytic philosophy’ and ‘continental philosophy’ confer family resemblance concepts in ordinary language then it becomes the task of interpreters to make the features of those concepts explicit. The task is to make explicit only those features that allow the concept to be used according to convention.

In the remainder of this section I want to consider accounts of analytic and continental philosophy that hold them to be family resemblance concepts. Hans-Johann Glock in What is Analytic Philosophy? popularised the approach so I will focus on his work. 75 While there is no doubt that the family resemblance model can

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74 Wittgenstein, Philosophical Grammar, 120-121
75 Glock argues for the family resemblance approach in chapter eight of What is Analytic Philosophy? and he gives a family resemblance account of analytic philosophy in ‘Was Wittgenstein an Analytic Philosopher?’ Glock includes the following indicia:

- Commitment to the linguistic turn
- The rejection of metaphysics
- The claim that philosophy is continuous with science
- A reductive approach to analysis
- The employment of formal logic
- A focus on argument and a concern for clarity (Glock, ‘Was Wittgenstein an Analytic Philosopher?’, 438)

To this list Chase and Reynolds add: “… the injunction to minimize one’s departure from empiricist respectability …” and the need to “… place some weight on the deliverances of common sense”. (Chase and Reynolds, Analytic Versus Continental: Arguments on the Methods and Value of Philosophy, 7).

Chase and Reynolds also supply a family resemblance account of continental philosophy, which includes the following indicia:

- … wariness about aligning philosophical method with common sense; a ‘temporal turn’ that encompasses both ontological issues and an emphasis on the historical presuppositions of concepts and theoretical frameworks; an interest in thematizing intersubjectivity; an anti-representationalism about the mind; an investment in transcendental arguments and, more generally, transcendental reasoning; a concern
successfully explicate common conventions and practices of use, as I have already mentioned, the critical question that guides much scholarship on the divide is whether the divide, rather than producing mere names, images or representations, is successful in grasping two distinct kinds (types, groups or lineages). I will argue that charged with answering the question of kinds, the scholar of the divide is given a task that cannot be achieved by employing the family resemblance model alone. That the question of kinds is at issue and in tension with the family resemblance approach is evident in the ambiguity between representing common usage and achieving correct application in Glock’s work. This I will now discuss.

Glock introduces his family resemblance model of analytic philosophy only after bracketing the honorific use of the term, a use he recognises to be widespread and fundamental. James Chase and Jack Reynolds also leave “… aside any prescriptive implications they [analytic and continental philosophy] inevitably have for the ways in which philosophy ought (or ought not) to be done”. Glock brackets this use to focus instead upon our use of the terms to refer to a group. While this decision is consistent with the family resemblance model the subtle effect of the decision upon the reader is to shift the focus away from potential critique of use (and metaphilosophical reflection upon the meaning and relevance of our use of the divide) toward a concern with achieving correct reference (the explication of features that achieve reference). This effect is compounded when we are supplied with a table of traits, traits that Glock then ‘ticks’ and ‘crosses’ off on behalf of philosophers. This is not necessarily problematic if one adds the caveat that one is referring only to the resemblances that one (or one group?) conventionally associates with philosophers. However, the claim seems stronger than this.

Indeed, Glock does use the family resemblance concept prescriptively in ‘Was Wittgenstein an Analytic Philosopher?’. Here he uses the concept to determine whether or not Wittgenstein was an analytic philosopher. While there is a sense in

76 Chase & Reynolds, Analytic Versus Continental: Arguments on the Methods and Value of Philosophy, 2
77 I am referring to the table of family resemblance traits Glock provides in ‘Was Wittgenstein an Analytic Philosopher?’, 438. Traits are applied to Frege, Russell, the Vienna Circle, Oxford Ordinary Language Philosophy, Quine, the Wittgenstein of the Tractatus and the Wittgenstein of the Philosophical Investigations, who, respectively, receive ‘ticks’ or ‘crosses’ according to whether traits may be applied to them.
which one can argue for borderline cases by appealing to conventions of use, one cannot correct conventions of use by simply referring to indicia.

I think that the ambiguity between mapping usage and achieving reference is the result of Glock emphasising the table of traits and removing consideration of the history of use. Or, in other words, he emphasises the notion of a picture, which cannot determine its own use over the syntax from which the picture finds its application. And the effect of this procedure is to move away from arguing whether or not Wittgenstein should be said to be an analytic philosopher given the way in which the term is conventionally used, to a claim that, in applying traits, one has said something significant about Wittgenstein himself – whether or not he is an analytic philosopher.

This emphasis seems to lead to a reversal of Wittgenstein’s own procedure: rather than treat the concept as what we know, which we know because we speak the language, and then attempt to show how the concept encompasses many instances – these relying on often slim resemblances – we have a building-up of the concept from these indicia, as though the concept is the sum of indicia and its use directed by means of them. This is to assume that knowledge of the sum of the parts can replace knowledge of the whole. One imagines for the interpreter a highly idealised role – charting resemblances between disparate ‘pictures’, reconstructing concepts from raw data. But what counts as belonging to the concept is not given

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78 Theaetetus resisted this reduction of Socrates in the Theaetetus (Plato, Theaetetus, 204b-c). We can understand why, to take an example, knowing the totality of individual soldiers does not exhaust the meaning or power of an army. Neither is analytic or continental philosophy reducible to the few features outlined: the terms themselves have been used to particular ends and with considerable effects which those features neither encompass nor comprehend.

79 One is almost led to think it possible to specify the degree to which a particular quality must be displayed in order for it to count as an instance of the concept. This leads to questions such as Monk’s:

How many strands must a philosopher partake in, for example, to pass the family resemblance test? Why is he [Glock] so confident that this test would rule out Husserl while ruling in the later Wittgenstein? Husserl, it seems to me, would tick at least as many boxes on Glock’s table as the later Wittgenstein (Monk, ‘Definitions, Characterisations … “and similar things”: Hans-Johann Glock on Analytic Philosophy’, n.p.).

But of course the idea of analytic philosophy is not originally based upon such a practice; one does not go around collecting resemblances and then only form one’s categories if those resemblances are useful. My point is not only that without the concept I lack any rationale or motivation for this idealised mapping, leaving the mapping simply possible, but that I also lack the criteria and properties that would make the mapping possible. For example, I may have a stereotype of the facial features of someone of a particular family, nationality or race and I may therefore see exceptions as exceptions and applications as applications of this stereotype – we cannot conclude that without the stereotype I
on account of indicia; rather, the indicia give a means to consider the function of the concept in everyday language and are secondary to this function, in the sense that a family does not form a family by virtue of resemblances.

A prescriptive task that has honorific connotations is taken as merely a descriptive exercise – a matter of simply applying traits. Insofar as traits and features that belong to a family resemblance concept of analytic philosophy are a part of a prescriptive and evaluative discourse, the exercise of applying that model cannot merely be descriptive. When we use the family resemblance concepts prescriptively, such as when Glock seeks to determine whether Wittgenstein was an analytic philosopher, we do not merely explicate (or ‘acquire’) Wittgenstein’s status in a community, but, by necessity of this very process, we, in some sense, ‘produce’ Wittgenstein as, or as not, an analytic philosopher, transforming ‘him’ in the minds of people (effecting what people will or will not say about him). There may be such a productive element to diaerésis too. This would align the method with what we will discover to be the methodology of the sophist: the production of imagery and the division between better and worse.

A scholar that uses the family resemblance model may be able to answer my critique by arguing that the resemblances he notes are not due to initial prejudices and conventions that should come under critique, but are due merely to analytic and continental philosophy forming two traditions. Indeed, the family resemblance concept already contains a reference to the familial in traditions of thinking. In what follows I want to consider the definition of analytic and continental philosophy as traditions and the methods that are adopted to argue that, as traditions, analytic and continental philosophy are applicable to the vast field of modern philosophy. I will argue that, despite appearances, these methods do not necessarily yield two

would pick out these very exceptions and applications as exceptions and applications (the exceptions could form their own concept against which previously thought applications now appear as exceptions).

80 That Glock can merely cite the single word ‘clarity’ as an indicium of analytic philosophy, without any clarification, is to assume that we, in this family, know what clarity is and have a shared conception of it. Yet people who do not identify as analytic philosophers may not find analytic philosophers clear. It does not suffice to say that we see a connection, while failing to explain that connection philosophically, for the connection could always be arbitrary. There is an ‘obscured’ evaluative dimension of this indicium of ‘clarity’, in that it allows us to ignore the numerous difficulties in interpretation and translation by making of these differences a difference – the difference between the clear and the obscure – which is also a judgement that permits us to avoid questions of interpretive subtleties altogether.
lineages of philosophy, though they might reveal the conventional representations one might have of those 'traditions' (and even suppressed features of those representations).

Glock understands analytic philosophy as a tradition united by causal influences over time.81 On this account, identifying a ‘tradition’ is a matter of identifying influences and causal connections between members. I think that the criterion of ‘influence between generations’ is inadequate. It places no constraint on time-scale or extent (trivial habits such as may be passed down between schoolchildren are indistinguishable from orthodox groups that aim at invariant practices of a ritual nature), and it leaves the notion of influence vague (influence is not necessarily ‘causal’; we also speak of aesthetic influence). Further, it isn’t clear that charting influences would yield two distinct and internally unified groups. One would be faced with questions such as the following:

How many “generations” is one allowed to go back? And, if one follows a historical line of influence that leads, say, from the later Wittgenstein to Jean Paul [sic] Lyotard, by what criteria are we to say that Lyotard is not, but the later Wittgenstein is, a member of the analytic tradition?82

The interpreter of the divide needs to make a decision about when to begin, and end, his charting of causal connections. This will not be determined, however, by simply charting causal connections (given that ‘parts’ do not exhaust the ‘whole’).83 The decision must be due to criteria he thinks proper to that tradition that cannot be explained through influence alone – a pre-given image of what is or ought to be traditional in this case (this is to say the image one has of the ‘whole’ influences one’s

81 Glock, What is Analytic Philosophy? 20. Scott Soames also holds that analytic philosophy can be reconstructed as a tradition where a tradition can be defined and charted in terms of ‘trails of influence’ (Soames, Philosophical Analysis in the Twentieth Century, Volume 1: The Dawn of Analysis, xiii). Chase and Reynolds also argue “… the continental tradition, like the analytic tradition, exhibits patterns of influence over time (in this case, Kant, Nietzsche, Husserl and Heidegger, among others, are the key figures)” (Chase and Reynolds, Analytic Versus Continental: Arguments on the Methods and Value of Philosophy, 8).


83 In the Platonic dialogue, diaeresis might give us a method by which to analyse a compound, but it does not answer to the context of analysis. That is, we cannot by diaeresis alone know when to begin or stop the process of analysis. To determine this we might appeal to our pre-theoretical image of the subject matter, but if this is so, how will diaeresis take us past the mere image?
reception of the 'parts').\textsuperscript{84} That is, when recognising 'lines of influence’ we tend to appeal to a pre-given image of the broader structure of the relevant 'tradition'.\textsuperscript{85}

The criterion of influence does not exhaust what is contained in that 'image', nor can it explain why lines of influence are maintained, and why they are imagined where they would be lacking, so that self-declared analytic philosophers who have no contact or influences in common still identify themselves as ‘analytic’.\textsuperscript{86} Moreover, in obscuring this dimension of traditions, the influence that a particular traditions appeal could have on my own charting of resemblances, goes unnoticed.\textsuperscript{87}

By dividing the groups as traditions and providing a causal account of relationships between members the interpreter is able to reinforce her prior image

\textsuperscript{84} We can see that this must be employed in order to include Nietzsche, Hegel and Kant in the continental cannon, even though they significantly predate the discourse of division.

\textsuperscript{85} It would be difficult to treat continental philosophy as a tradition, since the grouping arises from within an analytic discourse to confirm non-identification. While it is true that there can be ‘identity through exclusion’, “… unities of exclusion can be experienced as both powerful and meaningful …” (Reynolds, ‘Continental Philosophy and Chickening Out: A Reply to Simon Glendinning’, 257) just as negative stereotyping can achieve greater identification than positive (Ellemers and Mlicki, ‘Being Different or Being Better? National Stereotypes and Identifications of Polish and Dutch Students’). However, we would then have to see both analytic philosophy and continental philosophy as rather recent phenomena, in which identification as a tradition requires the rather fictitious, but no less powerful, invention of its borders and origins. Continental philosophy would also need to be said, rather ironically, to be a phenomenon issuing from Anglo-American Universities.

\textsuperscript{86} Analytic philosophy cannot be understood as a social group tied together by communicative ties, for this it would have to have a ‘saturated communicative structure’ and lived relations between members (Frey, \textit{Group Communication in Context}, 4). A better definition of a tradition might be that a ‘tradition’ is a set of practices, rules and prescriptions that encapsulate certain values and norms, which are themselves endorsed and prescribed. In a sociological context, analytic and continental philosophy could be called ‘invented traditions’, that is, “…a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past” (Hobsbawm, \textit{The Invention of Tradition}, 1). Traditions seek invariant practices, norms and values, and so seek their own continuation through an identity (they tell a story). Eric J. Hobsbawm notes that:

\begin{itemize}
  \item The historic past into which the new tradition is inserted need not be lengthy, stretching back into the assumed mists of time. Revolutions and ‘progressive movements’ which break with the past, by definition, have their own relevant past…
  \item However insofar as there is such reference to a historic past, the peculiarity of ‘invented’ traditions is that the continuity with it is largely fictitious. In short, they are responses to novel situations which take the form of reference to old situations, or which establish their own past through quasi-obligatory repetition (Ibid., 2).
\end{itemize}

Defining traditions in this manner we would still be left with the question of what philosophical significance sociological traditions should have and the question whether analytic and continental philosophy form \textit{philosophical} (rather than merely sociological) traditions.

\textsuperscript{87} We might note that in causal accounts the analytic heritage is often presented such that it “… can be combined with no other form of contemporary philosophy, and conversely; it is strictly incompatible with all other forms, it can breed no hybrid descendent” (Andler, ‘The Undefinability of Analytic Philosophy’, 7). Likewise, the Stranger’s \textit{diaeresis} reflects the constraint of tradition; in summarising the \textit{diaeresis} he uses “[t]he anastrophic form … so that it looks like a Homeric genealogy” (Benardete, \textit{The Being of the Beautiful}, II.82). That is, the Stranger presents his definitions in the form of a family tree — definitions must emerge from within a lineage.
of these ‘traditions’; however, this does not necessarily mean that her description
sets these groupings apart from others in any explanatory sense. Glock might reply
that one is then able to form a family resemblance concept of that tradition, which
will speak to the specificity of that grouping. However, that one can form an image
of a group of people and apply it by noticing their adherence to that image does not
necessarily reveal a significant group.

Thinking that a significant grouping is formed by virtue of the resemblances
that one is witness to, while ignoring the broader significance of doing so, the
purpose or intent of doing so, as well as the evaluative functions of those groupings,
bears a striking resemblance to stereotypical thinking. This is a problem for both
analytic and continental philosophy, but the problematic might be easier to draw out
with regard to continental philosophy, since this title was more often applied from
without to denote non-membership of the analytic school, while purporting to cover
what is a very broad and heterogeneous domain. Moreover, there is no doubt that
(prior perhaps to recent times) the title ‘analytic philosopher’ was more often than
not, a badge of honour, whereas use of the term ‘continental’ tended to be
defamatory, if not to some degree degrading.

While we might fairly judge that a particular philosopher embodies a
stereotype, we risk prejudice if we judge that ‘all of these philosophers, on the basis
of the resemblance which I see between them, form a group’. It might be thought

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88 One could interject that these stereotypes are not necessarily wrong. There is a tendency to think
that a stereotype is loosely accurate and therefore useful. We tend to assume that this will be the case
if stereotypes are shared – that is if the continentalists identify with the analytic’s stereotype of
continental philosophy. However, even if this were true this focus on identification is misleading.
We might take as an example, one that will be shown to be entirely appropriate: national identity.
Sociological studies have shown that we wildly overestimate the extent to which such identification is
homogeneous or non-trivial. A study of three thousand nine hundred and eighty-nine people from
forty-nine cultures saw that national character ratings did not “… converge with assessed traits”. The
researchers had to conclude, against their preconception of stereotypes as ‘useful’, that “perceptions
of national character … appear to be unfounded stereotypes that play a function in maintaining
national identity” (A. Terracciano et al., ‘National Character Does Not Reflect Mean Personality Trait
Levels in 49 Cultures’). The identification with national identity was not found to be, on the
individual level, in any sense significant.

89 The former is not necessarily true: we might overemphasise the extent to which we can judge fairly
that someone fits a stereotype. In response to the Terracciano study, considered in the footnote
above, Richard W. Robins asks how stereotypes about national character can be inaccurate when we,
in all other cases, seem to be fairly good at judging personality traits. Why do such encounters with
individuals fail to challenge the stereotype? Robins argues that when we allow national stereotypes to
inform an encounter we no longer have a predilection to recognise violations of the stereotype as
significant. Using the stereotype to judge, we keep it invariant and see violations of the stereotype as
exceptions to it. Robins proposes many answers to this question, the most promising is perhaps his
sufficient for neutrality that I employ the question of whether the grouping achieves reference. However, if this is determined only by means of whether people in that grouping receive a majority of ‘ticks’ against the features I suggest, then insofar as I am merely surveying the features of my ‘concept’ such that it allows me to ‘pick out’ people in that group as I am accustomed to doing, they will of course receive ‘ticks’. The process of ‘ticking’ off uncritically pre-determined features, as if one simply observed such complex philosophical traits as ‘a commitment to the linguistic turn’ (as if the properties of philosophical texts where not themselves subject to the critical process of interpretation), while purporting to determine a highly contested conceptual grouping as though conducting a mere survey of applicability or non-applicability, is what I find so disconcerting. Homi Bhabha captures the concern when he says that:

It is the force of ambivalence that gives the … stereotype its currency: ensures its repeatability in changing historical and discursive conjunctions; informs its strategies of individuation and marginalization; produces that effect of probabilistic truth and predictability which, for the stereotype, must always be in excess of what can be empirically proved or logically construed.\textsuperscript{90}

Applying the continental grouping from without (and including philosophers who predate the discourse of division) may be thought a form of historicism. Here, historicism involves employing an approach akin to Friedrich Schlegel’s 25\textsuperscript{th} Critical Fragment, where we compare the past in terms of the present, and translate the foreign in terms of familiar conventions.\textsuperscript{91} Hans-Georg Gadamer writes, “… historical objectivism … resembles statistics which are such excellent means of propaganda because they let the ‘facts’ speak and hence simulate an objectivity that in reality depends on the legitimacy of the question asked”.\textsuperscript{92} The point here may

\textsuperscript{90} Bhabha, \textit{Nation and Narration}, 71. Bhabha defines a stereotype as “… a form of knowledge and identification that vacillates between what is already in place, already known and something anxiously repeated” (Bhabha, \textit{The Location of Culture}, 66).

\textsuperscript{91} The fragment reads:

The two main principles of the so-called historical criticism are the Postulate of Vulgarity and the Axiom of the Average. The Postulate of Vulgarity: everything great, good and beautiful is improbable because it is extraordinary and, at the very least, suspicious. The Axiom of the Average: as we and our surroundings are, so must it have been everywhere, because that, after all, is so very natural (Schlegel, \textit{Philosophical Fragments}, 3).

\textsuperscript{92} Gadamer, \textit{Truth and Method}, 300
not be that the concept ‘misrepresents’, as Edward Said cautions in the context of Orientalism:

My whole point about this system is not that it is a misrepresentation of some Oriental essence – in which I do not for a moment believe – but that it operates as representations usually do, for a purpose, according to a tendency, in a specific historical, intellectual, and even economic setting.93

In a similar manner, Wittgenstein warns: “[d]on’t look only for similarities in order to justify a concept, but also for other connexions. The father transmits his name to his son even if the latter is quite unlike him”.94 The connections that make a family a family are legal, traditional, sexual and political, and, to a much lesser extent, visual (though not always visual, and where visual such a connection is difficult to separate in judgment from the influence of the common name and the social functions of the familial). In a similar manner, the analytic and continental images have been constructed out of political, institutional, and metaphilosophical discourses. It is perhaps only on account of these discourses that I am apparently able to ‘see’ the divide as applicable. What we have is an immensely complex history of use, much of which has been prejudicial and evaluative, and which certainly has “… implications … for the ways in which philosophy ought (or ought not) to be done”.95 How might one think about the legitimacy of the questions asked, or the features being applied? We need to ask who uses these concepts, to

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93 Said, Orientalism, 273
94 Wittgenstein, Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology, Vol. 1, 923. In a letter written by Wittgenstein to Norman Malcolm on the topic of national character (as will be shown, crude assumptions regarding national character were in a large part constitutive of the divide), Wittgenstein wrote:

Whenever I thought of you I couldn’t help thinking of a particular incident which seemed to me very important. You & I were walking along the river to the railway bridge & we had a heated discussion in which you made a remark about ‘national character’ that shocked me by its primitiveness. I then thought: what is the use of studying philosophy if all that it does for you is to enable you to talk with some plausibility about some abstruse questions of logic, etc., & if it does not improve your thinking about the important questions of everyday life, if it does not make you more conscientious … You see, I know that it’s difficult to think well about ‘certainty,’ ‘probability,’ ‘perception,’ etc. But it is, if possible, still more difficult to think, or try to think, really honestly about your life and other people’s lives. And the trouble is that thinking about these things is not thrilling, but often downright nasty. And when it’s nasty then it’s most important (Wittgenstein, cited in Malcolm, Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir, 39).

Wittgenstein suggests that it is not acceptable to make a separation between philosophy and rhetoric in order to deal with the problem of rhetoric. One has to find a way to reflect philosophically upon one’s extra-philosophical opinions. In this section, I am suggesting that the pooling of opinion is not acceptable; one must be able to reflect upon those opinions, their sources, motivations, justifications and effects.

95 Chase and Reynolds, Analytic Versus Continental: Arguments on the Methods and Value of Philosophy, 2
what ends and under what conditions. We may even need to find a way of asking whether those uses are honourable. While the ‘family resemblance’ approach to the divide may make explicit certain features presumed in the use of the terms ‘continental’ and ‘analytic’, it will in no other way assist us in answering these questions. It may, in fact, obscure them.

Given the way in which I have argued that Glock appropriates the family resemblance model and understands traditions, the relevant context, the “… specific historical, intellectual, and even economic setting …” in which these uses find the appearance of applicability, is obscured. This appropriation also allows one to assume a vantage point by which this use can be reinscribed as the mere process of noting resemblance, when the interpreter, his prejudices, and the historical discourse of the divide are genuinely implicated in the process.

In *The Sophist*, Theaetetus and the Stranger end their analysis of the angler with what seems little more than the opinion that they started with; it is not clear that they have moved past the name or associated opinions to the kind or ‘thing itself’. If the method of *diaerésis* is merely *acquisitive*, then the Stranger faces the

96 To retain criticality, one might think that the criterion of ‘use’ is sufficient. That is, we might ask whether these features are *useful* simply in picking out their referents. However, there is no doubt that a widely used concept will (unsurprisingly) be ‘useful’ in, at the very least, displaying its own entrenchedness. There are indefinite ways in which something can be said to be useful: if one wishes quickly to discount a thinker or one simply wishes not to have to engage with a work, it may be *useful* to rely on attitudes and opinions about that work in order to form ‘likely’ judgements with regard to it. Such a classificatory function is *useful*, with respect to the necessity of classifying (which refers to broader pragmatics in the institutional and social divisions of labour, and thus to a field of competition, status, and politics), but it is highly questionable whether the virtues of such a usage are any deeper than this.

For Reynolds and Chase the critical question is whether the family resemblance concepts are useful in representing philosophical difference for the purpose of comparing their respective methodologies. However, if the aim is comparison it may be useful to render qualities diametrically opposed and to exclude meta-differences regarding the understanding and function of methodology that may complicate the comparative model. For example, if a central tenet of analytic philosophy were that philosophy had no methodology, or that methodologies are inseparable from theoretical commitments, or that methodologies cannot be compared (for what method would one adopt to compare one method with another?), this would call into question the very value of the project of comparison. It would take us too far off course to consider the comparisons made (would comparison ever really begin?). I want simply to suggest that the question of utility for particular ends is not sufficient to retain criticality. Moreover, if the discourse of division proposes thorough-going metaphilosophical differences, any comparative project that for ease of comparison (and utility) assumed a neutral metaphilosophical playing ground would be asking the wrong question.

97 Said, *Orientalism*, 273

98 As Stanley Rosen comments:

We cannot be sure that what we cognize privately is the thing itself … Needless to say, none of this prevents us … from arriving at ‘definitions.’ The serious difficulty concerns the status and value of our talk and our definitions … Definitions are
problem of analysis: in what sense can the discovery be revelatory and, if we define according to pre-theorised judgements that could always be arbitrary and accidental, how can we know that the definition is complete and explanatory? If the method is productive however, then a kind has been produced, and “… the stranger’s speech” can itself seem “… sophistic, for it conjures into being that which it is seeking to discover”. 99

In this section I have argued that if we take self-claimed descriptive accounts of the divide (that make use of the family resemblance model and understand the divide as a divide between traditions) as merely descriptive they reveal only conventional images or traditions of representing philosophies. Nonetheless, this may be sufficient to speak of ‘traditions’ in philosophy, insofar as those images are then endorsed and appealed to in practice (and in the seeking of common influences). I have suggested that there is an unacknowledged normative element to these descriptive exercises. Understood so, scholarship does not merely comment upon the discourse of division, but is a part of that very discourse that proposes a division in philosophy, just as one might say that the Stranger’s division, despite appearances, is not concerned:

… to divide a genus into species, but more fundamentally with selection from among lines of succession, distinguishing between the claimants, distinguishing the pure from the impure, the authentic from the inauthentic … The … dialectic is not a dialectic of contradiction nor of contrariety, but one of rivalry (amphisbētēsis) – a dialectic of rivals or claimants. Division’s essence appears not in breadth – in the determination of the species of a genus – but in depth – in the selection of the lineage: the sorting out of claims, the distinguishing of true claimants from false. 100

Glendinning writes, “… an appeal to the idea of a division between analytic and continental philosophy does not so much as capture the rotten scene as it is a part of
It may indeed be the case that the argument for a divide is not based primarily upon a revelation of kinds, but the argument that there should be kinds (or traditions) in the hope that these kinds might be constituted. As such, differences between what is better and what is worse are no doubt employed. It is to this prescriptive dimension of the distinctions that I wish to turn. Again the concern will be the metaphilosophical assumptions and consequences of our discourse regarding the divide.

101 Glendinning, The Idea of Continental Philosophy: A Philosophical Chronicle, 13
In the previous section I argued that to constrain our account by tradition risks reducing that account to the opinions common to traditions of thinking. If this possibility is not fully recognised, those opinions may be raised to the status of truths that are not subject to critique. The problem is familiar from The Sophist: if one begins with common usage to determine a kind there is a tension between granting that one’s definition belongs to a certain tradition of thinking, and claiming that that tradition is correct tout court.

The Stranger’s appeal to his tradition is evidenced in his claim to have learnt the distinctions between the philosopher, the sophist and the statesman, by memorising their respective diaereses. Socrates appeals to the Stranger to simply repeat the lesson. Yet, he also asks the further, seemingly innocent, question of the Stranger: do you prefer to give a monologue in which you will not be interrupted, or to enter into dialogue? By admitting dialogue as a possible mode of delivery Socrates implies that a rehearsed (or memorised) Eleatic answer may not be

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102 We were brought back to one of our first suspicions with regard to the method of division by opposing features: such a procedure involves assuming answers to contentious metaphilosophical questions, which are then concealed, rather than becoming subject to dialogue.

103 Plato, The Sophist, 217b. Probably against the Stranger’s wishes, Theodorus reveals to Socrates that he and Theaetetus had been questioning the Stranger upon a very similar topic before they met with Socrates, and the Stranger had been full of excuses about the difficulty of the topic, as he is now. However, the Stranger had boasted that he had a good schooling in the matter (Plato, The Sophist, 217b). One might speculate that Theodorus, who holds the Stranger in high regard as a philosopher without reflecting upon the nature of philosophy, would have posed this question, not as a philosophical question, but in the fashion of an external admirer, thus allowing the Stranger to occupy the position of the philosopher, allowing him to act as the one who has an answer yet need not reveal it.

John McCumber suggests that the general absence of self-reflection in Post-War American analytic philosophy served an end, in that it gave the impression that the philosophers were too busy ‘doing philosophy’ to reflect upon this question, and so implied that the question of philosophy was either irrelevant or had already been satisfactorily answered. However, McCumber writes:

[If philosophy professors provide no account of themselves, of how they got to be where they are or of where they’re going, then the impression given to their students is inevitably that they somehow dropped from heaven. What drops from heaven is hardly open to discussion much less to criticism. The usefulness of such a standpoint to the professor can hardly be disputed (McCumber, Time in the Ditch, 11).]

With this statement one recalls Socrates remark, upon being introduced to the Stranger, that he may be, for all he knows, a god.

104 Plato, The Sophist, 217c
complete, or appropriate: the Stranger has to admit that an Athenian respondent could interject and change the course of the lesson.

The Stranger claims dialogue is acceptable on the condition that the respondent is tractable and gives no trouble.\textsuperscript{105} How might an interlocutor ‘give trouble’? Theodorus implied that Socrates was a troublemaker for his obscure metaphilosophical concerns. A troublesome interlocutor might raise questions about the status of the Stranger’s own approach so that the discourse cannot ‘get going’ (or the \textit{diaerēses} the Stranger has learnt become burdened with controversy). Socrates offers Theaetetus as an agreeable respondent.\textsuperscript{106} Indeed, Theaetetus will offer very little to the discourse; he will merely assent, ask for clarification and sometimes grow lethargic.\textsuperscript{107}

Dialogue is here understood in the Parmenidean tradition, rather than in the Socratic: “[t]he purpose of a Parmenidean conversation is ostensibly for a bystander’s

\textsuperscript{105} Ibid., 217c.
\textsuperscript{106} Ibid., 217c.  Theaetetus is the young student of Theodorus, a gifted mathematician, whom Socrates discoursed with the day before.
\textsuperscript{107} The Stranger, addressing Theaetetus, tells him that he need only have endurance (Plato, \textit{The Sophist}, 218b). That is, he merely needs to follow the Stranger’s method in order to achieve his results. When the Stranger poses this criterion Theaetetus says that he has no fear of fainting under the conversation. Theaetetus is referring to his fainting spell in conversation with Socrates the day before (Plato, \textit{Theaetetus}, 155c-d). The experience of defining knowledge had included an existential element: Socrates and Theaetetus had to speak about their own knowledge in the search for knowledge. One might speculate that because Theaetetus had to put his own knowledge into question, he had experienced bouts of anxiety in trying to determine a definition of knowledge, which Socrates applauded as his ‘pangs of labour’, a sign that he had something within him that he was ‘bringing to birth’ (Ibid., 155d). Theaetetus’ trepidation about entering into dialogue with the Stranger will not be of an existential nature: at times he will tire at the length of the dialogue, and grow bored and lethargic. At such points he is told to press on and be patient, with the assurance that results will come.

Socratic maieutics, and thus Socratic dialogue, is here implicitly contrasted with what will become the Stranger’s dialogue. Socrates produces a fainting spell, the ‘pangs of labour’, through a form of philosophical questioning that interrogates one’s existential relation to the question itself, a form of questioning which seeks after self-knowledge (the seeking reveals its absence as knowledge, hence the anxiety, or crisis, of thinking that one does not know oneself), the relation or very significance that knowledge would or should have for oneself. On the other hand, the Stranger will speak to Theaetetus as if he were subordinate to his own knowledge, rendering his interlocutor passive, reactive and bored, as if he were merely the audience to a lecture, as if the ‘dialogue’ were more akin to a performance. Socrates suggestion that Theaetetus (who sought the nature of knowledge with Socrates in \textit{The Theaetetus}) take the place of the agreeable respondent, the one that allows the discourse to get going, hints at Socrates understanding that metaphilosophical questions can obstruct progression in philosophical discourse (or what might appear as progression to another) and that in the presence of those who are not so self-aware (Theaetetus and Theodorus) such questions should be allowed to emerge in their own time from within that discourse (Socrates’ silence throughout the \textit{The Sophist} can thus be interpreted as both a generosity toward Theaetetus and Theodorus (and by association, the reader), and a form of self-critique: the sophistication of his irony being a possible impediment to the education of others.
benefit and not necessarily but only incidentally for the interlocutor”. 108 A Parmenidean ‘dialogue’ is essentially a monologue delivered to an audience in the form of a dialogue. That is, dialogic elements are merely performative and decorative. Likewise, in the study of the analytic-continental divide, dialogue is undertaken insofar as both sides of the divide are to be represented, but as with dialogue in the Parmenidean tradition, this is typically only for a bystander’s benefit. We might think of the widespread metaphor of ‘bridging the divide’, which implies that one abstracts from two kinds, which are to remain unchanged by discourse, but for the introduction of a third perspective by means of which they can be compared, contrasted or evaluated. Choosing such a dialogic style is consistent with the idea of philosophy being a kind: if philosophy is a kind then its nature can be determined independently of dialogue: it may be abstracted and repeated in different contexts.

It seems that the Stranger may give his rehearsed answer after all. Although the Stranger’s account is tradition-specific, that tradition claims to be capable of defining philosophy per se; if the Stranger, following his tradition, identifies philosophy with norms and practices endorsed by that tradition then he may not simply explicate the Eleatic account of philosophy, but claim that the Eleatic tradition is equivalent to philosophy per se. 109 Indeed, as we have said, the Stranger’s descriptions may indict Socrates.

Leaving the narrative of The Sophist, let us consider how this particular problem (of the relation between traditions and the philosophical tradition) ‘plays out’ in the divide. Considered in the context of their use most descriptions of analytic and continental philosophy also have a prescriptive dimension (they implicitly endorse or critique, telling us what philosophy should or should not be like). Many accounts of analytic philosophy are written as a way of “… reinforcing it from within by an updating of its sense of identity”. 110 The implicit claim is that analytic philosophy should be a tradition. And it is clear that the family resemblance features are often invoked as endorsements. There is certainly:

108 Benardete, The Being of the Beautiful, II. 76
109 Recall that Socrates called the Stranger a god, revealing that by taking up the position of the philosophical judge he might absolve himself from philosophical judgement or the commitment to philosophical dialogue.
110 Cohen, The Dialogue of Reason: An Analysis of Analytic Philosophy, 9. It is assumed to be a sign of ‘crisis’ (not health) when the analytic identity is felt to be undermined.
... a strong tendency to move from (a) the thesis that analytic philosophy is this and that to (b) the claim that analytic philosophy is truly this and that and thence to (c) the claim that analytic philosophy is true philosophy tout court in virtue of the fact that it is (deep down) this and that.\footnote{Andler, ‘The Undefinability of Analytic Philosophy’, 5}

However, this prescriptive dimension tends not to be defended philosophically (for example, we rarely find discussions of why it is philosophically valuable for the philosopher to identify as a type of philosopher). The analytic identity is usually assumed to be valuable and then confirmed and maintained by merely describing what it is that ‘analytic philosophers’ can now be said to do or believe.\footnote{This ought to be accompanied by critical discussions of these traits, whether they are ‘good’ traits or why they are so considered; this ought also to be accompanied by critical discussions upon whether philosophers should seek to inculcate themselves in traditions at all, what the relationship is between philosophy and its tradition (or traditions). The nature of this tradition or traditions and what appealing to them might mean for the continuing practice of philosophy should also be considered. Again, I think these metaphilosophical questions are important, but too often left unmasked, or obscured, in the discourse upon the divide.}

In what follows I will be examining the tension between descriptions and endorsements of the divide – these form an indistinct boundary, if not an essentially porous one. I will argue that if we see the task of scholarship to be the description of two philosophical kinds then, without a metaphilosophical defence such that the philosophical value of there being two kinds is argued for, descriptions remain ungrounded (they could always be said to be superficial or philosophically vacuous). However, I will also argue that if one does engage in a metaphilosophical defence of the divide such that either group is endorsed explicitly, this serves to undermine the idea that the distinction is between two groups or traditions of philosophy (that one could merely describe), but becomes instead a distinction between philosophy and non-philosophy (involving us in a discussion about the limits of philosophy itself).

To make this argument I will consider the identification of analytic philosophy through the identification of norms that are said to be endorsed by analytic philosophers.\footnote{It has been less common to argue that there should be a continental as opposed to an analytic tradition, so I am referring here to arguments for an analytic tradition. However, insofar as the critiques I present are applicable to a so-called analytic tradition they would also be applicable to arguments for a continental tradition.} Chase and Reynolds see “… quasi-unity undergirding each tradition (even the ‘motley crew’ that is continental philosophy), in terms of the
methodological norms each has adopted”. Chase argues that, along with influence between members,

... there is a normative aspect to such connectivity as well ... contemporary analytic philosophy can be seen as a common dialogic enterprise characterized by a degree of internal interactivity and responsiveness, which aims to promote a certain kind of ‘inferential connectivity’

‘Inferential connectivity’ can just be taken to mean ‘arguing and discussing together in order to maximize the possibility of agreement’. Surely, this is what all philosophy, and all dialogue in general, involves. The question then is why it is felt that a sub-tradition needs to be introduced that will maximize this possibility internally, while withdrawing the obligation to discourse with other groups. It must be the case that a particular sort of discourse is sought.

Pascal Engel defines the analytic dialogue by means of norms – such as truth and justification – that he then takes as a means to identify analytic from continental philosophy. The criterion which he uses to differentiate the two is as follows: “... the more a philosopher is prepared to accept consciously the cognitive norms of truth and justification that he follows in his practice, the closer he is to the theoretical and practical commitments of analytic philosophy”. Engel’s claim is that analytic philosophy “... is the kind of philosophy which conforms most closely, both explicitly and implicitly, to the minimal cognitive norms which govern, and should govern, philosophical inquiry.”

114 Chase and Reynolds, Analytic Versus Continental: Arguments on the Methods and Value of Philosophy, 6
115 Chase, ‘Analytic Philosophy and Dialogic Conservatism’, 140. One can see analytic philosophy as a dialogue between members, constrained by norms, for example Chase writes in the same work that:

... as in many research enterprises the dialogue is not essentially hierarchical – no participant’s views are to be discounted or accepted because of their identity. Of course, more and less influential philosophers have emerged, and on occasion authority can be misused to stare down or silence, as in any other enterprise. Allocations of influence can arise in a perfectly respectable manner from experience (everything of X’s that I’ve read has been excellent, so I expect much from this article of hers), but silencing or trumping activities of this kind are in effect breaches of the norms of inquiry and dialogue in play, which are meant to be underlined by standard academic practices of double-blind refereeing and the like. The modest claim here is that participants in the dialogue generally abiding by the constitutive norms of the dialogue are entitled to take themselves to have the same status as potential contributors, as others (Ibid., 98).

116 Engel, ‘Analytic Philosophy and Cognitive Norms’, 228, emphasis in original text
117 Ibid., n.p. 'This quote is from an online version of Engel’s ‘Analytic Philosophy and Cognitive Norms’ (URL: http://jeannicod.cesd.cnrs.fr/docs/00/03/55/TXT/ijn_00000229_00.txt). The quotation does not appear in the copy published in The Monist.
Likewise, Dagfinn Føllesdal argues that analytic philosophy is constrained by norms of argument and justification, while continental philosophers – he cites Heidegger and Derrida – are more interested in rhetoric. For L. Jonathan Cohen analytic philosophy is understood as "... a continuing, many-sided dialogue". For Cohen the analytic dialogue concerns "... normative problems about reasons and reasoning". To distinguish this dialogue from the tradition of philosophy per se Cohen argues that the dialogue has moved away from doctrines toward a culture of problem-solving.

The above image of analytic philosophy unites that field into a collection of research projects where we can read philosophers as developing each other's ideas. Engel writes that analytic philosophy "... mimics the scientific style of inquiry, which proposes hypotheses and theories, tests them in the light of data, and aims at widespread discussion and control by the peers". This way of understanding 'analytic philosophy' shares something of the Kuhnian model of a 'normal' science, as has been suggested by Aaron Preston and by Neil Levy. Holding that analytic

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118 Føllesdal, 'Analytic Philosophy: What is it and Why Should One Engage in it?', 204. In 'Analytic Philosophy: What is it and Why Should One Engage in it?' Føllesdal endorses analytic philosophy not merely as a good way to 'do' philosophy. He thinks that analytic philosophy promotes a way of thinking that is socio-politically valuable. Føllesdal writes:

In our philosophical writing and teaching we should emphasize the decisive role that must be played by argument and justification. This will make life more difficult for political leaders and fanatics who spread messages which do not stand up to critical scrutiny, but which nevertheless often have the capacity to seduce the masses into intolerance and violence. Rational argument and rational dialogue are of the utmost importance for a well-functioning democracy. To educate people in these activities is perhaps the most important task of analytic philosophy (Ibid., 207-208).

However, we might wonder whether the opposition between the argumentative and rhetorical ensures only the appearance of scholarly virtue, rather than committing us to those values as ideals.

119 Cohen, The Dialogue of Reason: An Analysis of Analytic Philosophy, 3
120 Ibid., 11
121 Ibid., 14
122 Engel, 'Analytic Philosophy and Cognitive Norms', 222. Engel writes that:

AP [analytic philosophy] is the tradition of philosophical argument, of objections, of descriptions, examples and counterexamples. It mimics the scientific style of inquiry, which proposes hypotheses and theories, tests them in the light of data, and aims at widespread discussion and control by the peers. It believes in the possibility of progress through criticism, which is made possible only if its formulations are clear, and aim at coherence, through the respect of usual logical standards of argument. It aims to solve particular problems, puzzles and paradoxes, and to build theories in answer to them. It prefers to work upon details and particular analyses, rather than to produce general syntheses. For these reasons, it is scornful of unnecessary abstractions, and close to common sense. Its style could be characterized as "enlightened" or "critical" common sense (Ibid., 222).

philosophy should be considered as similar to an epistêmê, earlier defined as involving the adoption of a domain of enquiry with methods and norms of study, is also to anticipate the cessation of metaphilosophical questioning regarding the aptness or reality of this domain, the cessation of metaphilosophical questioning of the validity or correctness of these methods and norms of study (this being one of the primary features of a normal science). However, it is very difficult to argue that philosophy should not be metaphilosophical. As I suggested in the introduction, any such argument would itself presuppose answers to fundamental questions regarding philosophy’s nature.

Given philosophy’s metaphilosophical nature, I think that the procedure of identifying analytic philosophy (or continental philosophy) by means of such constraining norms (whether or not we go as far as employing the Kuhnian model for analytic philosophy) is highly problematic and self-undermining. First, norms, such as the true and the just, do not merely distinguish one group of philosophers from another; these terms have normative force, that is, their use implies that philosophy qua philosophy should seek truth and provide justifications. However, if I allow the universality of normative prescriptions, then I cannot use norms as philosophical traits to describe in order to determine kinds (I would instead be identifying philosophy against non-philosophy, or sophistry).

In discussions of the nature of analytic philosophy, norms are often used not as rules we should all follow, but as means to identify analytic philosophy from continental philosophy, and if a reason is given for this it is often little more than the common suspicion that some continental philosophers are unreasonably skeptical of these norms where we recognise that we are bound to them. Now, if philosophy is

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124 See Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. We will see that Russell in *Mysticism and Logic* prescribes a communal model for philosophy, in part to avoid metaphilosophical speculation — if philosophy is to propose hypotheses that can be assessed neutrally among peers then no individual philosopher can reflect upon the whole of philosophy and speculate about its meaning. In a sense the communal problem-solving model replaces metaphilosophical reflection, or becomes a substitute for such reflection, since the meaning of philosophy, as a subject or field of enquiry, is thus regarded as the totality, or inferentially bound collection, of these accepted and communally recognised research projects.
metaphilosophical, then constraining norms will be contested, perhaps reinterpreted, and certainly argued over (such as when a philosopher holds that how we have understood ‘justice’ up until now is incorrect, is itself unjust). If it is granted that self-reflection is a genuine philosophical possibility, then the continental philosopher’s supposedly unreasonable scepticism is given a different status to the scepticism that might be found ‘within’ analytic philosophy. What gives us the right to choose our critiques as if we already knew which ones were the appropriate forms of critique?\(^\text{125}\) We cannot appeal again to those norms as merely descriptive features in order to justify this choice, nor can we rightly appeal to those norms where there are enough of ‘us’ who simply seem to us to already know (at least sufficiently to exclude the wrong forms of scepticism) the limits, conditions and qualities of those norms.

It seems that one could *justify* the decision not to extend these norms to others only by extending them, i.e. by seeking the truth of the other’s supposed scepticism. However, this would threaten the stability of the representation and, more generally, the philosopher’s capacity to form representations of philosophies. For example, if, following Engel, I were to hold that analytic philosophy aims at the truth as opposed to rhetoric, a philosopher might yet argue that such an opinion could merely be rhetorical until it is philosophically defended against *this* sceptical question. If I want to grant that the opinion is accurate and I hold myself to be an analytic philosopher, then I am also obliged to make it accurate, that is, one would expect the norms of truth and justification to be in play in my metaphilosophical defence of these representations. When I speak of ‘truth’, presumably I do not say that it is merely an opinion of philosophers; for if I were to hold that only some philosophers should seek the truth, while others can hold the opinion that truth is not important, I can defend this only by saying that the question of truth is subordinate to the ‘doing’ of philosophy. In other words, I say that we will see

\(^{125}\) Responding to John Searle’s presentation of himself as a representative of a lineage inclusive of his philosophical predecessor J. L. Austin, a lineage he claims to justify his subsequent ownership of the ‘meaning’ of J. L. Austin’s, work, Derrida writes:

> ... what characterizes a self-proclaimed heir ... is the fact that, doubting his own legitimacy, he wishes to be the only one, in tête-à-tête, to break, now and again, the filial bond of identification, in what is here the height of identification; he alone shall have the right of criticizing and correcting his teacher, defending him before the others at the very moment of murderous identification, of parricide. All this is familiar in philosophy, and mutatis mutandis, has been ever since *The Sophist* ...

(Derrida, *Limited Inc.*, 42)
which opinion works (a criterion that cannot be distinguished from the opinions that successfully convince people). But this defence involves subordinating truth to group opinion or to the opinions that groups have about themselves, or to a notion of utility that loses the normativity inherent to the concept of truth, and if I hold to this, according to my own criteria, I cannot consider myself an analytic philosopher. Rather, in holding to truth as a norm I must say that all philosophy should seek truth. It seems then that in providing a metaphilosophical defence I cannot ratify the image that I have of myself as a truth-seeker and of the continental philosopher as a mere rhetorician because I undermine this self-image or imply that the continental philosopher is not really a philosopher.

If a continental philosopher confirms that she does not aim to speak the truth, then I would have to say that she is not a philosopher. The criterion of seeking truth no longer picks out a kind of philosophy (analytic philosophy); it picks out philosophy per se. However, if I want to remain a pluralist and I want to hold that there are different kinds of philosophers, then insofar as the continental philosopher has made a claim to truth – that philosophy need not seek the truth – I am obliged, in the light of that claim, to re-evaluate my criteria for differentiating philosophies. But, and this is the far more likely scenario, what if she replies that she does aim to speak the truth, but understands this ‘aiming at the truth’ differently? Then a dialogue in which both of us aim at the truth about truth-seeking needs to occur (even if, in the beginning, I cannot claim to understand in what sense the other is ‘aiming’ given they’ve claimed to understand it differently); however, I then have to withdraw truth-seeking as a criterion for differentiating analytic from continental philosophy.

Or, to provide another example, if my opinion is that analytic philosophy is pro-science, while continental philosophy is anti-science, what would happen if the continental philosopher replied that he has what Chase and Reynolds call a “… critical and non-deferential (or transformative) attitude to science …” or that for the very reason that he is sometimes critical he is ‘pro-science’? I would be obliged to give a reason for my opinion. I might reply that the continental philosopher cannot be pro-science (which amounts to saying that this continental philosopher doesn’t know what he means when he says that he is, if he is a continental philosopher rather

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126 Chase and Reynolds, Analytic Versus Continental: Arguments on the Methods and Value of Philosophy, 7
than the mere shade of one) because he does not fulfill the analytic philosopher’s criteria for being pro-science, i.e. perhaps he is not a naturalist. If the continental philosopher replied that it is not necessarily the case that the scientist himself has to be a naturalist then again this dialogue has already undermined the presumed representations in becoming a metaphilosophical enquiry in which both of us are concerned with supporting a philosophical understanding of science.

Consider now what is perhaps the most common feature appealed to in the divide: the concern for clarity as against obscurity. A philosopher who understands herself to be analytic might argue that Derrida is obscure, while another philosopher might hold that Derrida is not obscure. What would accurately applying either judgement to Derrida involve? It would, ironically, involve comprehending Derrida (rendering him clear to others, especially to those with some claim to comprehending Derrida) such that one could defend the ascription of the property of ‘obscurity’. If the ‘analytic philosopher’ refuses to engage in the process of understanding Derrida for the reason of his obscurity, this now asserts merely an unwillingness to engage in rendering a text clear and so a lack of concern for clarity or a hypocritical relation to that virtue.

It seems that one cannot define continental philosophy as sceptical of norms without arguing that continental philosophy is not philosophy and so undermining the distinction as a distinction between kinds of philosophy or by extending those norms to continental philosophy and so undermining the distinction as a distinction between kinds of philosophy. Such dialogues as I enacted above can be imagined for each of the norms I might propose (and for family resemblance indicia). This is just a symptom of philosophy’s metaphilosophical nature: representations of

\[127\text{ I do not think that this problematic extends to all exegetical terms in philosophy. I have already considered some of the differences between the divide and exegetical terms, such as rationalism and empiricism. As I will argue in further detail in the next chapter, the present problematic is peculiar to the divide because, using the divide, we seek to demarcate philosophical kinds – differing ideas about what philosophy very generally is – that can then be used to frame our investigation of those kinds. The divide operates at this metaphilosophical level of the form of philosophy and there introduces plurality, which threatens philosophical unity. The same problem does not occur when I seek to represent definite philosophical theses (such as rationalism and empiricism). In this context, I operate at the level of content – I seek to represent a philosophical debate. For the very reason that I represent a debate I must anticipate its potential resolution (and so the unity of philosophy), however unlikely this may be in practice. When talking of analytic and continental philosophy I talk not of a debate, but a divide. I seek to explain why it is that debate is apparently not possible.} \]
philosophies can come under philosophical scrutiny. In fact, we seem left with a choice of mere representation or metaphilosophical enquiry.

This problematic also extends to the definability of analytic philosophy: characterisations of analytic philosophy make it difficult to identify analytic philosophy as a specific kind of philosophy, rather than as philosophy par excellence. Daniel Andler writes that in defining analytic philosophy “[w]hat we are after is a value-free, ahistorical, purely descriptive criterion C which applies to pieces factually belonging to analytic philosophy, and not to pieces factually not acceptable to analytic philosophy.”128 If one is a pluralist – that is, if one thinks there are other traditions that have a right to claim the title of philosophy (an implicit assumption if we are trying to show the specificity of analytic philosophy against other kinds of philosophy) – then:

On the one hand, it is impossible to (a) choose to be an analytic philosopher; (b) accept criterion C, without (c) believing in the methodological principles contained in C are optimal for the pursuit of philosophy. Therefore it is impossible to be an analytic philosopher, a sincere pluralist and accept C. On the other hand, a non-pluralist analytic philosopher has no interest in discovering a value-free criterion such as C, much less to defend it against non-analytic philosophers. Therefore there is no analytic philosopher which can propose, believe in, and defend, a demarcation criterion.129

If one refuses reflection on what are essentially contestable representations and reverts to the ‘different traditions’ view, one replies to my criticisms above by concluding that there are just different understandings of norms such as ‘clarity’ and what scholarship seeks to do is represent them.130 It seems to me that there is no prima

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128 Andler, ‘The Undefinability of Analytic Philosophy’, 17
129 Ibid., 17-18
130 Although such a view may have institutional merit in that, possessing a representation means that one can argue for representation in the academy, it does threaten the unity of philosophy per se. Putnam writes:

> From my point of view, the only legitimate function for “movements” in philosophy, is to gain attention and recognition for ideas not yet being received or which have been neglected or marginalized. Analytic philosophy has been around for a long time, and it is certainly one of the dominant currents of world philosophy. Making it into a “movement” is not necessary, and it only preserves the features that I have deplored. Just as we can learn from Kant without calling ourselves Kantians, and from James and Dewey without calling ourselves pragmatists, and from Wittgenstein without calling ourselves Wittgensteinians, so we can learn from Frege and Russell and Carnap and Quine and Davidson without calling ourselves “analytic philosophers”. Why can we not just be “philosophers” without an adjective? (Putnam, ‘A Half Century of Philosophy, Viewed from Within’, 203).

By isolating the norms of truth and justification as features of analytic philosophy, Engel intends to answer Putnam’s question in the negative: recognising norms at work in analytic philosophy “…
facie philosophical reason to refuse reflection or dialogue; one does so only by refusing the unity of philosophy more generally. So that the only way in which one could defend the formation of representations of different philosophies is to claim that philosophy per se is a family resemblance concept, a collection of disparate traditions and so always adjectival. Metaphilosophy then need not be open to contestation, dialogue or necessitate self-reflection, but can be understood as a pre-philosophical means by which we identify kinds, which are then a matter of mere extra-philosophical convention.131

Yet “[t]o be told that these senses have no unity, but possess instead a family resemblance is to assume that knowledge of the whole is the same as knowledge of the sum of the parts, with the fatal addition that we deny the whole from the outset”.132 To hold such a view would be to display an attitude which Robert Pippin characterises as one which implies that: “… any attempt to answer that pedagogically potent question about why one does philosophy can only be undertaken in terms of why one does philosophy in this way or that”.133 This may be understood as a cynical response to the task of interpretation. Given this response one does not need to offer hospitality in order to seek the unity of philosophy, for one has already concluded that unity is impossible. Since no rationale need be forthcoming with regard to features definitive of those kinds (save that I perceive them), such an attitude renders debate redundant, to be replaced by type-casting.134

hardly allows us to speak of philosophy without an adjective” (Engel, ‘Analytic Philosophy and Cognitive Norms’, 232). However, norms as broad as truth and justification, I have argued, used consistently, do not allow us to speak of philosophy with adjectives.

131 In 1964, answering questions regarding the nature of the philosophical, questions posed to him by Robert Ostermann, the editor of the National Observer, Wilfred Quine replied:

[Philosophy is one of a number of blanket terms used by deans and librarians in their necessary task of grouping the myriad topics and problems of science and scholarship under a manageable number of headings … I am not alluding to the fragmentation of specialities; I speak of the insignificance of a certain verbal grouping (Quine, W. V. Quine: Quine in Dialogue, 293-294).

132 Rosen, ‘Socrates’ Dream’, 175

133 Pippin, ‘Critical Methodology and Comprehensiveness in Philosophy’, 210. This would support the refusal to give a defence for one’s opinions, as the Stranger had refused to give an account to the mathematicians. If philosophy is simply what philosophers do, then all we need is to describe what they do or ask a ‘philosopher’ for his opinions, not for a defence of those opinions. One has not learnt philosophy by rote-learning the opinions of other philosophers.

134 As Simon Critchley writes, it is right to be sceptical about the “… drawing of distinctions between philosophical schools and doctrines because it disguises and disarms a more profound and interesting possible debate about the identity of philosophy itself” (Critchley, A Companion to Continental Philosophy, 6).
The task of defining kinds of philosophy seems to reduce philosophy per se to a collection of kinds, and this then undermines those philosophical kinds as kinds of philosophy. One might even say that to hold that there are just so many traditions of philosophy is to give up the tradition of philosophy. It is the sophist who holds that philosophy is equivalent to the opinions, actions and deeds of philosophers. And from this opinion the ‘threats of sophistry’ follow: for example, if philosophy is only so many traditions, each constrained by separate traditions of thinking, then this leads to problems of sophistical relativism; philosophies are potentially incommensurable.

Derrida writes that to speak of the differences “… between so-called continental and Anglo-Saxon philosophies…” solely in terms of intra-philosophical “… questions of style, method or even problematic field…” maintains a gulf, which in turn guarantees that:

… the minimal conditions for communication and co-operation are lacking … the same interference or opacity can prevent philosophical communication and even make one doubt the unity of the philosophical, of the concept or project behind the word philosophy, which then constantly risks being but a homonymic lure.135

Revisiting The Sophist, I am suggesting that as with diæresis the understanding of metaphilosophy operative in use of the divide is such that one represents traits, but this also has the effect of hypostatizing the groupings and converting dialogue, in which one would engage in self-reflection or put into question one’s own assumptions (working toward a shared understanding or shared ignorance), with dialogue understood in the Parmenidean tradition where one takes a third person

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135 Derrida, Who’s Afraid of Philosophy, 104. The structure of the divide itself, along with the associated judgements, ensures lack of communication between groups, as Bernard Williams writes: 

[It is not simply a matter of labelling. It is not that the distinction itself is unproblematic, and only needs more aptly chosen titles to represent it. The distinctions involved are obscure, and the titles serve to conceal this fact. The term ‘Continental’ serves to discourage thought about the possible contrasts to analytical philosophy, and so about the identity of analytical philosophy itself. At the same time, the vague, geographical resonance of the term does carry a message, that analytical philosophy is familiar as opposed to exotic, and perhaps – if some older stereotypes are in play – that it is responsible as opposed to frivolous. This is indeed what many analytical philosophers believe about it, and they believe it not so much in contrast to activities going on in some remote continent, but, in many cases, as opposed to work done in their local departments of literature. It is not true that work in other styles does not exist in the heartlands of analytical philosophy; it merely does not exist in departments of philosophy. The distinctions involved are not geographical but professional, and what is at issue is the identity of philosophy as a discipline (Williams, ‘Contemporary Philosophy: A Second Look’, 23-24).]
perspective upon traits. This has the effect of replacing metophilosophical discourse with competing claims to a final metaphilosophy. We must choose between these claims, but on what basis can we choose when dialogue regarding those claims is excluded? We end up appealing to the authority of a group and philosophy is subordinated to fashion and opinion. In representing philosophies in this manner we may avoid the seemingly interminable nature of metophilosophical enquiry, but only at the cost of resembling the sophist.

In this chapter I have considered some of the limitations of contemporary perspectives on the divide when it comes to dealing with metophilosophical questions regarding their own philosophical grounding. I argued that the ‘methodology of the divide’, understood as a method of division to reveal kinds (lineages or types), may always be argued to merely reflect popular opinion, and not extend to reflect the actual nature of philosophies or philosophy per se. We cannot resolve this problem through further description and division, which, understood as a matter of representing kinds, can only produce further representations. Division cannot speak to the context and limits of division.\(^\text{136}\) It is also for this reason that, in treating ‘analytic’ and ‘continental’ philosophy as kinds to be revealed through division, we obscure a potentially important metophilosophical debate, with the result that prescriptive or metophilosophical elements of the division are left undefended and unchallenged. Current scholarship tends to subordinate metophilosophical enquiry or reflection to the representation of different metaphilosophies.

I have argued that while the popular approaches to the divide that we have considered do not necessarily reveal something significant about analytic and continental philosophy such that the divide may be ratified, they do tell us what philosophers think about their practice or the way in which philosophers have come to represent themselves. The distinction may be as John Mullarkey comments:

\[\ldots\text{ philosophically erroneous but metaphilosophically accurate: it has less to do with what philosophers think when they philosophize than where they}\]

\(^{136}\)Just as diaréxis seeks to represent, but does not give us a rationale for that representation. For example, the Stranger provides enough information regarding the angler such that one would be able to paint his portrait, but he has not given us the rationale and nature of his art (we were also told that the angler possesses an ‘art’ of catching fish, but no analysis was undertaken of an ‘art’ in general). What if someone was only pretending to be an angler – would the Stranger be able to recognise the difference?
philosophize, with whom they talk about their philosophical work, and what they say about it to each other.\footnote{137}

In the next chapter we are to look to the divide in this light, as a discourse that philosophers utilize to represent themselves and others, to ask what work these particular representations do. We move from the image of traditions to the tradition of image-making to consider the construction of those images. It will be shown that the images and features of the divide that we have considered – the general oppositions, the seeking of certain influences and the family resemblance indicia – find philosophical grounding in a prescriptive and metaphilosophical discourse. Coextensively, we turn to the Stranger’s application and use of diaeresis. It will be argued that both metaphilosophical discourses can be said to share a common imperative: to provide a representation of philosophy that would preclude sophistry.\footnote{138}

\footnote{137}Mullarkey, Post-Continental Philosophy, 2.
\footnote{138}I owe this argument to Glendinning’s The Idea of Continental Philosophy: A Philosophical Chronicle. In answer to the question ‘what then is Continental philosophy?’ Glendinning writes: Not, I would suggest, a style or method of philosophy, nor even a set of such styles or methods, but, first of all, the Other of analytic philosophy: not a tradition of philosophy that one might profitably contrast with analytic philosophy, not a distinctive way of going on in philosophy, but a free-floating construction that gives analytic philosophy the illusory assurance that it has methodologically secured itself from ‘sophistry and illusion’ (Glendinning, The Idea of Continental Philosophy: A Philosophical Chronicle, 83-84).

While I agree with Glendinning, I would enlarge this argument by shifting the focus away from the image of the ‘continental philosopher’ toward an understanding of the discourse of division in general (including the discourse on the analytic philosopher).
In this chapter we turn from representations of the divide, to the history of the use of such representations to divide philosophy (to give reason and incentive for engagement or disengagement with different philosophies). We also turn from looking at the Stranger’s method considered in abstraction, to its application.

Socrates asked the Stranger for the difference between the sophist, the statesman and the philosopher. The Stranger announces that he will begin with the sophist. No rationale is given for beginning here, but we have made a few cursory remarks upon a possibly connection between diaerésis and sophistry that may provide a motive.

In the previous chapter I argued that the division of philosophy faces the threat of sophistry. Socrates warned that attempts to define philosophy as a kind may serve to disguise philosophy such that the metaphilosopher becomes indistinguishable from those philosophical mimics: the sophists. In order to avoid this threat we might attempt to define the sophist in order that we differentiate him from philosophy and from our own philosophical practice. Since the sophist “... assumes all looks, we must first identify and isolate him, lest we be tricked later into taking him for a statesman or philosopher”. But, in this chapter we show that the charge of sophistry is apparently also applicable for attempts to define sophistry, attempts to distinguish its philosophical mimicry from the philosophically legitimate.

I implied, in the previous chapter, that the imperative to distinguish the philosopher from the sophist might inform the divide. I said that taking up the task of discerning kinds could be understood as an attempt to differentiate philosophy

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139 As I suggested in the previous section, this is a somewhat arbitrary distinction. Representing the divide is a way of using the divide to this end and leads to a consideration of this use.
140 Plato, The Sophist, 217a
141 Ibid., 218b.
142 Rosen, Plato’s Sophist, 85. It is worth noting that although the Stranger does not give a dialogue on philosophy, he will need to give a definition of philosophy when in the process of defining the sophist (see Plato, The Sophist, 253d-e). At this stage we might say that one only ‘gets to’ the philosopher through differentiating him from the sophist.
from sophistry. Considered in the context of its historical use, it is easier to show more explicitly that the divide can be understood as a response to sophistry. In the first section of this chapter ‘The Problem of Sophistry and the Divide’ I will depart from the narrative of *The Sophist*, but only to show the relevance of the dialogue: I will argue that the problem of sophistry is a problem that can be understood as a catalyst for the discourse regarding the divide (that is, the construction of *kinds* and judgements associated with these *kinds*).

In the second section, ‘Hunting the Sophistic Hunter’, I turn to common representations of ‘analytic’ and ‘continental’ philosophy to provide examples in support of this argument. In providing these examples our guide will be Bertrand Russell’s *Mysticism and Logic*. In this section we also return to the narrative of *The Sophist* to consider the Stranger’s definitions of sophistry, which, I will argue, both foreshadow various representations in *Mysticism and Logic* and representations common to the divide more generally.

If I am right, and the divide can be understood as providing representations of philosophy against sophistry, we again face Socrates’ first speculations regarding the problem of sophistry, which arises in the attempt to define philosophy. We will come up against these problems throughout the present chapter and conclude by formulating them before turning to their possible resolution in the following chapter.

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143 *Mysticism and Logic, and Other Essays* is a collection of essays that was compiled by Russell in 1917 and represents work from 1902 to 1914. I will focus on two essays in particular: ‘Mysticism and Logic’ and ‘On Scientific Method in Philosophy’. ‘Mysticism and Logic’ was first published in the *Hibbert Journal* in July 1914 and ‘On Scientific Method in Philosophy’ was the Herbert Spencer lecture at Oxford in 1914, originally published by Clarendon Press. The collection also includes: ‘The Place of Science in a Liberal Education’, ‘A Free Man’s Worship’, ‘The Study of Mathematics’, ‘Mathematics and the Metaphysicians’, ‘The Ultimate Constituents of Matter’, ‘The Relation of Sense-Data to Physics’, ‘On the Notion of Cause’, ‘Knowledge by Acquaintance and Knowledge by Description.’ The majority of these essays will be referenced over the course of the thesis.
2.1 THE DIVIDE AND THE PROBLEM OF SOPHISTRY

In the previous chapter we raised metaphilosophical concerns regarding the divide in the form of interpretive questions, such as the degree to which prejudice informs the appearance of applicability or usefulness and the significance of the divide for our thinking about philosophy per se. I said that these problems arise when we hold both to pluralism (we hold that there are different kinds of philosophy) and to an understanding of metaphilosophy as their description and delineation – we then risk reducing philosophy to many kinds. Sophistic threats, such as incommensurability and relativism ensue. However, in response, one might give up on pluralism and instead argue that the other is not a philosopher, but a sophist. It is to this second option that I would like to turn, to argue that this accusation is the original catalyst and background condition for the divide. I would like to begin by presenting reasons why I think that this is the case, why I think the divide can be considered a response to the problem of sophistry.144

As employment of the family resemblance model shows, the representations of the divide reflect the way in which such representations have been used. Family resemblance features do not typically emerge from a careful survey of the philosophical territory and a description of difference. The divide is used in order to divide philosophy – that is, philosophers use the divide to identify with a particular group and exclude another. The features of the groups that are appealed to will relate to values and beliefs about philosophy such that these groups appear unified and opposed, such that a rationale for choosing to identify or deny one or the other group is supplied.

144 If this is shown to be the case it provides a rationale for what, according to Randall Collins, is the most substantive feature of the divide: vehemence (Collins, The Sociology of Philosophies, 751). It also gives a means to explain why certain influences are sought, and others avoided, in reconstructing ‘traditions’, and why particular traits are referred to in descriptions of these groups, even when their status as descriptions, as means of identification, is tenuous.
In the previous chapter I suggested that descriptions of philosophy – for example, descriptions of the external historical conditions of philosophies or a survey of the opinions of philosophers – cannot exhaust what we mean by ‘philosophy’ without risking sophistry. Metaphilosophy does not merely describe what philosophers do or think, but is normative: metaphilosophies endorse, obligate, chastise, recommend. If metaphilosophy implicitly asks ‘what is philosophy?’, as a philosophical question regarding a purported concept, the giving of an account of ‘philosophy’, is inherently normative insofar as this account can only be argued for as true with reasons that condition the further usage of that name; that is, insofar as this account implicitly says ‘this is how we should go on using the concept of philosophy, for it is true’. In using the divide to divide philosophy (that is, to justify membership to a group and disengagement with others) I appeal to representations, but these representations cannot be equivalent to simple descriptions. For them to be used to obligate me they must prefigure reasons why I should identify with one group and not entertain others, on the basis of judgements regarding what I think philosophy should or should not be.

Presumably there are many reasons to refuse identification or dialogue with a group that would not involve my excluding that group from philosophy altogether. Noting that the divide has a prescriptive dimension is insufficient to tie these prescriptions to the problem of sophistry. For the divide could be akin to other philosophical classifications, such as those between specialities and the representations of those classifications may prefigure non-controversial reasons not to engage. For example, they might tell me that concerns differ too widely for conversation to advance my interests even though I might still recognise and admire the other as a philosopher.

The divide differs from other exegetical terms, such as those that reference specialities (for example, ‘epistemology’ and ‘aesthetics’) or those that reference philosophical debates (such as the debate between Platonists and Nominalists). Unlike these, the divide concerns competing ideas of what philosophy, very generally, is or should be. This can be seen in the fact that the ‘analytic’ and ‘continental’
adjectives cut across exegetical terms. The divide, I’ll say at this stage, concerns two competing representational groupings of philosophy, and this is why we speak of the divide and not simply these as classifications among others. However, before we think that these competing representational structures are just another means of classification, I want to stress that we only say that the divide represents two competing groups of philosophy when we abstract from the ‘use’ of the divide. In the context of this ‘use’ this competition must be understood as between the legitimate and illegitimate, between philosophy and sophistry. Let me explain why I think that this is the case.

If the discourse of the divide is metaphilosophical, and metaphilosophy is normative, it does not merely concern what this or that philosophy should be (this would risk sophistry), but it concerns what philosophy per se should be, and this then tells me what all ‘philosophies’ should seek to be. For endorsements to be endorsements proper, we must take it that the property being endorsed applies fully to what we might call ‘philosophy’ in the ideal – what all philosophy should be (but may not be). Endorsements then imply that one selects paradigmatic philosophers, while chastisements give reason to exclude from philosophical consideration. Insofar as I claim to be a member of a certain group I then endorse that group as oriented toward that which philosophy should be (otherwise I have no motive to claim membership). This still need not relate the divide to the problem of sophistry, although it does potentially relate the representations of the divide to good or bad philosophy or to the virtues and vices of philosophy.

The difference between the representations of the divide and representations of good and bad philosophy lies in this: when I speak of philosophical differences between individual philosophers, specialities or ‘types’ of philosophers and even

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145 A ‘continental’ philosopher might be a Nominalist and an epistemologist; an ‘analytic’ philosopher might be a Platonist who writes on aesthetics.

146 For example, I do not imply that only analytic philosophers should be pro-science; rather, for the claim to be an endorsement of science proper, I must hold that all philosophy should support science and then I might endorse analytic philosophy as exemplary philosophy on the basis of the support it offers. If I make this judgement of philosophy per se, and say that continental philosophy is anti-science, this would be to judge those philosophers as falling short of the obligations that I believe should be representative of the philosophical. Endorsements are not endorsements of kinds of philosophy: an endorsement selects that kind according to an ideal of what philosophy should be.

147 Thomas Akehurst uses the difference between virtues and vices of philosophy to explain the representations of the divide. See chapter three of The Cultural Politics of Analytic Philosophy: Britishness and the Spectre of Europe.
when those differences propose to demarcate ‘good’ from ‘bad’ philosophies, I nonetheless take it that dialogue may occur and may challenge such differences or improve philosophies. For example, when talking about differences between Platonists and Nominalists I presuppose that the debate between them could be decided. If this were not the case it would not be worthwhile to discuss differences. Likewise, when I call a philosophy ‘bad’ I presuppose that it is subject to the standards of philosophy and should be improved by means of its exposure to those standards. If I do not take dialogue as possible, I call into question the unity of philosophy and so risk sophistry (as seen in the previous chapter). I must presuppose dialogue and potential unity when speaking of philosophical differences, such that those differences can be said to be ‘philosophical’. The differences cited between the philosopher and the sophist, however, do not presuppose debate, but work to exclude the sophist from philosophical discourse altogether in order to preserve the unity of philosophy.

I will be concerned to show that the philosophical differences expressed through the discourse of the divide amount to such thoroughgoing differences as to undermine dialogue and threaten sophistry. In anticipation, I would like to consider the conditions of inclusion and exclusion in philosophical dialogue, beginning with the former. I believe that the conditions for inclusion are lacking when it comes to the divide. This is certainly not to say that actual individual philosophers fail to acknowledge and fulfil these conditions in dialogue; it is rather to say that treating the representations of the divide as though they were ‘accurate’ anticipates a situation where the conditions of discourse would be lacking between the ‘analytic’ and ‘continental’ philosophers thus imagined.

Let us consider conditions for ‘including’ someone in dialogue. In the previous chapter I argued that if I have an image of what philosophy should be – a set of traits, commitments or values that I think are indicative of philosophy or of ‘good’ philosophy – then it would be commendable to evaluate it before using it descriptively to pick out philosophers from non-philosophers or ‘good’ from ‘bad’ philosophers. In order to do this I may extend these traits to those philosophers

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148 Insofar as one is providing a metaphilosophical account one would hope that it would be representative of philosophy or that philosophers would assent to those values as properly philosophical.
who would seem to be exceptions in order that a higher unity or a more nuanced account for philosophy might be sought.

In this context traits cannot be used descriptively, but are thought against the *ideal* of philosophy (what philosophy *should* be), for there is nothing to describe, but something to argue for. In order for dialogue to occur I must take it that the *ideal* of philosophy is shared *as sought*. In putting these traits into question I must also take it that the traits that I propose are distinct from that ideal, for otherwise those traits cannot be assessed against an ideal (which at this stage I merely anticipate).

Of course, a unified account may never eventuate, for one may ‘agree to disagree’, and, moreover, if a metaphilosophical account can *always* be brought into question against an ideal that must be considered distinct, then a unified account may be in principle unachievable. No matter, insofar as I offer to enter into dialogue or feel obligated to take exceptions as significant I have treated my interlocutor as a philosopher and thus, counting him as a philosopher, I have taken it that he is, at least in potential, capable of adjusting my own metaphilosophical account or presumptions. Insofar as I propose criteria for what all philosophy should be, I cannot then deny the unity of philosophy by, for example, claiming that we just have different opinions about philosophy, for I myself assume that unity by providing a metaphilosophical account of what philosophy *should* be. Even if the other disagrees with my account I must hold that given sufficient argument he *should* agree with me, though he need not. In assuming that he *should* agree I assume that the other also holds that unity is possible, he is also concerned with what philosophy *per se should be* and so the ‘ideal’ of philosophy (however empty) is a shared obligation or end.

We talk of ‘philosophy’ as a way of grouping together philosophers, but this does not imply that every philosopher whom we include in that group has the same definition of philosophy or the same idea of what philosophy *should* be. But we imply that they are all engaged in *seeking* to be adequate to the ideal of what philosophy should be, however they happen to understand it. This ideal orients us in disputes regarding different representations of philosophy. That is, metaphilosophical discourse is unified by an ideal of what philosophy *should* be (perhaps a necessarily empty ideal), which makes dialogue with regard to it possible. If, providing a metaphilosophical account, I must take it that dialogue and agreement
are in principle possible, the only way in which I can refuse to seek that unity or to enter into dialogue is by citing contingent factors (time constraints or complaints about the difficulty of the task) that we would not wish to call ‘philosophical justifications’. But what if I should wish to justify such a refusal by citing philosophical reasons? Then I must argue that dialogue and agreement are not possible and I can only do this, while maintaining fidelity to the ideal of philosophy (i.e. actually speaking philosophically, rather than sophistically), by excluding the other from philosophical discourse altogether.

Consider a scenario in which one would want to withdraw the obligation to enter into dialogue on philosophical grounds. One might imagine a sceptic of philosophy who refuses the ideal of philosophy so that conversation becomes futile (we are no longer seeking a common end) – for example, someone who incessantly answers my philosophical proposals with ‘that is an interesting opinion, but it is just your opinion’ (someone who holds that all philosophy is mere opinion). One wants to say that at some point I would be justified in refusing to enter into dialogue, and further, that I should consider this interlocutor as excluded from the philosophical dialogue per se given that the sophistical claim that all is opinion can be shown through philosophical discourse to be self-undermining.

By refusing to consider the sceptic, I take it that he does not pose a significant exception that could even potentially challenge my account of what philosophy should be. The list of traits or virtues that I began with will not extend to him; in fact I may use those traits to exclude him. I may now enforce my metaphilosophical account in order to absolve myself from the responsibility of responding to these interlocutors. In doing so I take it that my account can stand in for the ideal of philosophy.

I will argue that the divide is used to include and exclude from philosophical dialogue per se. The situation with the divide is often akin to the scenario of the philosophical sceptic, for appeals are made to traits that would justify us in anticipating dialogic impasse. Very often, in looking at the literature on the divide, we will encounter claims that philosophers on the other side of the divide do not share traits that would make philosophical dialogue possible; this is not saying that I

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149 This could still be regarded an account of philosophy that we might want to discuss, but the conversation could not develop if my interlocutor merely repeats the same trope.
refrain from dialogue for contingent reasons, but that I should not enter into dialogue for philosophical reasons. In addition, the very word ‘divide’ is telling, especially when we note the way that it has now become standard usage (i.e. almost no one speaks of a continental, analytic ‘debate’).  

Let us consider Glock’s indicium of ‘clarity’, a matter of stylistic difference, perhaps the most common difference that is appealed to in order to enforce the divide (in the sense that it is one of the primary reasons provided for inculcating oneself in an analytic conversation and withdrawing oneself from dialogues with continental philosophers). The indicium does not pick out a speciality or kind of philosophy; rather, it stipulates that all philosophy should be clear. If I hold that all philosophy should be clear, this does not necessarily mean that I can use this criterion descriptively; that is, it does not entail that a work is philosophy if and only if it is clear, and obscure writing is not philosophy. Rather, I take it that clarity is a goal that all philosophers should strive for and that some achieve better than others. This, so far, does not commit me to exclude unclear texts from philosophy, though it does commit me to seek clarity. If I take it that what someone is trying to say is philosophical then I am committed to seeking clarity on his or her behalf. As Paul Redding writes: “[i]f a thinker is regarded as having something important to say, of course, then the project of trying to make that something clearer will generally be regarded as worthwhile”.

What then is thought in the judgement of a lack of clarity, such that it provides a reason not to enter into dialogue, or not to clarify? I have to take it that

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150 Although the word ‘divide’ obviously has acquired different connotations in different contexts, the word ‘divide’ often replaces ‘debate’ in reference to arguments at a point where a once fierce argument has ground to a halt and where what comes next are merely repetitions of labels, ad hominem and the often very literal separation, which, of course, is the primary connotation of the word divide: ‘you can go your own way, thinking what you think. I, on the other hand, will be over here thinking something entirely different which I now realise is pointless to talk to you about!’ For example, we can imagine an argument between a certain kind of U.S. ‘conservative’ and a certain kind of U.S. ‘liberal’. However, when journalists or sociologists speak of a Red-Blue state divide, they do not speak so much of an on-going argument, but refer to a known fissure in the polity which testifies less to the possibility of real argument as to a prophylactic against it.

151 The argument will be shown to hold for other indicia as well.

152 Redding, Analytic Philosophy and the Return of Hegelian Thought, 8

153 Further difficulties arise before an answer can be provided: presumably there are many ways of being a ‘bad writer’ or a ‘good writer’, and examples can be found throughout both ‘analytic’ and ‘continental’ philosophy. Moreover, the simple opposition between clarity and obscurity may itself obscure subtleties. A work might achieve superficial clarity by obscuring what it assumes or what is actually pressing (or by simplifying issues, relying on stereotypes, or rhetorical techniques to achieve
what is being said is not philosophical, but how can I possibly hold this opinion, while also holding that the work is obscure? It seems that I would have to clarify the work in order to justify the judgement and this means that if I were to succeed in clarifying the work ‘obscurity’ can no longer be the indicator of philosophical worthlessness. And if I do not succeed in justifying this judgement, then I merely defer the judgement, until sufficient clarity has been achieved. How might one then justify, not merely defer, the judgement on the basis of which the obligation to clarify is withdrawn?

For the issue of clarity to be used as an exclusionary measure in philosophy, lack of clarity must be symptomatic of a threat to the ideal of what philosophy should be. I may take it that the work is not only unclear, but that it is intended to be unclear so that I can connect it with the claim that philosophy is not meant to be clear. Now we have a competing conception of philosophy. However, I think that this still does not provide reason enough not to enter into dialogue – this is a competing metaphilosophical account at this stage and I might still enter into dialogue regarding this proposal. To make dialogue ‘impossible’, the claim that I associate with my interlocutor – ‘philosophy should not be clear’ – must indicate that he could not even entertain an empty ideal of what philosophy should be. Let us take an example.

In the previous chapter we found Cohen, Engel and Føllesdal arguing for an account of analytic philosophy; they were implicitly concerned with what philosophy should be and they wished to endorse analytic philosophy on that basis. All three writers justified the adjective ‘analytic’ by showing that we must exclude certain ‘continental philosophers’ (they all take Derrida as the paradigmatic example) from their accounts of philosophy. They justify this exclusion by citing a stylistic difference: Derrida uses rhetoric, and they all take this use as indicative of Derrida quick understanding and assent). Is the work judged on the condition that it is written in plain English that everyone grasps, while obscuring subtleties, or is it expected to seek to clarify those subtleties even at the cost of a superficial clarity? A balance must be achieved. So how can there be bad writing, or obscurity, common to continental philosophy yet distinct from analytic good writing as that with clarity? The question then is what is thought in this stylistic difference such that it a) unifies a group of disparate philosophers and can be recognised and judged as true of all of their work, and b) provides a reason not to enter into dialogue, clarify or seek a higher unity for philosophy that superficially appears otherwise.

being *more interested* in rhetoric than in philosophy.\(^{155}\) We suppose that rhetoric is set into opposition and conflict with ‘philosophical argument’ (a trait definitive of analytic philosophy).\(^{156}\) On the basis of the use of rhetoric, Engel, Follesdal and Cohen conclude that Derrida is not concerned with norms such as transparency, truth and justification. The suggestion is that rather than seek to justify and argue toward philosophical truth Derrida makes rhetoric his *end*.\(^{157}\) This is not just to say that we have different philosophical interests that we should be allowed to pursue, or different conceptions of philosophy: the difference threatens the very possibility of philosophical dialogue. Derrida is seen as a metaphilosophical sceptic who risks reducing all philosophy to rhetoric. If this judgement were accurate there would be no way in which to enter into dialogue over our ‘different conceptions of philosophy’. Like the sceptic of philosophy, the Derridean response to any metaphilosophical proposal would be that philosophy *should not* be anything but rhetorically effective.

We can understand the sophist as a distorted and distorting image of the philosopher. The sophistic image captures and replicates all the external conditions of philosophy and reduces philosophy to that image, making that image philosophy’s meaning and end. The image *does not* capture the ideality of philosophy, that is, the question of what philosophy *should* be. More precisely, the sophist argues that philosophy need only be effective as an image in the context of contingent, psychological, historical and political conditions. The threat of relativism results: if there is no ideal that we can orient ourselves toward, philosophy and the ideals of truth and justification are only another discourse among others. The representation of Derrida, found in Cohen, Follesdal and Engel, reduces his work to mere false images of philosophy and thus constructs him as a sophist.\(^{158}\)


\(^{156}\) The judgement cannot be that they use rhetoric (presumably all philosophers use rhetoric; denying that this is the case could itself be considered a rhetorical move).

\(^{157}\) There is a distinction to be drawn between rhetoric and sophistry, while all philosophers might use rhetoric to administer judgements, sophistry reduces philosophy to rhetoric (making rhetoric philosophy’s meaning and end).

\(^{158}\) Such representations of Derrida are not uncommon. Let us consider a particularly opprobrious example. Simon Blackburn writes that:

*The excitement that surrounded Derrida often seemed to be premised on the thought that something called Theory enabled you to avoid the hard work, and effortlessly*
The representation that Cohen, Føllesdal and Engel rely on to justify the analytic adjective in fact serves to imply far more: it implies that analytic philosophy is philosophy per se. For if we argue for the universality of truth and justification while arguing that only one type of philosopher upholds this, we would risk reducing the discourse that holds to the universality of truth and justification to just one philosophical discourse among others, and so would undermine that very universality – they could not hold that they themselves are analytic philosophers in this scenario. The distinction between analytic and continental philosophy then cannot be a distinction between kinds of philosophy, but between philosophy and sophistry understood as distinct kinds.

I will consider the stylistic difference further. I have used this as an example here, since I have found it to be the most commonly cited difference that accompanies arguments for division, but also because it allowed me to make my point quickly and effectively. However, I believe that an investigation into the use of all the tropes and traits that refer to these groups would yield similar results.159 For

attain some vantage point from which the Western novel, or Western philosophy, or patriarchal science, or whatever the next target might be, could be diagnosed as just another self-undermining discourse or narrative. This is of course an attitude especially appealing to the young, and I think much of the heat of l’affaire Derrida came from the indignation of those who thought, rightly, that mockery and ignorance need taking down a peg, and that universities are a good place to do it. Seen like this, Derrida or his disciples are like mentors encouraging people not to read … And, alas, many in the world, whether ideologues in the White House, or similar fundamentalists in Arabia, have found that a highly congenial lesson to absorb. (‘Derrida May Deserve Some Credit for Trying, but Less for Succeeding’, n.p.)

It is interesting to compare Blackburn’s charges against Derrida with those that were made against Socrates, and with the depiction of Socrates in Aristophanes’ The Clouds. In saying that Derrida’s work ‘targets’ texts, such that they can be ‘diagnosed as just another self-undermining discourse’, and in saying that this appeals especially to the young, we are reminded, in particular, of the charges of corrupting the youth and of letting the weaker argument defeat the stronger (a charge of political trespass and a charge of sophistry – also note the bizarre rhetorical comparisons with fundamentalists and political ideologues, as if to suggest that Derrida’s thought were a slippery slope to real political oppression, and thus in need of public censor). In The Clouds the young students of philosophy are depicted as learning a knack for perplexing and undermining the discourse of others, particularly those of high public esteem, as if for little reason other than personal amusement and spite. Such a depiction, Socrates himself will tell us in The Apology, will form the basis of his later trial and execution. That Blackburn would seem to be invoking similar charges against Derrida (in an article shortly following his death), charges that effectively cast Derrida as a sophist akin to the Aristophanean and Athenian trial depictions of Socrates, could be read as implicitly, and rather ironically, celebrating the victory of the Athenian sophists: those who were accepted in the polis as respectable teachers with the right to charge their fee.

159 Over the course of the chapter we will refer to various indicia of analytic philosophy, such as “[a] focus on argument and a concern for clarity”, or “[t]he rejection of metaphysics” (Glock, ‘Was Wittgenstein an Analytic Philosopher?’, 438), along with “… the injunction to minimize one’s departure from empiricist respectability…” and the need to “… place some weight on the
example, we could also look at the purported opposition of the ‘literary’ against the
‘scientific’. In the previous chapter I said that analytic philosophy is often imagined
in line with a Kuhnian normal science whereby philosophers work together upon a
stable set of problems and research programs. In contrast, continental philosophy is
often seen as akin to literature, or to literary discussions of key figures and texts.
While we imagine analytic philosophy as progressing toward a given unity, the unity
of continental philosophy fractures into just so many stories. If philosophy were
imagined, in the continental context, as a collection of disparate stories then one
cannot enter into dialogue that aims at unity, for that unity would be just one story
among others. Again, here, we can see a subtle imputation of relativism, if not,
sophistry.

I think that this holds for the other indicia, for the simple reason that insofar as
one endorses certain features by taking oneself as belonging to a group, while
opposing that group to others, these features will provide a rationale for a lack of
engagement so that dialogue over those features will not eventuate. When these
features concern what philosophy should be such that I chose to identify as a member
of a group, the features that are opposed to these will tell me what philosophy should
not be – what I chose not to be. When I reference such features to justify a lack of
dialogue over those features, I take them to stand in for the ideal of philosophy (as a
given unity manifest in the unity of a tradition) and exclude that ideal from discourse
with the other.

Although philosophers have less commonly identified as continental
philosophers, as such identification becomes more common a study of the traits that
are appealed to in order to confer the ‘continental’ identity should also pick
continental philosophy out as philosophy per se. Taking on the identity of the
‘continental’ philosopher by endorsing one’s proposed features of philosophy, while
opposing them to features of ‘analytic’ philosophy one is establishing the
groundwork for the exclusion of analytic philosophy on the basis of sophistry.
Analytic philosophy is surely characterised as such for some philosophers that claim
to be ‘continental’.

deliverances of common sense” (Chase and Reynolds, Analytic Versus Continental: Arguments on the
Methods and Value of Philosophy, 7).
But let us take as an example Plato’s dialogue *Euthydemus*, in which the sophists Euthydemus and Dionysodorus are characterised as petty technicians that merely wrangle and cause strife, to no philosophical end, and without interest in the philosophical meaning, truth or relevance of their practice. The sophist is traditionally thought adept at philosophical argument or eristic (*eris* meaning ‘strife’ – hence ‘eristic’ can be translated as ‘designed for wrangling’). What the sophist lacks aren’t valid arguments, but a concern for the philosophical meaning, relevance and truth of his argument. Rather, he is content to make idle argument and word play philosophy’s end. Ernest Nagel characterised analytic philosophy as providing “… quiet green pastures for intellectual analysis, wherein its practitioners can find refuge from a troubled world and cultivate their intellectual games with chess-like indifference to its course.” From the perspective of the ‘continental philosopher’ – that is, the perspective according to which ‘analytic’ features such as ‘narrow focus upon technical ability’ are set into a mutually exclusive opposition to the features thought proper to the love of wisdom, which of course continental philosophy will exemplify so far as one takes oneself to have rationally chosen to identify as a continental philosopher – Nagel’s characterisation will thereby appear to epitomise sophistry. A focus on technical ability that obscures its own meaning and relevance might lead to accusations of sophistry – that is, the reduction of philosophy to the conditions of writing or argument. And this is, as we have seen, to treat philosophy as merely producing images of philosophy. Nicholas Capaldi raises just such a concern with regard to analytic philosophy, he writes:

> In stressing the practice of philosophy (‘doing’ philosophy) and repressing the question of the norms behind the practice, analytic philosophers deny that there is a normative order beyond practice. Once practice refuses to recognize pre-existing norms, it invariably converts both theory and practice into production. The result is technocracy, or a social system in which technical elites emerge as a political despotism.

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160 This is a common critique of analytic philosophy, similar to the charge of ‘scholasticism’. The critique may also be found as a self-critique. Consider the following:

The quickest way to a career in the competitive world of modern AP [analytic philosophy] is to pick a puzzle in a trendy area – be it vagueness, modal counterparts, rigid designation, ‘the hard problem’ or the elimination of truth – and come up with a hitherto unsuspected twist in the dialectic, earning a few more citations in one or another of the on-going games of fashionable philosophical ping-pong (Mulligan and Simons and Smith, ‘What’s Wrong With Contemporary Philosophy’, 65).

161 Nagel, “Impressions and Appraisals of Analytic Philosophy in Europe 1,” 9

162 Capaldi, *The Enlightenment Project in the Analytic Conversation*, 459. As we will see the sophist converts philosophy into production and raises the problem of ‘philosophical despotism’.
The political dangers of sophistry will be considered in detail in this chapter. At this
stage I want simply to note that attempting to enter into discourse with such a
‘philosopher’ would result in a similar scenario to that with the sceptic of
philosophy: important philosophical debate would be reduced to trivial ‘images’ of
debate.

Family resemblance features of the divide will reflect the use of the concepts.
I want to claim that we can read that use out of the particular traits and images to
which we appeal in talking about the divide. In this chapter our first concern will be
to show that what is now too often considered the mere observation of a division can
be traced to the imperative to divide philosophy, and we can trace the specific
descriptions of analytic and continental philosophy to prescriptive judgements made to
justify disengagement. These imperatives will be shown to recall the figure of the
sophist in order that disengagement might be thought justified. The traits can then
be interpreted, in the context of their use, as traits of philosophy in opposition to
sophistry.

Of course representations will change. On this basis someone may want to
argue that such use of the divide as outlined above is a matter of historical accident,
and the divide might now be removed from the context of its historical use and
appropriated to neutrally comment upon the differences between philosophies.
However, if I am successful in showing that the way in which the divide is used to
divide philosophy is inseparable from the content of the divide (what is ‘thought in’
the family resemblance concepts, specific indicia and their historical meaning and
philosophical significance), then such a neutral account would need to form wholly
new indicia.

It might be thought that we could point to new indicia and construct ‘more
accurate’ representations of analytic and continental philosophy, representations that
do not reflect the vehement use of the divide. The obvious problem with such a
view is that any representation would need to be dependent on and secondary to the
use of such representations to divide philosophy. But, assuming that a ‘neutral’
description could be given that would amount to the divide, the question to pose
would be why we feel the need to refer to the divide in the first place. The divide,
whether imagined or not, is a matter of vehemence, disengagement, insularity and
exclusion. The gross simplification of the philosophical landscape to fit the model of two opposing groups and the specific descriptions of these groups will reflect the use of the divide to achieve just that – the appearance of two opposing groups. To think that one may produce neutral accounts of what is such a non-neutral arrangement may be merely to discourage metaphilosophical critique by naturalising the terms of the debate. However, even if such accounts were to achieve neutral and apt representations devoid of vehemence (and I think this would be highly unlikely to cover the usual referents and certainly would not capture their opposition), such an account would cease to be explanatory. It could not, in other words, tell us why philosophers identify with a group and exclude others, why certain influences are sought and others avoided in reconstructing ‘traditions’. Also, they would not tell us why vehemence outlasts other differentiating features.\footnote{In contrast, if we take the divide as a way in which we apparently determine who the philosophers are and who may be excluded from the dialectic, research project, or tradition, we can say that vehemence is a condition of citing features that allow us to continue this practice.}

If we were imagining a scenario in which differentiating features hold, but are not the outcome of active division (whether imagined or actual), then we would no longer be speaking about the divide.\footnote{In such a scenario metaphilosophical accounts would become subject to dialogue across the division, but if this were to happen we would no longer need to speak of the divide. For representations would be called into question, adapted and a higher unity would be sought.}

In the following section I want to consider the discourse of the divide during the formative break with idealism, taking our lead from Russell’s *Mysticism and Logic*, to show how the particular representations cited have us imagine the traits of a group such that those traits commit one to membership or motivate exclusion. I want to support the arguments of this section by showing that the representations found in the literature recall the division between philosophy and sophistry.

In revealing a relationship between representations common to the divide and the figure of the sophist I want to think about how the inclusion of the sophist in philosophical practice would, in Timothy Williamson’s words, induce the feeling of a “… serious loss of integrity …” such that we are provided with a reason to withdraw discourse.\footnote{Williamson, ‘On Vagueness’, 151} I also want to think about what that withdrawal might achieve with regard to the sophistic threat in general.
We will consider what it is about the metaphilosophical task that makes the sophistic threat possible and peculiar to philosophy. I have argued that the sophist reflects an image of philosophy’s external, nonessential features, and makes of this image the end (meaning and purpose) of philosophy, replacing the ‘ideal’ of philosophy. This threatens philosophical unity, for philosophy would now be equivalent to a collection of accidental, disparate, and culturally-specific (or personality-specific) features. The exclusion of the sophist serves to ‘externalise’ that image again. However, I also raised the concern that in excluding the sophist the philosopher must act as though the ideal of philosophy is given to her as actual; that is, as potentially embodied in a tradition or set of practices. For this reason, that ideal may be said to be indistinguishable from an image of ‘extra-philosophical’ conditions, such that this image also serves to threaten the unity of philosophy. In the following we will be concerned with how the discourse of the divide is subject to this problem.
2.2 HUNTING THE SOPHISTIC HUNTER

Let me begin to show, through examples, the way in which representations common to the divide (and the slim indicia we are now so accustomed to employ in differentiating analytic from continental philosophy) recall traditional representations of philosophy as against sophistry. My concern will also be how – with what right and under which conditions – we can successfully define the sophist, such that he is differentiated from the philosopher and excluded from philosophical discourse.

I will take as paradigmatic examples the traits that we find in *Mysticism and Logic*. Russell is here concerned with two opposing groups of philosophies, and the descriptive traits and broad oppositions that Russell employs to characterise these groups clearly prefigure conventions in contemporary discourse of the divide. *Mysticism and Logic* is of particular interest to our concerns since these oppositions and traits do not originate in the observation of a divide between two groups of philosophies, but in the argument that we should divide philosophy along these lines (I have suggested that the same is true of the discourse of the divide generally).

Russell begins ‘On Scientific Method in Philosophy’ by arguing that we can discern two antagonistic groups of traits that motivate philosophical reflection in general: he writes that “[p]hilosophy, throughout its history, has consisted of two parts inharmoniously blended”, and that “… these two groups of motives are, on the one hand, those derived from religion and ethics, and, on the other hand, those derived from science”. Philosophy inspired by the latter is concerned with fact, with impartial argument and justification. Russell prefers the traits due to the ‘scientific’ motive, and argues that:

… the ethical and religious motives in spite of the splendidly imaginative systems to which they have given rise, have been on the whole a hindrance to the progress of philosophy, and ought now to be consciously thrust aside by those who wish to discover philosophical truth.

166 Russell, ‘On Scientific Method in Philosophy’ in *Mysticism and Logic*, 97
167 Ibid., 98
But Russell does not simply condemn the negatively valued terms in his oppositions and endorse the positive (the division is not between ‘good’ and ‘bad’ philosophy); rather he condemns the mixture and tension of the two and argues for their division. As I hope to show, the ‘mixture’ of these two tendencies invites sophistic threats, which act as a catalyst for the division of philosophy.

Let us begin where we left off in the previous section, with the differentiating feature of ‘style’. For Russell, literary or poetic style in philosophy is symptomatic of the ‘mixture’ of scientific and mystical tendencies. I want to show that, when considered in the context of Russell’s use of this trait, this indicium prefigures traditional representations of sophistry. To draw this connection let us return to The Sophist, and think about the Stranger’s first diaresis of sophistry, beginning at The Sophist, 221d.

Sophistry as Hunting by Private Persuasion

Having practised their method, the Stranger and Theaetetus are readied to begin their account of the sophist in the light of the example (of the angler). The Stranger asks Theaetetus whether they should characterise the sophist as a layman or the professor of some art.\footnote{168 Plato, The Sophist, 221c} Theaetetus replies that, given the sophist’s title, he must be characterised as a professional.\footnote{169 Ibid., 221d. ‘Sophistry’ translates to ‘wisdom’. On account of the apparent, the name, Theaetetus thinks that the sophist must have wisdom, for how could ‘the wise’ be ignorant? Likewise, the poetic or literary ‘philosopher’ must have a technē, if only to convince the youth that he is wise.} In relation to the question of what sort of art the sophist possesses, the Stranger pronounces, with an oath, that the angler and sophist are kinsmen, for they are both hunters of a sort.\footnote{170 Ibid., 221d. The first diaresis, upon which the others follow, begins on the authority of an analogy or metaphor; this raises again our suspicions with regard to the Stranger’s method. It seems that we might start the diaresis at any point - the analysis does not extend to interrogate its own context, but relies on an analogy to the everyday - for this reason the definition that follows may be merely coincidental. The Stranger also understood diaresis as a form of hunting and he is now defining the sophist as a hunter, the definitions given and the very process of defining sophistry against philosophy continually draw the Stranger into proximity with the sophist. I want to raise a similar concern regarding the method of representing the sophistic threat in the context of the divide.}

We are told that the sophist’s quarry, unlike the angler’s, is a ‘tame’ animal: man.\footnote{171 Ibid., 222b} There are two paradigmatic means to ‘hunt man’: one may do so by tyranny
and force, such as in war, or one may do so by persuasion, as in courts of law.\textsuperscript{172} This distinction concerns the political dimension of sophistry, which is otherwise strangely absent from the dialogue. The historical sophists played a role in educating future political leaders (or young, wealthy Athenians) and they taught the art of rhetoric destined for use in courts of law. But, as we will come to see, the sophist is not merely that philosopher who adopts political ends: rather, the sophist argues that politics is philosophy’s end. The sophist converts philosophy into persuasive speech that can be evaluated by its political effectiveness.

Turning to \textit{The Sophist}, 222d, persuasion is divided into persuasion that takes place in public, such as in law courts, and persuasion in private. Sophistic discourse does not occur in public law courts – the sophist creates the conditions for effective political speech by impressing certain beliefs and abilities upon the young in private. The same will be shown of the poetic or literary philosopher, who creates the conditions for the political utilisation of ‘literary’ philosophy in private. The sophist is linked to private persuasion, while we will be told that the philosopher speaks a public discourse.

‘Private persuasion’ is divided by means of whether the hunter receives monies or whether he gives gifts.\textsuperscript{173} Despite the absence of a concern with the erotic in \textit{The Sophist}, itself an important consideration, this is a distinction between two types of erotic hunting, one in which payment is received and the other in which flattery wins favours. The sophist’s persuasion is erotic and he hunts in order to earn a salary. The adoption of a literary style is likewise a form of erotic hunting, as we will see.

Two types of private persuasion are then determined: one in which the hunter persuades by pleasurable conversation, where ‘pleasure’ is that which is sold, and the other where what is offered for sale is ‘virtue’ or ‘education of the soul’.\textsuperscript{174} The distinction made here is between flattery and sophistry, respectively. The sophist claims to teach ‘virtue’, or more precisely, he would evaluate philosophies by
whether they are noble or base (in a political context) without regard for the truth.\textsuperscript{175}

In this, the Stranger’s first \textit{diaerēsis}, we can ascertain two features of philosophical practice by which the sophistic critique becomes applicable to philosophy. The Stranger has us consider the relationship between philosophy and the erotic and the relationship between philosophy and politics. The sophist exploits these relations to reduce philosophy to them. That is, he would claim that philosophy is merely a type of persuasive speech for particular ends. If this is so, the threats of sophistry, such as relativism, result: the question of whether a philosophy is true is reduced to the question of whether it is seductive.\textsuperscript{176} This is just to say that whatever happens to convince will be held to be true.

I will show that the continental philosopher understood as a poetic or literary ‘philosopher’ is also represented as a hunter of men by persuasion, and a similar threat of sophistry is implied. Turning to the early analytic discourse, we find the familiar accusation that the idealists and romantics (the forerunners of continental philosophers) are obscure. I said that this judgement might simply indict the continental philosopher as an inexperienced or ‘bad’ philosopher, in which case he is still included in the field of philosophy and expected to share the ideal of philosophy in order that he might better himself. However, I want to think about the ways in which the judgement of obscurity implies the threat of sophistry, such that the judgement may be used to exclude him as a sophist.

\textsuperscript{175} The synthesis of the \textit{diaerēsis} given by the Stranger is as follows: “sophistry … is the name to be given to the \textit{chase after young men of wealth and reputation by an art of appropriation by conquest, effected by hunting, of an animate quarry inhabiting the dry land, when the quarry is man, and the hunting done by the persuasion of an individual, paid in current coin, and carried on under a pretext of imparting education}” (Plato, \textit{The Sophist}, 223e, emphasis in the original text).

\textsuperscript{176} Note the prevalence of philosophical sayings, such as ‘I buy that’. In accepting an argument or claim one acknowledges that one has been convinced. This does not distinguish the true from the appearance of truth for ‘accepting as true’ is an act that suppresses the possibility of being sceptical about it. Whenever one is convinced one takes oneself to possess the truth, whenever one makes an assertion one takes oneself to be expressing the truth (or at least seeking to express the truth). But this also does not imply that all who are convinced are in that moment deceived for that would mean philosophy is indistinguishable from sophistry. The point is that the sophist will correlate ‘the truth’ with convincing in general, or in convincing the public, whereas the philosopher will say that the truth should convince all but does not necessarily do so, i.e. what is accepted generally isn’t because of that fact, true. The sophist is wrongly orientated, by the public, rather than by truth which should orient the public.
We find it a common opinion that obscurity is adopted for dishonest and deceitful ends.\textsuperscript{177} The point of obscurity on this reading is to ‘bewilder’ reason and instead appeal to the emotions in order to persuade or seduce readers.\textsuperscript{178} We might also take note of a common link that the ‘analytic’ philosopher makes between ‘continental’ writing and the erotic.\textsuperscript{179} This is perceptible in the ‘analytic’s’ own discourse; in which Dionysian metaphors emerge to describe ‘continental’ style: images of seduction, invasion, intoxication, disease, worship, hallucination, dreams, drugs and deluges.\textsuperscript{180} Obscurity is supposedly endorsed or sought by the continental

\textsuperscript{177} In Ayer’s autobiography Kant is mentioned twice, both times as ‘obscure’ (Ayer, \textit{Part of My Life}, 81, 264). Mary Warnock described German idealism as ‘obscure’ (Warnock, \textit{Ethics Since 1900}, 163). An accusation of dishonesty or fraudulence is closely associated with the judgement of obscurity: Isaiah Berlin writes that the British philosopher Collingwood was a “… continental sort of philosopher”, which allows him to draw the conclusion that he was “… deceitful and unsound” (Berlin, \textit{Two Concepts of Liberty}, 132). Geoffrey James Warnock calls Bradley ‘rhetorical’ and he says of his colleague Bosanquet that he is “… closer to bombast … [and] vagueness. And in the writings of lesser men solemnity and unclarity seem to rise not seldom to the pitch of actual fraud” (Warnock, \textit{English Philosophy Since 1900}, 6).

\textsuperscript{178} Russell said of F. H. Bradley that his philosophy was “… calculated to produce bewilderment” (Russell, \textit{Our Knowledge of the External World}, 17). Likewise, A. J. Ayer wrote: “… it is not the habit of Existentialists to concern themselves overmuch with logic. What they strive to obtain is an emotional effect” (Ayer, ‘Some Aspects of Existentialism’, 12).

\textsuperscript{179} Rhetoric and sex appeal are seen as linked by Jonathan Rée, who comments on the attitude of the Oxfordians: Continental philosophy, to the Oxfordians, was the epitome of the intellectual habits that their revolution was meant to eradicate: excessive interest in the history of philosophy, failure to respect the gap between philosophy and science, and above all a self-indulgent use of language. The continentalists, it was insinuated, followed fashions, not arguments, and if literary intellectuals were attracted to them, this was only because of their skin-deep sex appeal (Rée, ‘English Philosophy in the Fifties’, 13).

\textsuperscript{180} Linking German Idealism to the rise of European fascism, Russell warns against being “… seduced from intellectual sobriety in favour of some delusive will-o’-the-wisp” (Russell, \textit{Ancestry of Fascism}, 10, my emphasis). Bernard Williams and Alan Montefiore also use the distinction between sobriety and intoxication to distinguish analytic from continental style (Williams and Montefiore, ‘Introduction’ in \textit{British Analytical Philosophy}, 13).

We also find imagery of infection and illness: “[w]hile the influence of Hegel radically changed the rest of European thought, and continues to work in it, the sceptical caution of British philosophy left it, after a brief infection, markedly immune to it” (Williams, ‘Man as Agent: on Stuart Hampshire’s Recent Work’, 39). In Ayer’s autobiography, \textit{Part of My Life}, the metaphor of ‘infection’ is used to describe ‘a fever’ that Ayer says he contracted while supposing that he understood a
philosopher, either tacitly or overtly. Bad writing is not due to a lack of proficiency with language, but demarcates a certain 'type' of writing — “[po]or reasoning and obscurity, then, are not errors, but tools”.181

A positive account is associated with the continental philosopher’s obscurity — the conviction that we should forego the philosopher’s interest in argument, truth and transparency in order to persuade the public or have emotional affect. For example, Russell says of Hegel:

So long as the main object of philosophers is to show that nothing can be learned by patience and detailed thinking, but that we ought rather to worship the prejudices of the ignorant under the title of ‘reason’ if we are Hegelians … so long as philosophers will take care to remain ignorant of what mathematicians have done to remove the errors by which Hegel profited.182

For Russell, Hegelians hold that we ought to worship the prejudices of the ignorant, and they profit from that ignorance. Karl Popper links Hegel with “… the fascist appeal to ‘human nature’ [which] is to our passions …” and proposes that we call this particularly ‘obscure’ part of Kant’s work: “[b]y the time the fever left me, I had lost my insight into Kant and have never since recaptured it” (Ayer, Part of My Life, 264).

In Russell we find the claim that Kant “… deluged the world with muddle and mystery from which it is only now beginning to emerge” (Russell, An Outline of Philosophy, 64). Berlin speaks of “… those who have lost their way in some dark Heideggerian forest” (Berlin, ‘Political Judgement’, 50).

Russell writes that ‘continental’ intoxication is due to “… the intoxication of power which invaded philosophy with Fichte” (Russell, History of Western Philosophy, 856). Berlin writes, on Romantic politics: “… worship of the night and the irrational: that was the contribution of the wild German spirit … Then the tidal wave of feeling rose above its banks and overflowed into the neighbouring provinces of politics and social life with literally devastating results” (Berlin, ‘European Unity and its Vicissitudes’, 197). Rousseau was often characterised as a forerunner of romanticism and so of ‘continental philosophy’. Berlin writes on Rousseau’s ‘style’ as follows:

[j]ou appear to be reading logical argument which distinguishes between concepts and draws conclusions in a valid manner from premises, when all the time something very violent is being said to you. A vision is being imposed on you, somebody is trying to dominate you by means of a very coherent, although often very deranged vision of life, to bind a spell, not to argue, despite the cool and collected way in which he appears to be talking (Berlin, Freedom and Its Betrayal, 43).

See Akehurst’s The Cultural Politics of Analytic Philosophy: Briti shness and the Spectre of Europe for a comprehensive list of such metaphors. Stuart Wallace comments that during this period the descriptive features of the Hegelian state were “… repeated so often that they [had] an incantatory quality” (Wallace, War and the Image of Germany: British Academics 1914-1918, 49, my emphasis).


182 Russell, History of Western Philosophy, 832. Russell judges that while “[a] man may be pardoned if logic compels him regretfully to reach conclusions which he deplores, but not for departing from logic in order to be free to advocate crimes” (Russell, A History of Western Philosophy, 769). The idealist’s departure from philosophical argument, on Russell’s reading, leaves the philosopher free to advocate crimes. More than this, the suggestion is that continental philosophy’s departure, more generally, from logic, within and following on from German idealism, is not accidentally related to the actual historical crimes subsequently committed on the continent.
appeal the “... cunning of the revolt against reason”.\textsuperscript{183} Hegel, we are told, “... wants to stop rational argument, and with it, scientific and intellectual progress”.\textsuperscript{184} If obscurity is thought symptomatic of this belief it is no wonder then that obscurity is considered a danger to philosophical integrity.\textsuperscript{185} I want to look more closely at the dangers associated with obscurity and rhetoric, in terms of Russell’s account of mixture and separation in \textit{Mysticism and Logic}.

On its own, literary or poetic writing is not considered indicative of sophistry. We are told that the poetic or literary writer indulges the mystical motive by seeking to describe or inspire in others a \textit{feeling}. In ‘Mysticism and Logic’ Russell defines the mystic and ethical motive as originating in “... little more than a certain intensity and depth of feeling in regard to what is believed about the universe”.\textsuperscript{186} Russell gives us an account of how this motive arises:

[t]he mystic insight begins with the sense of a mystery unveiled, of a hidden wisdom now suddenly become certain beyond the possibility of a doubt. The sense of certainty and revelation comes earlier than any definite belief. The

\textsuperscript{183} Popper, \textit{The Open Society and its Enemies}, Vol. 2: The High Tide of Prophecy: Hegel, Marx and the Aftermath, 268
\textsuperscript{184} Ibid., 235. Ayer argues that although Hegel might be judged to reason poorly, it is Heidegger that turns away from reasoning in general, Ayer writes:

Few men, indeed, can ever have reasoned worse than Hegel, the arch pontiff of the nineteenth century, but at least he claimed the support of reason for his fantasies ... Though he misused logic abominably he did not affect to be above it. But now if we turn to Heidegger, the high priest of the modern school of existentialism, and the leading pontiff of our time, we find ourselves in a country from which the ordinary processes of logic, or indeed reasoning of any kind, appear to have been banished (Ayer, ‘The Claims of Philosophy’, 2)

Note the rhetorical shift from speaking of a single philosopher to inculcating an entire ‘country’.

\textsuperscript{185} Ayer writes that “… one of the great dangers of philosophy is woolliness, and woolliness, particularly among Germans, is always masked by very unclear writing” (Ayer, ‘An Interview with A. J. Ayer’, 225). In another example we read Ayer saying that Nietzsche “... represent[s] a kind of woolly romantic thinking which made Nazism possible” (Ayer, ‘Logical Positivism and its Legacy’, 132). But consider the tension between the judgement of vacuity (obscurity is incomprehensible) and danger (we can comprehend a danger). This is especially evident in the following quote from a television interview, in which R. M. Hare judges that:

[although there are some good philosophers in these schools, the common sort do little but blow up balloons of different shapes and colours full of nothing but their own breath, which float here from over the Channel or the Atlantic; and if you prick them with a sharp needle, it’s very hard to say what was in them, except that it was probably inflammable and certainly intoxicating. This may increase the head of steam a bit beyond what natural human group aggression produces anyway; but from faulty plumbing most of it gets on people’s spectacles (Hare, from a BBC television interview with Bryan Magee, cited in Akehurst, \textit{The Cultural Politics of Analytic Philosophy: Britishness and the Spectre of Europe}, 112).]

As we will see obscurity is considered a political danger.

\textsuperscript{186} Russell, ‘Mysticism and Logic’ in \textit{Mysticism and Logic}, 3. This definition reveals a relationship between the mystical, or ethical motive, and fanaticism; for fanaticism might likewise be thought to be an intensity of feeling that is applied to what is believed (\textit{doxa}).
definite beliefs at which mystics arrive are the result of reflection upon the inarticulate experience gained in the moment of insight.187

Russell tells a story in which loneliness and dissatisfaction, along with fear of mortality, bring about a “… mad dance of fantastic phantoms”, where the feeling of certainty comes before specific beliefs.188 Defining the mystical motive as arising in feeling, or ‘inarticulate experience’, clearly demarcates it from philosophical discourse. The proper form of writing for such a motive would be poetry or literature. And if the literary philosopher were only producing a poem or piece of literature Russell would be unperturbed; however, the poet or mystic ‘mixes’ this feeling with “… [t]he impulse to logic, not felt while the mystic mood is dominant”, but which “… reasserts itself as the mood fades … with a desire to retain the vanishing insight, or at least to prove that it was insight, and that what seems to contradict it is illusion”.189 Philosophical writing becomes ‘obscure’ since it seeks to use a rational form of writing in order to undermine reason for the purpose of replicating ‘inarticulate experience’. It is with ‘mixture’ that the threats of sophistry ensue.

The first outcome of ‘mixture’ is the belief in revelation – “… the belief in insight as against discursive analytic knowledge: the belief in a way of wisdom, sudden, penetrating, coercive, which is contrasted with the slow and fallible study of outward appearance by a science relying wholly upon the senses”.190 That is, “… in the possibility of a way of knowledge which may be called revelation or insight or intuition, as contrasted with sense, reason, and analysis, which are regarded as blind guides leading to the morass of illusion”.191 The mixture of the poetic and philosophical does not serve merely to reduce philosophy to poetry (undermining public discourse), but also to raise poetry to the status of truth: what “[t]he poet, the artist, and the lover …” seek in “… the haunting beauty that they pursue is the faint reflection of its sun … the mystic lives in the full light of the vision: what others dimly seek he knows, with a knowledge beside which all other knowledge is

187 Ibid., 9
188 Ibid., 9. Interestingly, Derrida also associates sophistry with the fear of death. We will consider his reasons for making this association further on in the discussion.
189 Ibid., 20
190 Ibid., 8
191 Ibid., 9
When all criteria that reason would have had at its disposal to argue for the truth or falsity of an account are judged illusory, there is simply no recourse to argue for the falsity of the revealed truth and philosophy is transformed into worship.

Although representations of ‘continental’ philosophy will change throughout the 20th Century, if my arguments have purchase, they should converge on the threats of sophistry, such that we are provided with a reason to withdraw the injunction to provide hermeneutical charity. I have already said that sophistry makes dialogic unity impossible; it also prevents the unity of philosophy more generally. For Russell the influence of ‘mixture’ has meant that philosophy has historically formed a multiplicity of divergent and competing revelations based in the incommunicable ‘feelings’ of particular men. This gives rise to sophistical challenges by undermining the unity of philosophy per se: if philosophy is simply so many revealed ‘truths’, there may be no standard of deciding between philosophical systems, and simply their persuasiveness might then be decisive.

We can now note the second theme in the Stranger’s definition of the sophist – the collapse of the distinction between philosophy and politics. By undermining dialogic unity philosophy is potentially transformed into a form of politics. To provide further evidence of the ‘sophistical’ status of the continental representation we can note this theme in the discourse of the divide as well. The claim that the continental philosopher practises philosophy as a form of politics is not uncommon. The most formidable example of this judgement is the view that

192 Ibid., 10
193 Russell writes that:
Most philosophies hitherto have been constructed all in one block, in such a way that, if they were not wholly correct, they were wholly incorrect, and could not be used as a basis for further investigations. It is chiefly owing to this fact that philosophy, unlike science, has hitherto been unprogressive, because each original philosopher has had to begin the work again from the beginning, without being able to accept anything definite from the work of his predecessors (Russell, ‘On Scientific Method in Philosophy’ in Mysticism and Logic, 113).

We might note that even at this early stage we get the characterisation of continental philosophy as pre-paradigmatic in the Kuhnian sense. Of course the threat is that the origins of the paradigmatic discipline are not entirely dissimilar to the origins of the mystical as Russell has here characterised it – in the sense that, at least according to Kuhn, one does not first adopt a paradigm on the basis of the piecemeal and tentative methods that nonetheless result from its adoption, but by ‘inspiration’ or ‘conviction’, which is the language Russell uses to describe mystical insight.

194 Hilary Putnam gives an account of continental philosophy as ‘para-politics’ (Putnam, Renewing Philosophy, 197). Chase and Reynolds explain ‘para-politics’ as referring to “… a politicized
philosophy on the continent had in some sense contributed to the rise of Nazism; Russell in particular promoted the argument.\textsuperscript{195}

We might refer to Thomas Akehurst’s \textit{The Cultural Politics of Analytic Philosophy: Britishness and the Spectre of Europe}. Akehurst notes that there was a felt need to reappraise German philosophy after the First and Second World Wars, which led to the judgement that ‘continental philosophy’, and, in particular, Hegelian philosophy had ‘caused’ the war.\textsuperscript{196} Akehurst reveals that this opinion was widely held.\textsuperscript{197} But we might ask how it came to be thought that a group of

\begin{quote}
philosophy that sees itself primarily in social and political terms" (Chase and Reynolds, \textit{Analytic Versus Continental: Arguments on the Methods and Value of Philosophy}, 228).
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{195} Thomas Akehurst writes that "[i]n understanding [this] critique of the anti-canonical, the strength of Russell’s lead cannot be underestimated. First, he was a witness to the first war of anti-canonical aggression … it was Russell who chose to speak on the subject early in the 1930s" (Akehurst, \textit{The Cultural Politics of Analytic Philosophy: Britishness and the Spectre of Europe}, 28-9).

Although the argument is not explicit in \textit{Mysticism and Logic}, as we will see, it is central to Russell’s thinking on the idealists in general. We will note that Russell’s arguments regarding the political effects of mysticism in \textit{Mysticism and Logic} recall his arguments elsewhere for a connection between German philosophy and Nazism.

\textsuperscript{196} Cyril Joad, who was a prominent figure involved in instigating the reappraisal of German philosophy after the First World War, gives us this honest account:

\begin{quote}
Of all the parallel crises of its kind historically recorded, the intellectual volte face in the English estimate of German scholarship will surely stand out as immeasurably the most startling … We have found that … Nietzsche’s philosophy is the incoherent babbling of a dyspeptic megalomaniac, that Hegel is the apostle of a monstrous and repellent state which makes insatiable demands upon the lives of its individuals, sacrifices happiness to efficiency, and liberty to false deification of discipline and order … These are intellectual judgements we pass, and we are not concerned here to weigh them as right or wrong; only be it noted that they are the direct outcome of feelings engendered by the war, and immeasurably disparate from their predecessors of four years ago (Joad, \textit{Essays in Common Sense Philosophy}, 238-9).
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{197} Akehurst writes that by “… 1945, a broad consensus existed among the analytic philosophers that the intellectual origins of fascism could be found in the continental philosophy of the previous 200 years … As the post-war age began, this view had achieved the status of unquestioned orthodoxy” (Akehurst, \textit{The Cultural Politics of Analytic Philosophy}, 16). Philosophers who re-introduced this topic after the 1930s and devoted philosophical attention to arguing this point was again Russell (in numerous texts, but his \textit{History of Western Philosophy} was most widely read), Isaiah Berlin (particularly the broadcast lectures ‘Freedom and its Betrayal’), Popper (\textit{The Open Society and its Enemies}) and Joad (\textit{Guide to the Philosophy of Morals and Politics}). These men were very influential. Russell in particular spoke with authority on the matter and did the most to argue for the connection: along with Berlin, he popularised the discourse for the generations to come until by the Oxford of the 40s to 50s the view seemed an entirely conventional and ‘obvious’ fact; one that certainly did not need deeper consideration. This is evidenced by Ryle’s review of Popper’s self-described ‘war-work’ (for the use of ‘war-work’ see Bryan Magee’s \textit{Karl Popper}, 12) \textit{The Open Society and its Enemies}:

\begin{quote}
Nor is it news to philosophers that Nazi, Fascist and Communist doctrines are descendants of the Hegelian gospel. They may therefore wonder whether Dr. Popper is not flogging a dead horse in exposing once again the motives and fallacies of Hegel. But Dr. Popper is clearly right in saying that even if philosophers are at long last immunized, historians, sociologists, political propagandists and voters are still unconscious victims of the virus … (Ryle, \textit{The Open Society and its Enemies}, 170-171).
\end{quote}
philosophers so varied in philosophy and temperament (as, for example, Kant, Hegel and Nietzsche) were thought to have influenced Nazi politics. We are very infrequently offered a causal or historical story, even though this does on occasion seem to be promised. How can we understand the use of ‘influence’ in this judgement?

The influence that the idealists were thought to have had upon political evils is an ideological influence; or, rather, idealism was thought to provide the conditions for ideology and propaganda in private, by inciting the “[r]evolt against reason …” that Russell believed had “… gradually dominated larger and larger areas of the life

Richard Price would come to write that “[t]he totalitarian political systems which now afflict the continent of Europe are the long delayed effects of the philosophies of Fichte, Hegel and Marx, or at least the psychological attitudes which underlay those philosophies” (Price, ‘The Permanent Significance of Hume’s Philosophy’, 8). Hare, referring to the First and Second World Wars wrote that “… they have affected history in a way that we analytical philosophers haven’t … the romantic philosophers, as the other kind have been called, have affected history enormously, for the worse, I think” (Hare, ‘Moral Philosophy’, 156). Geoffrey James Warnock writes “Absolute Idealism can be distinguished chiefly as being a system for extremists” (Warnock, English Philosophy since 1900, 53). The Warnocks shared this opinion and it can be found in Stuart Hampshire and Anthony Quinton, among many others. For further evidence of just how widespread the view was see Akehurst’s The Cultural Politics of Analytic Philosophy: Britishness and the Spectre of Europe.

198 As in Russell’s claim that “[t]he Nazis upheld German idealism, though the degree of allegiance given to Kant, Fichte or Hegel respectively was not clearly laid down” (Russell, ‘Philosophy and Politics’ in Unpopular Essays, 10). Or in the claim that “Hitler’s ideals come mainly from Nietzsche” (Ancestry of Fascism, 210). “In a prospectus for a new book delivered to his publisher in the mid 1930s, Russell identifies a philosophical tradition moving through ‘Carlyle, Nietzsche, William James and Bergson and finding its culmination in Mein Kampf’” (Akehurst, The Cultural Politics of Analytic Philosophy: Britishness and the Spectre of Europe, 37). But Russell could not have believed that Hitler had studied Kant, Hegel, Carlyle, Nietzsche, Byron, William James, and Bergson, to name a few of the philosophers who he claimed were directly responsible for Hitler’s views.

199 One may wonder whether ‘influence’ has any meaning or whether it does not reduce, as Walter Kaufmann suggests, to the fallacious ‘post hoc, ergo propter hoc’ (Kaufmann, From Shakespeare to Existentialism: Studies in Poetry, Religion and Philosophy, 93). It would only have taken a reference to the Nazi’s most influential ideologue, Alfred Rosenberg, to see that the official stance on Hegel was to consider him ‘foreign blood,’ ‘contemptuous’ – whose political ideas were alien, the ‘antithesis’ of everything German. Kaufmann writes: “Hegel was rarely cited in the Nazi literature, and, when he was referred to, it was usually by way of disapproval. The Nazis’ official ‘philosopher’, Alfred Rosenberg, mentioned, and denounced, Hegel twice in his best-selling Der Mythos des Zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts [The Myth of the Twentieth Century] … a whole chapter is devoted to Popper’s beloved Schopenhauer, whom Rosenberg admired greatly” (Ibid., 97).

I count three references to Hegel in Rosenberg’s The Myth of the Twentieth Century: “Logic is the science of god, said Hegel. These words are an affront to a truly Nordic religion. It is the antithesis of all that is truly German and all that was truly Greek. These words are truly Socratic. It is not surprising therefore that university professors have canonised Hegel along with Sokrates” (Rosenberg, The Myth of the Twentieth Century, 65), “a new doctrine of power alien to the blood was formulated which reached its peak in Hegel” (Ibid., 116), “… [a]bstract popular sovereignty of Democracy and the contemptuous words of Hegel” (Ibid., 116). Kaufmann writes that the “… Nazis concluded quite correctly that Hegel was unalterably opposed to their conception of the Volk and that his idea of the State was its very antithesis” (Kaufmann, From Shakespeare to Existentialism: Studies in Poetry, Religion and Philosophy, 116).
and thought of the world”. Russell and Berlin “… emphasise that the kernel of romanticism is a denial that there can be any objective standards of truth, or any true structures to the world. The essence of romanticism is that the world can be moulded by the will”.

The idealist, by undermining reason and judging philosophy as affective literature, is thought to have, whether intentionally or not, given legislative force to doxa (creating the conditions for effective propaganda) and so giving prejudice the status of truth. By doing so he lends a justification to any political end. Anthony Quinton judged that “[i]n general, idealistic philosophy can be seen as a disreputable verbal device which provided a metaphysical justification for whatever distribution of power happened to exist”. Obscure or literary and poetic language can then be symptomatic of the ascendancy of persuasion over analysis, which may be used to support any political end.

In contrast to the continental ‘philosopher’ who speaks a ‘private’ discourse to persuade for political ends, the analytic discourse is characterised as ‘public’ and neutral. For this reason, there is also a historical connection made between...

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200 Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy*, 819. Russell writes: “[i]t was Germany, always more susceptible to romanticism than any other country, that provided a governmental outlet for … anti-rational philosophy …” (Ibid., 752). Philosophy becomes a justification for tyranny; or rather, it provides the conditions for totalitarian thought. The question of influence should then be posed as a question of what it means to understand philosophy as a kind of politics.


202 Quinton, ‘Social Thought in Britain’, 131, my emphasis. Geoffrey James Warnock writes that: Absolute Idealism can be distinguished chiefly as being a system for extremists … In natural but unholy alliance with this novel extremism of thought, there occurred a striking rise in the temperature of philosophical writing. With honourable exceptions, the Idealists brought into British philosophy a species of vivid, violent and lofty impressions which even in general literature had hitherto been rare (Warnock, *English Philosophy Since 1900*, 53).

For Herbert Feigl Germany “… had not yet recovered from the intellectual debaucheries of the post-Kantian romantic metaphysicians … a reaction against the high-flown pretentious refuige of metaphysical speculation” (Feigl, ‘The Origin and Spirit of Logical Positivism’, 12, my emphasis).

203 A division between neutral and public, private and political, discourses informs two entries (one on analytic, and one on continental, philosophy) that Quinton wrote for *the Oxford Companion to Philosophy* in 1995. In the entry on analytic philosophy, Quinton writes that Putnam and Nozick “…think and write in the analytic spirit, respectful of science, both as a paradigm of reasonable belief and in conformity with its argumentative rigour, its clarity and its determination to be objective” (Quinton, ‘Analytic Philosophy’ in *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*, 31). The continental entry, after giving an account of intimacy between British and European philosophers in the past, talks of the present state of European philosophy, judging existentialism “… dramatic, even melodramatic utterance, rather than sustained rational argument” (Quinton, ‘Continental Philosophy’ in *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*, 170). Critical theory is said to involve political interests, and hence to be intolerable to analytic philosophers, who insist upon neutrality.
analysis and liberalism. This connection was often expressed as a fact, so that if one were to conduct a survey one would find, in Quinton’s words “… a rather high correlation between the endorsement of analytic philosophy and the adoption of liberal, secular, melioristic ideology of the Enlightenment”. Of course, if such a correlation could be found, we would still need to give philosophical reasons for this being the case, otherwise the correlation could be no more than politically or sociologically accidental (that is, a philosophical reason is required if someone were to claim that liberalism goes along with analytic philosophy because of the nature of the two).

We have seen that continental philosophy is represented such that it fractures into warring truths with no properly philosophical means to argue for one ‘truth’ over another so that the authority of individual philosophers (their persuasive power) is decisive. In contrast, Russell tells us that the scientific discourse applies: “… the harmonising mediation of reason, which tests our beliefs by their mutual compatibility, and examines … the possible sources of error on the one side and on the other”. He writes, “[a] scientific philosophy … will be piecemeal and tentative like other sciences”. With the rise of the ‘new philosophy’, he says, “… it becomes possible at last for philosophy to deal with its problems piecemeal, and to obtain, as the sciences do, such partial and probably not wholly correct results as subsequent investigation can utilise even while it supplements and improves them”. Analytic philosophy then reinstates philosophy’s unity and purpose and this can be seen in the supposed democratic organisation of ‘analytic’ philosophy.

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204 Quinton, *Thoughts and Thinkers*, 49
205 Russell, ‘Mysticism and Logic’ in *Mysticism and Logic and Other Essays*, 13
206 Russell, ‘Scientific Method in Philosophy’ in *Mysticism and Logic*, 113. Inspired by Russell, Rudolph Carnap writes:

> If we allot to the individual in philosophical work as in the special sciences only a partial task, then we can look with more confidence into the future: in slow careful construction insight after insight will be won. Each collaborator contributes only what he can endorse and justify before the whole body of his co-workers. Thus stone will be carefully added to stone and a safe building will be erected at which each following generation can continue to work (Carnap, *The Logical Structure of the World and Pseudoproblems in Philosophy*, xvii).

207 Russell, ‘Scientific Method in Philosophy’ in *Mysticism and Logic*, 112
208 Russell writes on Locke:

> Both in intellectual and in practical matters he stood for order without authority; this might be taken as the motto both of science and Liberalism. It depends clearly on consent or assent. In the intellectual world it involves standards of evidence which, after adequate discussion will lead to a measure of agreement amongst experts. In the
Ayer links the nature of ‘analytic’ philosophy to the liberal politics of its philosophers. For Ayer, the connection is due to:

… a certain habit of mind, a certain critical temper in the examination of political and social as well as philosophical questions … and this would, I think, tend to have the effect of making you a liberal radical in social and political questions. This would be more than just historical accident. 209

The features of this critical temper are manifest in clear and transparent prose concerned with truth. 210 Political virtues are manifest in good style. In an interview Ted Honderich asked Ayer what British empiricism is, Ayer responded:

… [s]ticking close to the facts, and close to observation, and not being carried away by German romanticism, high falutin’ talk, obscurity, metaphysics. It’s a tradition, on the whole, of good prose. That is very important. If you write good prose, you can’t succumb to the sort of nonsense we get from Germany and now also from France. 211

Ayer is distinguishing good philosophy, philosophy that strives to speak the truth, which has truth as its goal, in terms of a good style (what would normally be considered an aesthetic or rhetorical criterion). The assumption is that the truth is or is more likely to be expressed where there is a good prose style, that a good prose style inoculates one from the threat of sophistry – and yet such a mixture of the aesthetic (good writing) with the logical or rational (sound argument, correct or true in the practical world it involves submission to the majority (Russell, ‘Philosophy and Politics’, 16).

We have seen, in contemporary accounts also, that analytic philosophy is represented as being organized democratically, or in Chase’s words “… contemporary analytic philosophy can be seen as a common …” dialogue, and “… as in many research enterprises the dialogue is not essentially hierarchical – no participant’s views are to be discounted or accepted because of their identity” (Chase, ‘Analytic Philosophy and Dialogic Conservatism’, 98).

209 Ayer, ‘The Glass in on the Table: An Empiricist Versus a Total View’, 28. Russell writes that the logical positivists, as against other philosophers on the Continent, had been “… rendered . . . immune to the infection of passionate dogma . . .” and that this was due to “[t]he severe logical training to which these men submitted themselves” (Russell, ‘Logical Positivism’, 148).

210 Analysis, Stuart Hampshire tells us, is concerned with the truth, while on the continent “[t]he first requirement of a philosophical assertion – that it should be true – is no longer even considered, provided it is psychologically impressive and moving” (Hampshire, ‘The Philosopher as Superman’, 73). Hampshire writes:

[Philosophers in Britain and Australia, and in Scandinavia and America also, cling to the idea that their first duty is to try to make statements that are true, even if they are not always exciting, and to respect the bodies of ascertained truths which are labelled ‘science’ and ‘history’. To meet those of their critics who are uninterested in truth, a pragmatic apology can be found in the fact that none of these analytic philosophers has been friendly with Nazis or with other totalitarian parties, and that is not an accident. Anyone who is a member of these parties or is friendly with them has to acquire the habit of making statements that are impressive and powerful without any regard to their testable truth (Ibid., 73).

assertion) itself threatens sophistry, that is, he is implying that the truth requires a rhetorical convention to assure its actual expression. One should ask: why would one need to make good style a criterion for philosophy as opposed to simply engaging in dialogue through a form of communication more generally concerned with the expression of the truth (dialogue per se)? How could this implied need for rhetorical convention be a philosophical concern, as opposed to an outright political one, lest one presumes an irreducibly political aspect to all philosophical practice (in which the above assumption is akin to a kind of ‘noble lie’ as found in Plato’s Republic, the kind typically considered ‘totalitarian’ by ‘analytic’ philosophers committed to open and public discourse).

Akehurst understands this early analytic discourse as an expression of reparation following the First and Second World Wars, such that the problematic relationship between philosophy and politics is played out in recent history as an institutional separation of the (analytic) virtues and (continental) vices of philosophy. Virtues and vices find their (analytic and continental) referents by

212 Dialogue is concerned with the truth (of what the other says) insofar as one enters into dialogue in order to understand the other. Through open discourse we tend not to presume to judge good style as a sign of truth but to listen to what the other, the stranger, has to say, and seek to interpret it correctly through continued discourse.

211 The task was felt to be urgent, philosophically and politically; in a much quoted passage Leonard Trelawny Hobhouse writes to his son:

Presently three white specks could be seen dimly through the light of the haze overhead and we watched their course from the field. The raid was soon over … As I went back to my Hegel my mood was one of self-satire. Was this a time for theorizing or for destroying theories, when the world was tumbling about our ears? My second thoughts ran otherwise. To each man the tools and weapons he can best use. In the bombing of London I had just witnessed the visible and tangible outcome of a false and wicked doctrine, the foundations of which lay, as I believe, in the book before me (Hobhouse, The Metaphysical Theory of the State, 5-6).

The sense of responsibility and the subsequent process of arraignment and reparation are not felt only in the British climate, but are perhaps the most meaningful and most subterranean connection between ‘groups’. As Alain Badiou acknowledges, in Manifesto for Philosophy, philosophers have taken the political crimes of the century as indictments of philosophy, and philosophy as a consequence has entered into a period of self-accusation and, for want of a better word, guilt. Badiou writes:

… in face of the proceedings instituted by our epoch against us and upon reading the records of the trial, the major evidence of which is Kolyma and Auschwitz, our philosophers, taking on the burden of the century and, when it comes down to it, all of the centuries since Plato have decided to plead guilty … Only philosophers have interiorized the notion that thought, their thought, encountered the historic and political crimes of this century and of all those leading up to it, both as the obstacle of all continuation and as the tribunal of a collective and historic intellectual forfeiture (Badiou, Manifesto for Philosophy, 28-9).

The story that Badiou will tell is one in which the Kantian/Hegelian imperative to think our times cannot encounter unthinkable political atrocities, which limn a diminishing circle for philosophizing until all one can confront is the question of philosophy, and its finitude. The aporetic question of
means of an assumed judgement that German philosophy had been proven (by historical events) to be politically and philosophically dubious, while British philosophy had upheld political virtue. Akehurst shows how the judgement made against the Germans was redeployed against French philosophy. We have the formation of an ‘anti-canon’. However, if the argument set forth in the first section of this chapter is appropriate, then in forming such an anti-canon, excluded ‘philosophers’ are characterised as sophists, and the political concern is symptomatic of the general threat of sophistry.

whether philosophy is possible as metaphysics must now be decided. Unanimously it is judged, not always without irony, in the negative: philosophy as it had previously functioned, as metaphysics, as legislative, must be dead or dying. What results is the sacrifice of philosophy, in the form of accepting a more humble, more manageable position. For Badiou this acceptance of humility is based upon conceit – the conceit that atrocities can be thinkable for philosophy.

214 Ayer writes of “… the subservience, since the war, of French to German philosophy …” (Ayer, ‘Reflections on Language, Truth and Logic’, 24) and says that “[t]he ascendancy of Germany over France in this respect is especially remarkable” (Ayer, ‘Editor’s Introduction’ in Logical Positivism, 9). Quinton writes in 1998:

The German army was finally defeated in 1918 and 1945, but German ways of thought, in a particularly wanton and delirious form, have conquered French intellectual life. Its pantheon consists of Hegel, Husserl and Heidegger with Nietzsche as the presiding deity. The outcome is a bacchanalian revel of paradox and oracular chatter (Quinton, From Wodehouse to Wittgenstein, 302).

Interestingly, David Simpson in Romanticism, Nationalism and the Revolt against Theory shows how the accusations against Germany began in the claim that the Germans were adopting French tendencies. Germany was thought seduced by the Ramus’ systems, their minds bewildered by metaphysics so that the passions were let loose (Simpson, Romanticism, Nationalism and the Revolt against Theory, 101).

Originally it was the extremes of French materialism that came to characterise German idealism.

215 Jonathan Rée in Philosophical Tales coins the term ‘anti-canon’ to name philosophers believed to be ‘unworthy’.

216 This leaves the very reason for the formation of a canon and an anti-canon open. I do not think any single rationale can be given here. However, in Mysticism and Logic Russell suggests that in order to defend philosophy against popular critiques (in particular, philosophy’s redundancy when compared with the sciences) we must divide philosophy (for example, its scientific potential from the mystical urges that confound it). We can certainly note that in the years prior to a discourse of ‘analytic philosophy’, metaphilosophies grappled with popular critiques and insecurities. Crispin Sartwell writes in ‘The Analytic Turn: An Institutional Account’: “[a]s no era before, the years 1875-1910 produced a huge amount of writing in metaphilosophy … It was rare in this period for a major philosopher not to address the place of philosophy in relation to the special sciences” (Sartwell, ‘The Analytic Turn: An Institutional Account’, 265).

Sartwell argues that analytic philosophy provided an image for philosophy that could dispel the crisis so that when “… the analytic turn was accomplished and as it permeated academic philosophy, metaphilosophical writings slowed to a trickle and took on a much more sanguine tone for perhaps sixty years” (Ibid., 272). The suggestion that the emergence of analytic philosophy’s self-image correlates with an historically and socially conditioned need to assure philosophy’s place within the institution, to assure its intellectual reputation, threatens that very image with the question of sophistry.

The lack of metaphilosophical work, which is often noted as a feature of analytic philosophy, I would argue, is itself a feature of the metaphilosophical discourse of the divide that we are here considering, in that this discourse negotiated the metaphilosophical crisis by converting it from a philosophical crisis into an institutional one. For example, the opposition between the humanities and special sciences, which was felt a threat to the integrity of philosophy as a discipline (which has
It becomes imperative to argue for division – that is, to argue that ‘a philosopher’ who effectively persuades others (others whose politics are questionable) with language that appears (to us) unamenable to criteria (we consider) necessary for reasonable truth-seeking discourse, should be excluded from such discourse, and thus considered to not be a philosopher. They are more appropriately banded together with ‘mystics’ and poets, who, as is often suggested in the divide-literature, are those who, rather than seeking theses or the truth, seek a species of feeling. Mysticism and poetry are removed from philosophy – the pure (philosophy or reason) must be separated from the obscurity of a ‘mixture’, to use Russell’s terminology; in doing so, ‘revelation’, non-explicative intuitive expression, and literary styles that appear to mix the rhetorical with the practice of giving and articulating reasons, are either placed under permanent suspicion or simply barred from any claim to truth. In the latter case they are interpreted as the merely aesthetic or ethical, as the vain expressions of the inarticulate and incommunicable, or as expressions of feeling and sentiment alone. However, excluding such traits and excluding this ‘philosopher’ from philosophical dialogue may be more difficult than Russell anticipates. Let us consider some of the problems that arise in Mysticism and Logic.

In order to uphold the necessity of separation we cannot presume to show the truth or falsity of the sophistic account, for such philosophical criteria, we are in the process of arguing, should not be applied to mysticism (which must in the act of separating be presumed to have no claim to truth, and further, should not even be comprehensible). The argument is not that ‘mystical’ philosophy is ‘bad’ philosophy, but that it is not philosophy at all. Thus, Russell argues that he is not attempting to give an account of the reality or unreality of the mystic’s worldview – of which he says he knows nothing: “I have no wish to deny it, nor even to declare that the insight which reveals it is not a genuine insight”. Effective separation

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217 Ayer also makes this suggestion with regard to Heidegger, writing that Heidegger cannot be called a philosopher, but rather a “… mystic or a poet” (Ayer, ‘The Claims of Philosophy’, 3).

218 ‘Mysticism and Logic’ in Mysticism and Logic, 12
should, in order to preserve the unity of philosophical discourse, reduce ‘mysticism’
to inarticulate feeling such that it is excluded from philosophical discourse.

In the first section of this chapter I argued that it is because the sophist would
undermine philosophical discourse that he must be excluded from it. However, this
raises a problem: how can one justify the exclusion of others by arguing that they are
beyond the limits of philosophical discourse (incomprehensible) when it seems that
only a philosophical discourse could determine such limits?219

Let us look at the problem more closely. We might note that the experience
of obscurity is often thought to be the result of obscurantism on the part of the
author, and that this rightly leads to his exclusion from philosophical discourse.220
We should realize, however, that inferring from the experience of a lack of clarity to
the conclusion that the author was intentionally obscure, or lauds obscurity, is
certainly fallacious. Even if I do make that inference, the exclusion of the text from
philosophy, on that basis, probably violates the very norms that I wish to insist
upon.221

219 This question recalls the old claim that to not philosophise is still to philosophise (or that to call
philosophy in to question, to ask whether one should philosophise, is to have already entered into a
philosophical dialogue), which has often been invoked to argue for the intellectual inevitability,
essentiality, and thus, universal nobility, of philosophy.

220 To take an example, Martha Nussbaum writes of Judith Butler:

Butler gains prestige in the literary world by being a philosopher; many admirers
associate her manner of writing with philosophical profundity. But one should ask
whether it belongs to the philosophical tradition at all, rather than to the closely
related but adversarial traditions of sophistry and rhetoric. Ever since Socrates
distinguished philosophy from what the sophists and the rhetoricians were doing, it
has been a discourse of equals who trade arguments and counter-arguments without
any obscurantist sleight-of-hand. In that way, he claimed, philosophy showed respect
for the soul, while the others’ manipulative methods showed only disrespect. One
afternoon, fatigued by Butler on a long plane trip, I turned to a draft of a student's
dissertation on Hume's views of personal identity … Hume, what a fine, what a
gracious spirit: how kindly he respects the reader's intelligence, even at the cost of
exposing his own uncertainty (Nussbaum, ‘The Professor of Parody’, 203).

Here the experience of a lack of clarity has been taken to indicate intentional obscurity and so provides
a reason to exclude from philosophical practice. Nussbaum also speaks of “… the extremely French
idea that the intellectual does politics by speaking seditiously, and that this is a significant type of
political action” (Ibid., 200). As in Russell the conversion of philosophy into an affective political
discourse is considered a foreign problem, and there is again an appeal to the British tradition (in the
reference to Hume) as a way to counteract this problem, which is also a common theme in Russell’s
work.

221 The question I want to raise is whether we can defend the philosopher’s intolerance on this basis,
or whether the philosopher does not, in making such a judgement, sacrifice the scholarly virtues that
he takes himself to defend. Can we really defend, for instance, Hume’s claim:

When we run over libraries, persuaded by these principles, what havoc must we
make? If we take in our hand any volume of divinity or school metaphysics, for
instance, let us ask, Does it contain any abstract reasoning concerning quantity or number?
The exclusion of the sophist cannot occur on the basis of philosophical argument, but on the basis of the impossibility of argument. But we might ask whether this can really provide a philosophical reason not to engage with a work when the philosopher and his interlocutor have exchanged no reasons. One could answer ‘I am not giving a reason, but withdrawing a commitment to engage in reason-giving’. But it still seems that for the withdrawal to be justified or for it to say something meaningful about these ‘others’ such that I can refer to them with a single name (as a single kind), a reason must be provided.

The potential problems with excluding the sophist may be drawn out with reference to a paper by Charles Pigden entitled ‘Coercive Theories of Meaning or Why Language Shouldn’t Matter (So Much) to Philosophy’. Pigden’s concern is with ‘coercive theories of meaning’; theories of meaning that he associates with logical positivism and considers to still possess broad philosophical influence. These theories are considered coercive, and thus questionable, insofar as they enable us, on the strength of a definition of ‘meaning’, to claim, not the stupidity or insignificance or falsity of another philosopher’s propositions, but their philosophical meaningless such that their rejection need not require refutation or argument. Pigden’s topic is far more particular than ours, however we can borrow his central claim, for our concern is, like his, the exclusion of a philosopher from philosophical dialogue on account of the impossibility of dialogue.

Pigden’s first critique is ethical, arguing that the procedure is anti-liberal; he writes: “… whether the theories are true or not, the tactic is disreputable. It degrades one’s opponents below the status of rational beings and undermines the...

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No, Does it contain any experimental reasoning concerning matter of fact or existence? No.

Commit it then to the flames for it contains nothing but sophistry and illusion (Hume, An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding, 165, emphasis in the original text).

We might ask whether this claim itself concerns logic or number, fact or experimental reasoning concerning fact, and what that might mean for the argument. The question regards the nature and status of the metaphysical. My dear friend Patrick Hutchings once wrote a letter to A. J. Ayer regarding Ayer’s assertion that all propositions are either empirical or tautological. Hutchings asked after the status of Ayer’s assertion, Ayer replied that it was a ‘persuasive proposition’. Hutchings responded ‘Thanks, but I am not persuaded’. It seems that the argument, which aims to exclude rhetoric by narrowing the number of acceptable claims, cannot itself be subject to the limits it proposes, or by its own lights is simply rhetorical and should thus be excluded. We will return to this problem.

222 Pigden is concerned with this argument insofar as it appears in “… some of Hobbes, a fair bit of Locke, half of Berkeley, large chunks of Hume, Russell’s Theory of Types, verificationism in its positivist and Dummettian variants, much of pragmatism and most of Wittgenstein” (Pigden, ‘Coercive Theories of Meaning or Why Language Shouldn’t Matter (So Much) to Philosophy’, 180).
chief liberal arguments for tolerance and liberty”.223 One can here fix upon a political incongruity that applies to the divide: while analytic dialogue was often taken as supporting a liberal politics structured democratically (justifying exclusions for the purpose of maintaining these political virtues), in claiming ‘this group’ or ‘this space’ as the democratic group or space, a space in which all are equal and all have a say, one also says, implicitly, that ‘this group’ or ‘this space’ is not democratic vis-à-vis the externalised spaces. Having identified oneself as a representative of the democratic community, others (whose otherness does not raise the possibility of hospitality but rather constitutes an alternative identity as they who are other-than-us) are identified as the outsiders of the truly democratic group and are then quite easily treated undemocratically, as those to whom one does not owe an ear to listen.

A universal (the ideal of democracy) has been instituted upon an exception (the inclusion of me and the exclusion of the other) where that exception is the very one that preserves the very universality of the claim (‘we shall now, finally, uphold the universality of the democratic ideal’). This is to take the position of a divine judge, a position that is able to exclude itself in its legislation. The claim to be a unique judge is — of course — undemocratic. Because the rule is enforced by means of an exception this gives one reason that theories of meaning, “… have a yen for self-destruction. They often exclude themselves as senseless”.224

The question now is how we can represent the ideal of philosophy, and this is a technical as well as an ethical question. Pigden also argues that coercive theories of meaning must fail as theories of meaning. A theory of meaning, must surely, Pigden writes “…‘save the phenomena’, that is it must entail the factual data that it sets out to explain. Otherwise it is a failure”.225 For the very reason that these theories are coercive they must fail on this account.226

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223 Ibid., 167
224 Ibid., 174. In the previous chapter we noted other examples of the founding of a universal on an exception, such as in the belief that analytic philosophy is that philosophy which holds that norms such as justification and truth are universal. The very introduction of the ‘analytic’ adjective in this regard requires that we withdraw the universality of those norms (and withdraw the right of others to claim those norms for themselves) that we nonetheless use to identify as an analytic philosopher, that is, as that group that holds such norms to be universal.
225 Ibid., 179
226 Pigden writes: “… a coercive theory of meaning cannot fulfill its coercive function unless it fails this test. The whole point of a coercive theory of meaning is to contract the realm of the meaningful, to show that many of the things we considered meaningful are
The same fault occurs within much of the discourse on the divide. The philosopher might think that in providing criteria for philosophical sense, and nonsense, that he succeeds in determining the boundaries of philosophy, but in applying these criteria to exclude the continental philosopher he counts as nonsense or as mere ‘feeling’ what self-claimed ‘continental’ philosophers spend their lives clarifying, discussing, interpreting and studying. We often find the claim that in actual fact what appears as clarifying, discussing, interpreting and studying is actually a set of practices that serve to delude the continental ‘philosopher’ into thinking that he is doing more than espousing mere nonsense (when, of course, this is not the case). To call such work ‘obscure’ it seems that we would need criteria for obscurity and clarity and criteria for their applications. But, the following absurdity might arise: it seems that to apply such criteria, to make the judgement that a work is unclear or nonsense, a judgement of a philosopher’s work and not merely a report on my experience of reading that philosopher’s work, I seem to

meaningless (specifically the statements of our coercive theorist’s opponents). But this means that the theory does not save the phenomena. It does not explain the data that a theory of meaning ought to explain, i.e. our collective intuitions about what makes sense. Which is prima facie evidence that it is false (Ibid., 179).

Justifying my own experience of obscurity or confusion by arguing that a text is obscure and confusing and then concluding that those who seem to understand that text are, in fact, deluding themselves, could be argued to be a form of self-delusion, i.e. I mask my own confusion by my indignation. Bruce Fink attempts to foreground this with a joke:

The reaction in the United States to an author like Lacan is:
1. If I can’t figure him out myself, then he’s not worth thinking about.
2. If he can’t express himself clearly, then it must be muddled thinking.
3. I never thought much of French ‘theory’ anyway.

Which is reminiscent of the threefold denial concocted by the man accused by his neighbour of having returned a kettle in damaged condition:
1. I returned it undamaged.
2. The kettle had a hole in it when I borrowed it.
3. I never borrowed the kettle in the first place (Fink, The Lacanian Subject, 151).

However, even when criteria for clarity are given in abstraction from particular examples and without recourse to authorial intentions we encounter problems. Take for example Gerald A. Cohen’s attempt to adapt Harry Frankfurt’s work on bullshit, to academic bullshit. Despite what he calls the “…semantic-promiscuity …” of ‘bullshit’, Cohen gives criteria, such as a lack of clarity. However, when it comes to defining a lack of clarity, Cohen merely says “[s]omething is unclarifiable if and only if it cannot be made clear, but I shall not try to say what ‘clear’ means in this essay. (I’m inclined to think it’s impossible to do so, in an illuminating way)” (Cohen, ‘Deeper into Bullshit’, 333). Clarity itself appears unclarifiable. Other features of ‘academic bullshit’ include lack of an appropriate connection with truth, arguments that are deficient in logic or empirical evidence, and ‘irretrievably speculative comment’. Of the last he gives an example from David Miller: “Of course, everyone spends much more time thinking about sex now than people did a hundred years ago” (Miller, cited in Cohen, ‘Deeper into Bullshit’, 333). In the very next sentence, Cohen turns to speculate regarding “… why so much of that particular kind of bullshit is produced in France,” which is surely an example of an irretrievably speculative comment (Cohen, ‘Deeper into Bullshit’, 333).
need to understand that work. But if I admit to understanding that work I can no longer call it ‘unclear’ or incommunicable, for I have clarified it and brought it into philosophical discourse.

In refusing the obligation to clarify and understand I act as a divine judge: as one whom need not enter into dialogue in order to make a judgement that would require such dialogue in order to justify it. We might note that this problematic arises in the expulsion of the poets in the Republic. In the Republic, philosophy makes a gift of justice to the city and “[a] concern for justice, as well as for the preservation of philosophy, leads Plato to camouflage the hybristic nature of philosophy; one result of this is that he also camouflages the defect of what we might want to call a rage for justice.” The philosopher camouflages his rage by appealing to the ‘mathematical’ and impersonal. The expulsion of the poets is as much an expression of this rage as it is a reinforcement of the camouflage; what is disguised is that “… the attempt to achieve perfect justice is an act of hybris; like the desire for perfect wisdom, it expresses man’s wish to become a god”. We need justice because we are not gods; all justice must be imperfect, for justice as justice per se is an ideal.

Rosen, ‘The Role of Eros in Plato’s Republic’, 460
Rosen writes:

Mathematics is a general and thus anonymous enterprise; in this sense it is public rather than private… the method of mathematics is entirely impersonal, and in this sense it imitates the principle of justice, which allots to each exactly what he deserves independently of any ‘personal’ considerations. The ‘blindness’ of justice, its disinterestedness, its appeal to universal rules, all refer to an abstraction from particulars, from that which cannot be expressed in general formulas (Ibid., 467).

Rosen writes that the “… study of mathematics does not teach us about human nature, but turns our attention away from the human to the divine. It is poetry, suppressed if not expelled from the just city, which comes closest to the philosophical study of the various forms which human nature may assume” (Ibid., 467). And we might note that in his political biography of Russell (Ironside, The Social and Political Thought of Bertrand Russell: The Development of an Aristocratic Liberalism), Philip Ironside points out that, in Akehurst’s words:

… it was the most empiricist and positivist aspects of Russell’s thought that brought him closest to fascist ideas. His scientism contributed to his racism and was a crucial plank of his belief in eugenics. In contrast it was the romanticism that he shared with J. S. Mill, and which he castigated in others as a source of fascism, that gave rise to his humanism (Akehurst, The Cultural Politics of Analytic Philosophy: Britishness and the Spectre of Europe, 168).

Rosen, ‘The Role of Eros in Plato’s Republic’, 459

We might say that it is the poetic, and literary, tendencies which reveal the ideal status of justice, by revealing the various ways in which people aspire to, and yet betray, justice through their very own hybris. Interestingly, Pigden begins ‘Coercive Theories of Meaning or Why Language Shouldn’t Matter (So Much) to Philosophy’ by contrasting a passage from Neurath on with a citation from Orwell’s 1984 on newspeak. It is literature, Orwell’s 1984, that reveals something about the
Philosophy may also be such an ideal. Socrates warned that if philosophy is ‘divine’ and ‘hidden’ (signs perhaps of ‘ideality’), then one might have to be a god in order to recognise a philosopher. In the attempt to embody the divine philosopher perhaps we are revealed in the likeness of the sophist or the poet, in that we merely produce images of philosophy. Perhaps we betray a similar ‘rage’ by claiming that we embody that ideal and can, on this basis, withdraw our commitment to act according to that ideal in communication with others (a commitment that Socrates refers to as hospitality). To disguise this one can only insist upon one’s own ‘divine insight’, that is, one’s own neutrality (absenting oneself from the implication of one’s own judgments) in limning the boundaries of philosophy. However, for this reason, to another (a stranger) the philosopher is indistinguishable from the sophist. We will return, continually, to this problem. One symptom of this problematic is that the representations of the philosopher and sophist become interchangeable.

We can see ‘analytic’ and ‘continental’ philosophy as categories that divide legitimate philosophy from ‘philosophy’ inspired by and aimed at eros and politics. However, the expulsion of the erotic and political from philosophy may itself be ‘erotic’ and ‘political’. We might note that philosophy’s relationship to eros and politics is manifest in the metaphilosophical task itself, which, as I said, is normative and thus aims to produce conviction (a common binding). If metaphilosophy is normative, it resembles ethical arguments for virtue, in that a metaphilosophical account should explain what compels us, and it should compel us to agree. Here, the philosopher does not merely describe what conditions hold for making philosophy what it is; but in doing this, the task of measuring the success of a metaphilosophical account involves an evaluation of its capacity to persuade us that the philosophical life is inherently valuable, for in achieving its task it must uphold and exemplify the virtues inherent within the very giving of an account, or of making-explicit (i.e. in persuading us that philosophy is what it is, we must be persuaded that in doing so, he who persuades us, is the philosopher, or that he...

*‘mathematical’; it reveals that the judgement of obscurantism is not without a whole set of erotics. Despite the ‘mathematical’ disguise, there is what might be described as an erotic joy in dismissing entire fields of knowledge as ‘nonsense’, and we know from Freud that repression can be an inverse eroticism. Recall also the erotic nature of the language by which the continental is imagined — metaphors of seduction and spell-casting, of the dark and impassioned, the sensual yet ultimately impotent.*
rightfully exemplifies, in the act, the veracity of that which is explicitly claimed). Ergo, metaphilosophy involves an essential and justified form of persuasion, persuasion as self-validating through self-consistency.

In the context of The Sophist one might answer that philosophical hunting or diaerésis as the revelation of kinds does not involve persuasion or the erotic. However Theaetetus had to be convinced to adopt diaerésis in the first place. How do you argue that someone should take philosophical argument seriously? Surely that argument cannot be of the same kind as the one that it promotes. The argument for the disinterested search for reason cannot itself be disinterested. One cannot produce an argument for following the rules of argument, and expect the other to follow those rules before he has agreed to do so. One has first to ‘persuade’ the other to adopt norms of argument by holding, in the beginning, that he should follow those norms of argument. The student’s first education is one in desire. This is to say that we can look on the erotic as a condition for philosophy (in that one must first have faith in reason to take the results of reason seriously). 233

The affinity between the philosopher’s method and sophistry is visible in their shared promise to provide an education in virtue. The first diaerésis concludes with this promise. The Stranger is now to begin another diaerésis in order to distinguish

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233 Socrates aims to inspire the love of wisdom, but this is not the same as being wise; in an often-quoted passage from the Symposium he says that he “… would claim to know nothing except the things of love” (Plato, Symposium, 177d). There is an erotic relationship to the truth. The erotic relation to truth relates to Socrates’ forewarnings in The Sophist. There, metaphilosophy was first and foremost love or desire for wisdom (expressed as hospitality), such that it would be a seeking after that wisdom in the other. The problem that arose was that there may not be a moment at which Eros is satiated or wisdom is achieved; metaphilosophy would then appear as a perpetual striving or hunger.

In Dreams of a Spirit-Seer: Illustrated by Dreams of Metaphysics (henceforth Dreams of a Spirit-Seer) Kant will confess his love for metaphysics: “Metaphysics, with which it is my fate to be in love, although only rarely can I boast of any favours from her …” (Kant, Dreams of a Spirit-Seer, 112). The image is consistent with imagining metaphysics as a deceitful seductress and recalls the impassioned language of the divide. Yet this ‘love’ for metaphysics is also a condition for faith. For example, Kant closes the Critique of Pure Reason with the following:

We can therefore be sure that however cold or contemptuously critical may be the attitude of those who judge a science not by its nature but by its accidental effects, we shall always return to metaphysics as to a beloved one with whom we have had a quarrel. For here we are concerned with essential ends — ends with which metaphysics must ceaselessly occupy itself, either in striving for genuine insight into them, or in refuting those who profess already to have attained it (Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, A850/B878).
the differences between philosophical and sophistical education. We will also look to Russell’s account of two competing kinds of education in *Mysticism and Logic*.234

**Sophistry as Mercantile Traffic in Spiritual Wares**

The Stranger leaves behind the erotic element of gift giving, or of coercion, as they begin a second *diaerésis* at *The Sophist*, 223c that looks on sophistic education in the context of commerce. The second and third *diaeréses* follow the branch of acquisition, but instead of going down the path of hunting, exchange is considered. The Stranger considers sophistry as salesmanship, more specifically, the importing into a city of another’s products. The sophist’s merchandise is for the soul, not the body; sophistry is a ‘spiritual mercantile traffic’ in things that can be learnt, it is defined as trade in virtue.235 A third *diaerésis* is introduced merely to include the possibility excluded in the second – selling within the city one’s own products.236

In the dialogue sophistry communicates across cities, or belongs to the *polis*; it is cosmopolitan, and this reflects its interest in culture and ‘sophistication’. Likewise, another feature of the common idea of ‘continental philosophy’ is that it provides an education in culture by ‘importing’ foreign philosophies. Might this be a way to differentiate, and separate, analytic from continental philosophy? We might then make a distinction between two types of education.

Russell draws a distinction between a classical education and a scientific one in ‘The Place of Science in a Liberal Education’ in *Mysticism and Logic*, where he defines education as: “… the formation, by means of instruction, of certain mental habits and a certain outlook on life and the world”.237 He also considers the defects of a classical education in this regard; he draws on two features of a classical education to argue to this end: a classical education involves “… a too exclusive emphasis on the

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234 Russell’s general separation of features, such as the literary from the scientific, or the ethical from the disinterested, also creates the conditions for a defence of continental philosophy as education in virtue.

235 Plato, *The Sophist*, 224b

236 Ibid., 224d. We might note that the continuing irony of these *diaeréses*: the new accounts may be considered inclusive of the Stranger, who has presently come to Athens to give these accounts, accounts he tells us he learnt in Elea and is simply repeating (like the reproduction of a product), accounts he recites in the hope of educating others (thus verifying his claim to be able to educate — and thus sell the act of educating?).

237 Russell, ‘The Place of Science in a Liberal Education’ in *Mysticism and Logic*, 37
past …”, and “… a Calvinistic horror of the ‘natural man’”. Russell argues that these traits have meant “… the endeavour to teach virtue has led to the production of stunted and contorted hypocrites instead of full-grown human beings”.

Russell argues that the scientific worldview is a better guarantee of truth. However, as we know, the sophist denies the veracity of the philosophical notion of truth. In response, Russell might argue, as he does in *Mysticism and Logic*, that the adoption of ‘truth’ as an end may manifest other virtues. Russell considers the virtues of a scientific education, which in its disinterestedness promotes respect for facts; he also argues that what is desired from a classical education is better delivered by a scientific one, and he focuses in particular on the temper of mind that may be cultivated. Humility, it is argued, is cultivated in the endeavour to treat man as a natural phenomenon; hope is fostered in the focus upon the future. Moreover, in the domain of scientific education “… artistic creation …” is not excluded, for “… one can find in scientific systems a satisfaction more massive than any epic poem”. And the scientific education completes “[t]he desire for a larger life and wider interests, for an escape from private circumstances, and even from the whole recurring human cycle of birth and death”. Russell concludes that “[a] life devoted to science is therefore a happy life, and its happiness is derived from the very best sources that are open to dwellers on this troubled and passionate planet”. Russell refers to external measures to argue for the worth of a scientific education.

We can reintroduce the concern raised in the previous section that one cannot argue for disinterest disinterestedly, and so we cannot on the basis of the argument for disinterest differentiate philosophy from sophistry. If it were the case that we could only show within the limits that we adopt the rationality of our procedure, then the adoption and defence of those limits would still be interpreted as a form of faith, and the acceptance of those limits would appear as a leap of faith to those who do not adopt them, such that endorsements (suggestions that one should adopt them)

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238 Ibid., 35 and 38. There is continuity with critiques of sophistry: the sophist is traditionally thought to undermine access to *phusis* (the natural) and to argue that we are only left with *nomoi* (laws and norms). The sophist enters into the currency of discourse in the *polis* to promote certain ways of behaving or beliefs relative to others or to import laws and norms from other cities.

239 Ibid., 38

240 Ibid., 45

241 Ibid., 45

242 Ibid., 45

243 Ibid., 45
appear, at best, spurious, and, at worst, coercive. To solve this problem, it might be thought that, rather than promote philosophy on the basis of faith, we can show that adopting the philosophical worldview is more ‘convincing’ or more ‘useful’.

Robert Pippin argues that one way of dealing with the demand to provide a rational account of the limits one seeks to establish is to argue that adopting an account of philosophy involves adopting norms of practice that are preferable or useful. Our faith in philosophy might then be justified by showing that philosophy is fruitful or expeditious, or successful in achieving result, such that it may compete with sophistry on the basis of these results. Pippin notes two such defences. He says that one could:

1. … justify the limits within which one speaks just by pointing to the success achieved by adopting those limits, and by pointing to the disaster courted by overstepping them…
2. Finally, one could claim not to have “discovered” limits in any sense, either by “saying” what they are with a transcendental deduction, or showing that they are the limits of ordinary language by doing analysis. One could simply propose limits, or recommend that we adopt an ideal language which can demonstrably eliminate all philosophical difficulties, and still permit us to say everything else we need to say.

This allows the philosopher to:

…just “do” philosophy in a certain way, and judge our labor by its results alone. General defenses of this method (e.g. “linguistic analysis”) turn out usually to be ad hoc, and just criticisms and challenges to other methodologies (often accompanied by a profession “not to be able to understand” what any other resolution of philosophic problems would be like). Thus these criticisms usually take the form of explaining why a problem mistakenly arises in philosophy, rather than directly “solving” it.

Pippin’s argument is that such pragmatic and non-theoretical justifications can be said to be neither comprehensive nor complete. For our purposes, we might point to the residual irony that it is the sophist who traditionally justifies his activity by its utility or by the political affects it may achieve. It is the sophist who claims that we cannot give a philosophical account of philosophical account-giving and can only judge it by extraneous standards. The sophists are supposed to be those concerned not with the proper reasons, the true reasons, but with what reasons work (convince or ‘sell’). The ‘end’ of philosophy becomes ‘goods’ such as wealth.

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244 Pippin, ‘Critical Methodology and Comprehensiveness in Philosophy’, 201
245 Ibid., 203
and reputation. The sophist’s claim to the utility of sophistry is also a claim that the true is equivalent to the useful. This, of course, would threaten philosophical discourse even when it is precisely this kind of claim (that the true is useful, or that the pure pursuit of the truth is useful) that one is tempted towards whenever ‘philosophy’ is questioned in public, or its educational role within the university is questioned.

Russell cannot ‘sell’ a scientific education, as he has been doing, by arguing that it completes the aims of a classical education, for it is the very indifference to such aims that, according to Russell, makes a scientific education (rather ironically) better suited to fulfilling them. But the article sees Russell adopt just such aims to argue for a scientific education, and in so doing he risks the very basis upon which he argues for its superiority. He began the article by arguing that the general opinion that “… a literary education is superior to one based on science …” leads to “… the intrinsically valuable aspects of science … to be sacrificed to the merely useful”. Russell argues that under the sway of such an opinion the scientific disciplines can defend themselves only by claiming to be useful for extraneous ends. The central irony of the article is that Russell does adopt criteria of use and edification and in the process risks sacrificing what is, according to him, inherently valuable in science: disinterest in such ends. And this leads directly to the threats of sophistry – the threat that the scientific discourse is merely one among many, that the adoption of norms of ‘truth’ is motivated by and is, in the end, reducible to its potential utilization for extraneous ends.

We might note another peculiarity of the metaphilosophical task: any trait that one argues for must be considered distinct from the ideal of philosophy for reasons already considered, but if this is true, then that trait is open to reinterpretation so that it could always be argued that, for example, disinterest is merely another type of interest. If the sophist might always interpret diaerésis (or representation) as itself sophistical it seems that we will always need further diaeréses to support any given diaeréses of the sophist, and it is not clear what is required to stop the potential regress. We might take another route and seek to differentiate this sophistical questioning from proper philosophical discourse. I want to think about this option.
alongside the Stranger’s fourth definition: the Stranger turns now to eristic to
distinguish sophistical from philosophical discourse at The Sophist, 225a.

Sophistry as Eristic Conflict

After the second and third diaeréses, which removed the erotic nature of the first, we
now turn to warlike rivalry with the forth diaerésis. They begin by subdividing
‘contention’, which can either take the form of competition or combat. Combat is
understood as conflict by argument (in contrast to physical conflict). The Stranger
distinguishes between litigation (long discourse before a public audience) and
disputation as the “… customary name for it when pursued in private and broken up into
the small change [exchange] of question and answer.” If it is managed “… by rules of
art …” it is eristic, which may be for waste or for profit. If for waste, we are left
with ‘youthful chatter’ or quibbling; if for profit, we are brought to the sophist. The
summary given is as follows: “… the sophist is the profit-making type of professional of
the art of eristic; eristic being a form of controversy, controversy of disputation, disputation of
combat, combat of conflict, and conflict of acquisition.”

Here the Stranger approves of public discourse, rather than private and
controversy-seeking discourse. If ‘the sophist’ were to interject that even public
discourse may be interested (political, personal and sophistical) we might now claim
that by speaking at this meta-meta level the sophist becomes a mere eristic, who is
interpreted as a practitioner of private and ironic discourse that is not itself
evaluable, but serves to merely promote controversy (and make profit). In contrast,
philosophical discourse, one might hold, is not in need of a meta-meta defence, for it
is publicly accessible and evaluable.

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247 Plato, The Sophist, 225a
248 Ibid., 225b
249 Ibid., 226a
250 Recall that in the previous chapter the Stranger expressed his preference for monologues that
occur in public; he didn’t care for the particularity of his student, or for existential matters, but
embarred upon a discourse that would be accessible to anyone with sufficient stamina. Moreover,
this discourse was primarily for the bystanders’ (or the public’s) benefit. We can now note that these
early methodological choices were introduced, at least in part, to distinguish the Stranger from the
sophist.

The Stranger’s indifference to Theactetus is no doubt to be compared with Socrates’ interest
in Athenian youth – an interest that will have him indicted for his corrupting influence. In the
dialogue Theactetus, Socrates had gone to Theodorus seeking an Athenian youth, prefacing this request
with an expression of his lack of interest in other nationalities. He sought a gifted student of
geometry and had been offered Theactetus. The Stranger, as we know from The Statesman, is not
emphasis upon analytic discourse as publicly accessible and evaluable, and this has us presume that in actuality the analytic discourse coheres with the virtues that it is represented as having.

We might refer to contemporary adjectival uses of ‘analytic’ in various fields, from theology, to feminism and aesthetics. To take a few examples, in Analytic Theology: New Essays in the Philosophy of Theology, the editors, Oliver Crisp and Michael Rea, justify the adjectival use of ‘analytic’ by suggesting that its use relates their study to the virtues we associate with analytic philosophy generally: “… like analytic philosophy, analytic theology will prize intellectual virtues like clarity, parsimony of expression, and argumentative rigour”.

We can also look to Analytical Marxism. In Gerald Cohen’s study of Marx he declares that he borrows analytic techniques, and that “[t]he techniques in question are commonly styled ‘analytical’, in a broad sense, because their use requires and facilitates precision of statement on the one hand and rigour of argument on the other”. In Analyzing Marxism, Robert Ware and Kai Neilson write: “[c]ontemporary ‘analytical’ philosophy … emphasize[s] conceptual interpretation and exegesis. Emphasis on the details of implications and arguments is also distinctive”. We are told, “[i]t is difficult to find any contemporary method of analysis used in philosophy. At most there is a concern with details of meaning and of conceptual and logical implications”. There is no distinctive method of analytic philosophy; adjectival use

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251 Crisp and Rea, ‘On Analytic Theology’ in Analytic Theology: New Essays in the Philosophy of Theology, 37–38
252 Cohen, Karl Marx’s Theory of History: A Defence, xviii. Cohen also opposes this detailed thinking to holistic and dialectical thinking when he writes: I shall not try to define ‘Marxism’. As for ‘analytical’, it has two relevant, and relevantly different, senses in the present context, a broad sense and a narrow one. All analytical Marxism is analytical in the broad sense, and much is analytical in the narrow sense. In each sense of ‘analytical’, to be analytical is to be opposed to a form of thinking traditionally thought integral to Marxism: analytical thinking, in the broad sense of ‘analytical’, is opposed to so-called ‘dialectical’ thinking, and analytical thinking, in the narrow sense of ‘analytical’, is opposed to what might be called ‘holistic’ thinking. The fateful operation that created analytical Marxism was the rejection of the claim that Marxism possesses valuable intellectual methods of its own. Rejection of that claim enabled an appropriation of a rich mainstream methodology that Marxism, to its detriment, had shunned (Ibid., xviii).
253 Ware and Neilson, Analyzing Marxism, 4
254 Ibid., 4
is adopted because ‘analytic’ stands for very broad philosophical virtues such as emphasis on argument, clarification of problems, and ‘conceptual interpretation’.

But insofar as one adopts these norms does one not consider that they should be characteristic of philosophy per se? Should it not be the case that such norms characterise ‘good’ philosophy so that the adjective is unnecessary? It must be the case that it is believed that there are other persons claiming to be philosophers who do not seek these virtues, against which the analytic adjective is introduced to differentiate oneself. The first president of the Society for Analytical Feminism, Ann Cudd, defends the ‘analytic’ adjective in the following way:

Analytic feminism holds that the best way to counter sexism and androcentrism is through forming a clear conception of and pursuing truth, logical consistency, objectivity, rationality, justice, and the good while recognizing that these notions have often been perverted by androcentrism throughout the history of philosophy … While postmodern feminism rejects the universality of truth, justice and objectivity and the univocality of “women”, analytic feminism defends these notions.  

Use of the ‘analytic’ adjective differentiates one from controversy-seeking, metaphilosophical discourse that would call into question the very norms by which analyses must and should proceed. The continental philosopher is seen as a metaphilosophical sceptic; Engel characterises the continental philosopher in this way when he asks:

… could there be some other kind of skeptic, which would not bear on the truth and justification or our ordinary beliefs, but on the very cognitive norms by which we assess them (and which we could call a meta-skeptic)? Obviously there are such meta-skeptics. In fact most of what I have called CP [continental philosophy] in the narrow sense illustrates this form of skepticism … what they have in common is the rejection of the idea that there are genuine cognitive norms, which could in some sense regulate our philosophical discourse. Similar claims are put forward, in a somewhat different form, by Rorty’s “neo-pragmatism”, when he proposes the replacement of the ideal of “objectivity” by that of “solidarity”.  

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255 Cudd, ‘Analytic Feminism’, 20-21
For instance a number of French Nietzschean post-structuralists, such as Foucault or Deleuze, not only deny that there is any such thing as the truth or the justification of our beliefs, and espouse some form of relativism or perspectivism, but also explicitly reject the idea that truth and justification could be norms. This does not mean that they do not believe in other kinds of norms, such as for instance “creativity”, “desire” or “life”… (Ibid., 228).
Engel’s metaphilosophical sceptic is, drawing on his own connection, like Rorty’s ‘ironist’ in that he is said to recognise that “… anything can be made to look good or bad by being redescribed” and, on this basis he renounces “… the attempt to formulate criteria of choice between their final vocabularies”.\(^{257}\) Likewise, the sophist can always reply to the philosopher’s justifications by redescribing them and showing that they could also be rhetorical, metaphorical images: for example, the sophist would claim that the philosopher cannot maintain the distinction between truth (purged of the political) and falsehood (which is thought essentially political), because this distinction might also be ‘political’.

I have explained why I think it is that a ‘philosopher’ who proceeds in this manner cannot be included in philosophical discourse. Like the sophist, this ‘philosopher’ now exploits philosophy’s relationship to itself by speaking a metaphilosophical discourse that would reduce philosophy to eristic and frustrate dialogue. Because we may never arrive at noncontroversial norms by which dialogue can proceed, philosophy would fall into eristic combat.\(^{258}\)

However, even if metaphilosophical discourse is interpreted as promoting controversy-seeking eristic and thus sophistry, we cannot, on the basis of the use of

\(^{257}\) Rorty, *Contingency Irony and Solidarity*, 73. Rorty defines the ironist (he believes that the ironist tradition begun with Hegel) as follows:

I shall define an ‘ironist’ as someone who fulfils three conditions: (1) She has radical and continuing doubts about the final vocabulary she currently uses, because she has been impressed by other vocabularies, vocabularies taken as final by people or books she has encountered; (2) she realizes that argument phrased in her present vocabulary can neither underwrite nor dissolve these doubts; (3) insofar as she philosophizes about her situation, she does not think that her vocabulary is closer to reality than others, that it is in touch with a power not herself. Ironists who are inclined to philosophize see the choice between vocabularies as made neither within a neutral and universal metavocabulary nor by an attempt to fight one’s way past appearances to the real, but simply by playing the new off against the old. I call people of this sort ‘ironists’ because of their realization that anything can be made to look good or bad by being redescribed, and their renunciation of the attempt to formulate criteria of choice between their final vocabularies (Ibid, 73).

\(^{258}\) Michael Rosen writes that we can only meet such a sceptic with silence:

How do you argue with people for whom ‘reason’ and argument’ (like ‘sameness’ and ‘identity’) are simply terms in a ‘hegemonic discourse’ they have left behind? … they are obviously past being laughed back into sanity by a sense of the absurd. So I think that all the rest of us can do is to keep out of their way and leave them to patronize one another to their hearts’ content (Rosen, ‘Reply’, this is quoted from a comment that Rosen posted in November, 2010 on *Leiter Reports: A Philosophy Blog* in response to a review of Simon Skempton’s *Alienation After Derrida*. His comment can be found by following the URL: http://leiterreports.typepad.com/blog/2010/11/it-is-no-secret-that-contemporary-philosophy-is-under-the-spell-of-the-other.html#tp).
metaphilosophy, exclude the sophist, for this would mean also excluding metaphilosophy, and so excluding the discourse that arrived at the account. Since metaphilosophy must be acknowledged as a genuine philosophical possibility (such that we are able to draw a distinction between philosophy and sophistry) we must distinguish philosophical metaphilosophy from eristic. We need a diagnostic method by which we can distinguish the difference. I want to adopt, to this end, Russell’s characterisations of the scientific against the mystical motives.

Russell begins the essay ‘Mysticism and Logic’ in Mysticism and Logic by providing examples of the mystical and scientific tendencies in a survey of the history of philosophy, in which he notes one or other tendency at work in philosophical writings. The refusal to regard ethical or aesthetic categories is the essence of the scientific spirit. Russell gives the following example of this impulse in Plato:

There are passages in Plato … which illustrate the scientific side of his mind … The most noteworthy is the one in which Socrates, as a young man, is explaining the theory of ideas to Parmenides. After Socrates has explained that there is an idea of the good, but not of such things as hair and mud and dirt, Parmenides advises him ‘not to despise even the meanest things,’ and this advice shows the genuine scientific temper.

Russell might also have referred to the section of The Sophist, which we are to consider next (beginning 226a); here the Stranger seeks to divide sophistic metaphilosophy (the eristic art) from philosophical division.

Meta-Diaerésis: Division of Division

The Stranger professes that their quarry, the sophist, is “… a beast of manifold devices”; he has even insinuated himself into their own method. They must now divide division itself if they are to differentiate philosophers from sophists. The sophists practice a form of division that we commonly speak of as ‘purification’. To elucidate ‘purification’, the Stranger takes examples from the work of domestic servants – sifting, riddling, straining etc. Theaetetus calls these names ‘ridiculous’

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259 Russell, ‘Science and Culture’ in Mysticism and Logic, 42
260 Russell, ‘Mysticism and Logic’ in Mysticism and Logic, 7. However, there is an obvious problem with claiming Plato as a mystical or logical philosopher, since examples of either tendency in his dialogues would be examples only of these tendencies as portrayed by different characters, through which Plato might be commenting on the mystical and the logical or the relation between the two.
261 Plato, The Sophist, 226a
262 Ibid., 226d
263 Ibid., 226b
and is reprimanded by the Stranger: “… to the spirit of rational enquiry, the process of sponging is just as interesting as that of drugging.” 264 He advises:

The object of such a spirit in its efforts to discover affinity and the lack of it throughout the range of the arts is understanding … it treats all with a like respect. Where it can find an analogy, it regards neither term of it as more ridiculous than the other; if a man prefers strategy to vermin-killing as an example of the chase, it esteems his illustration not the more dignified of the two, but, as a rule, the more pretentious. 265

We are told to make no distinction between ridiculous and dignified (or pretentious) analogies. They are not separating better from worse, as one would do when ‘purifying’, but by kind, and so they must treat “… all with a like respect”. 266 There are two types of separation: the sophistic separation of better from worse and separation of like from like. The latter, the Stranger says, has no name, though presumably diaerésis would be an appropriate name.

Russell makes a similar distinction: between a mystical (and hence ethical) philosophy, which would distinguish between oughts or virtues and vices and a scientific philosophy, which would only distinguish between differences in kind and fact. 267 We might also consider other aspects of the Stranger’s diaerésis that feature in analytic discourse, such as the injunction to be easy with analogies, or to be common with language. Note the use of popular culture in stock examples and analytic thought experiments, science fiction films and examples common to everyday life feature over ‘high literature’. This is consistent with the refusal to admit the distinction between the noble and the base.

While the Stranger sources his metaphors from domestic servants, the analytic philosopher appeals to the manual labourer and gardener. 268 Hare sees a resemblance between the analytic philosopher and the plumber. 269 Russell appeals to the ‘common British man’ to represent the virtues of analytic philosophy. 270

264 Ibid., 227a. Note that within days Socrates will be sentenced to death through poison and that drugging is considered as light-heartedly as bathing.
265 Ibid., 227b
266 Ibid., 227b
267 See ‘Mysticism and Logic’ in Mysticism and Logic, 7. Russell calls the mystical outlook ‘ethical’ (Ibid., 27). He also argues that “[t]he opposition between a philosophy guided by scientific method and a philosophy dominated by religious and ethical ideas may be illustrated by … the notion of good and evil” (Russell, ‘On Scientific Method in Philosophy’ in Mysticism and Logic, 98).
268 See Ayer, ‘The Claims of Philosophy’, 6
269 Hare, ‘Moral Philosophy’ in Men of Ideas, 154
270 The connection drawn between common-sense and British sensibility results in occasional absurdities: Ryle reports a conversation with Russell, in which Russell proclaimed that: “[n]o one ever
Russell writes that “[t]he British are distinguished among the nations of modern Europe, on the one hand by the excellence of their philosophers and on the other hand by their contempt for philosophy. In both respects they show their wisdom”.

The analytic should share this scepticism with regard to immoderate, high-sounding and pretentious philosophies and adhere to the limits placed by common sense. Ernest Gellner tells us that the appeal of this metaphor of the common man lies in the:

… image it gives the philosopher of himself. He can see himself as a man modestly and competently doing a solid, limited piece of work, quite unlike the nebulous, melodramatic, world- or outlook-changing and over-pretentious claims of his … predecessor. A fine picture this, a kind of philosophical cross on the bluff, straight-from-the-shoulder man and of the stereotype of the natural scientist who does one manageable job at a time, and it is well done when completed.

The honest work of the analytic is often contrasted to the pretentious position of authority that the continental philosopher is made to assume. Ayer contrasts the pontiff and the journeyman (tradesman). Heidegger exemplifies the former (high-sounding and meaningless), and Locke the latter. We find it a common opinion that continental philosophy is authoritarian in structure. Readers of Kant had Common Sense before John Locke – and no-one but Englishmen have ever had it since” (Russell, cited in Ryle, ‘John Locke’, 4).

271 Russell, ‘Philosophy and Politics’, 1. Elsewhere he writes that Englishmen display “… once and for all, a love of compromise and moderation and a fear of pushing any theory to its logical conclusion, which has dominated them down to the present time” (Russell, History of Western Philosophy, 548).

272 Gellner, ‘Contemporary Thought and Politics’, 49

273 Quinton also tells us that the English Channel divides “… orderly bureaucrats of the intellect …” from the “… passionately prophetic …” (Quinton, ‘Wittgenstein’, 4).

274 Ayer, ‘The Claims of Philosophy’ in The Meaning of Life and Other Essays, 2. In the article Ayer appeals to a British tradition of modesty, quoting Locke: “… it is ambition enough to be employed as an under-labourer in clearing the ground a little, and removing some of the rubbish that lies in the way of knowledge” (Ibid., 6). In an English context, ‘pontiff’ also invokes four centuries of anti-Catholicism, wars with France, Jesuit intrigue, lands plagued by tyranny and revolution, i.e. nations of ‘excitable’ foreigners who, lacking the sensible compromise of Anglicanism, also lack the sensible compromise of ‘our’ parliamentary institutions.

275 This is a feature of Rorty’s definition of continental philosophy as concerned with common names rather than problems (see Critchley, Continental Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction, 55). It also extends to the institutional account that Rorty gives. By the end of the First World War in America, Rorty tells us that the organisation of the discipline by patronage (which is still often the preferred organization on the continent) was replaced with a ‘professional’ structure. Max Weber in ‘Science as a Vocation’ compares the American and German university to anticipate the effects of professionalization. He tells us that the assistant in an American University is paid, but expected to teach, and he is later rewarded with time to research. The Privatdozenten in the German university is given a pittance and ‘he teaches fewer courses than he would wish’; he is expected to research, teaching is a reward. Because the American is paid more he is expected to work, to take over the
are also his ‘supporters’: they are not, for Russell, in a position to know Kant better, but are enthusiasts; blinded, not enlightened, by proximity. It is only out of allegiance, he says, that enthusiasts hold that those who disagree with Kant have misunderstood Kant.276 One is not a scholar of Hegel, one is said to be a devotee or disciple.277 Simon Blackburn speaks of Heidegger’s ‘believers’.278 The connotation is that the bonds that are imagined to ‘hold’ the continental tradition together are bonds not of a research group as we find in analytic philosophy, but bonds of allegiance.279 For Russell, this is a characteristic of mysticism, its “… absence of indignation or protest, acceptance with joy”.280 Continental philosophy is seen as esoteric and mystagogic.

The archetypes of the pretentious priest and the common worker are related to one of Russell’s ways of discriminating the scientific distinction between kinds from the mystical-poetic distinction between better and worse. The former shows respect for the common life, which it aims to observe without ethical judgement. For the latter, Russell borrows the term ‘malicious’ from George Santayana (which was used in connection to Kant), writing that the mystical logic will display hatred for teaching duties of professors (Weber, ‘Science as a Vocation’, 1). According to both Rorty and Weber, professionalisation does not remove the ‘political’ elements involved in patronage. The story of the modern Anglo-Saxon university that Rorty tells is one of “… academic politics … of struggles between kinds of professors” (Rorty, Consequences of Pragmatism, 228). This leaves “… the topics and authors which fall under the care of philosophy departments to form a largely accidental and quite temporary hodgepodge – determined mostly by the accidents of power struggles within universities and by current fashions” (Ibid., 30).

276 Russell writes “[t]hose who disagree with him [Kant] are held by his supporters to have misunderstood him…” (Russell, An Outline of Philosophy, 273). Writing on Bradley, Russell begins with the disclaimer “[i]f I may be allowed to set forth his argument in popular language which his followers might resent” (Ibid., 276).

277 Ayer speaks of Hegel as “… the arch pontiff of the nineteenth century …” and Heidegger as “… the high priest of the modern school of existentialism, and the leading pontiff of our time” (Ayer, The Claims of Philosophy in The Meaning of Life and Other Essays, 2).

278 Only as a believer does one hold Heidegger to be an “… unparalleled modern thinker”, Heidegger developed “… himself neither as a philosopher nor a poet, but as an oracle”. These quotations are from Blackburn’s untitled and unpublished review of Heidegger’s Contributions to Philosophy, which can be found by following the URL:

http://www.phil.cam.ac.uk/~oswb24/reviews/Heidegger.htm

279 We might note that the account of continental philosophy as authoritarian is still common. On a blog devoted to naming and shaming continental philosophers a video features Timothy Williamson, who in an interview in Lima in May 2009 is asked why he became an analytic philosopher. He tells of an encounter with a group of ‘authoritarian’ continental philosophers when he was a university student. The group appealed to the authority of ‘continental philosophers’ and violently shut down independent critique of those philosophers. Williamson contrasts this to the free and democratic nature of analytic philosophy. The video can be found by following the URL:

http://stfucontinentals.tumblr.com/

280 Russell, ‘Mysticism and Logic’ in Mysticism and Logic, 11
for the everyday, presumably because it seeks to question everyday beliefs to promote controversy.\(^{281}\) This logic is ‘malicious’ in regard to the world of science and common sense, it “… is inspired by a certain hatred of the daily world to which it is to be applied”; “[t]he logic of mysticism shows, as is natural, the defects which are inherent in anything malicious”.\(^{382}\) It “… is not quite disinterested or candid”.\(^{283}\) We can diagnose ‘mixture’ by asking whether a philosophy makes use of ethical criteria.\(^{284}\) However, we might be suspicious about the supposed ‘neutrality’ of the analytic discourse we are considering; does it not also make ethical distinctions? Is the division between analytic and continental philosophy not ethical?

Let us consider the Stranger’s distinction between sophistical purification and diaerēsis further, beginning *The Sophist*, 227c. The Stranger divides ‘purification’ into two types: one may ‘purify’ the soul or one may ‘purify’ the body. While medicine deals with disease, physical culture with physical deformity, instruction deals with ignorance.\(^{285}\) Since we are not to make ethical distinctions between better and worse, we should judge that ignorance is only a form of disproportion (being at variance with oneself). Stupidity is the most grievous form of ignorance, which can be defined as “… [t]he conceit of knowing what one does not know”.\(^{286}\) This leads us to sophistic education, which promises to remove ignorance.

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\(^{281}\) See Santayana, *The Life of Reason*, 30

\(^{282}\) Russell, ‘Mysticism and Logic’ in *Mysticism and Logic*, 20. Likewise, Berlin writes that “… the Romantics and idealists … have contempt for the common, their aim is to destroy this already tolerant life, to destroy common sense” (Berlin, *The Roots of Romanticism*, 146).

\(^{283}\) Russell, ‘Mysticism and Logic’ in *Mysticism and Logic*, 20

\(^{284}\) This diagnostic measure allows us to bypass the seeming contradiction in claiming that continental philosophy is both meaningless and dangerous. Simon Blackburn identifies sophistry by means of ‘contempt’:

… this adolescent attitude also explains an apparent paradox that defenders of postmodernism often seize on. This is that their opponents, careful academics, managed in one breath to say both that Derrida’s works were gibberish, and that they represented a dire threat to Western civilisation. The paradox is only superficial though. Some gibberish – Lewis Carroll comes to mind – emanates not contempt but affection for its targets. But postmodernist gibberish does not. Out from the confusion comes a distinct whiff of the complacency and superiority that come from having seen through something by which the vulgar are taken in (Blackburn, ‘Derrida May Deserve Some Credit for Trying, but Less for Succeeding’ n.p.). However, I do not think that we can refer to external conditions, or to feelings we might have with regard to a work or tradition as a whole, to distinguish the philosopher from the sophist, for such features could be merely accidental or extraneous and may even be argued to be sophistical (in the sense of potentially relying upon thumotic images).

\(^{285}\) Plato, *The Sophist*, 229a

\(^{286}\) Ibid., 229c
In this description of the sophist the Stranger comes, accidentally, upon the philosopher in the form of purifying the soul of ignorance. 287 The philosopher recognizes no distinctions between values, but only between kinds. He is thus the real educator. The philosopher gives instruction by discourse, cross-examining his student or interlocutor, to bring him to shame. 288 This has, the Stranger says, a sobering effect. 289

Likewise, the analytic philosopher is often situated to correct ignorance by an education in fact. Hare gave a lecture series in Germany, entitled ‘Peace’, promoting analysis as a means to understand the political trauma that had occurred and to prevent further political evil. 290 His strategy in general was one of clarifying ideas, and especially the “… logical properties of moral words”. 291 In 1955, on the question “[c]an I be blamed for obeying orders?”, Hare argued that “… a terrible political mistake, the supposed blind obedience of the German army and people to the Nazis …” could be “… put down to a simple logical error”. 292

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287 Ibid., 230b. The Stranger has a misgiving about naming this educator a sophist for it might be to pay the sophists too great an honour (Plato, The Sophist, 230c-231a). I think this should be read as ironic, i.e. it would be paying the philosopher too high an honour to call his practice sophistry (wisdom). In fact this would be a form of ignorance understood as claiming to know more than what is actually known. The philosopher admits to not knowing and thus challenges sophistry to admit the same.

288 Ibid., 230d-231a

289 Recall the metaphors of ‘sobriety’ and ‘intoxication’ by which Bernard Williams distinguished analytic from continental style. These metaphors were widespread, for further examples see Akehurst’s The Cultural Politics of Analytic Philosophy: Britishness and the Spectre of Europe.

290 Hare writes:

[If we could understand the thinking processes which could persuade a man like Hitler that what he was doing was right, we might be on the way to immunizing people against such ideas. It is perhaps true that, if philosophers had done their job better in the last two centuries (both the job of clarifying ideas to themselves and the job of getting other people to understand them) there would not have been a Nazi movement (Hare, ‘Peace’, 74).]

291 Hare, ‘Freedom and Reason’, 181. Or, the philosopher is positioned to prevent “… monstrous philosophical edifices”:

… created by slipping, surreptitiously, from the ordinary uses of words to extraordinary uses which are never explained … nothing pleases us so much as to sit back and have a German metaphysician explain to us, if he can, how he is going to get his metaphysical system started. And as he is usually unable to do this, the discussion never gets on to what he thinks of as the meat of the theory (Hare, A School for Philosophers, 115).

As Hare writes in Freedom and Reason: “[i]n his war with the fanatic, the best strategy for the liberal to adopt is one of persistent attrition” (Hare, Freedom and Reason, 180).

292 Akehurst, The Cultural Politics of Analytic Philosophy: Britishness and the Spectre of Europe, 143. The analytic education is an education in facts regarding discourse; he refuses to enter into the pseudo-discourse of the continental philosopher or idealist, in the aim of revealing the false which is seen, at worst as politically dangerous, at best as vacuous. Ayer in his autobiography reports on a discussion
In this *diaerésis* we have made a distinction between a discourse of *kinds* and a discourse regarding value. We may raise again the concern that the division between a division in *kind* and a division between better and worse itself involves the distinction between better and worse. The distinction between better and worse is not entirely foreign to *diaerésis* in general and this particular *diaerésis* by which we propose the distinction. The identification of the sophist is not merely the identification of a *kind*, but involves making an ethical judgement that calls into question his integrity. If we oppose ourselves to him we have invoked a distinction between better and worse, and because we have done so the distinction between philosopher and sophist cannot be a distinction in *kind* (between those that do invoke the distinction between better and worse and those that do not) since the philosopher does invoke the distinction between better and worse in order to argue, ironically, that a distinction in *kind* is better. The content of the proposal (the appeal to neutral distinction in *kind*) serves to disguise the evaluative dimension of the proposal.

Out of frustration, one might answer to this critique by returning to metaphors of priesthood and manual labour, of national character and national histories to determine the difference between philosopher and sophist (or ‘continental’ philosopher). Yet this only consolidates the concern I have introduced – the distinction could be an evaluative one. Iris Murdoch said: “[m]etaphors often carry a moral charge, which analysis in simpler and plainer terms is designed to remove. This too …”, she continued, “… seems to me to be misguided. Moral philosophy cannot avoid taking sides, and would-be neutral philosophers merely take sides surreptitiously”.293 The would-be neutral philosopher who emphasises his own neutrality against the other’s interest still ‘takes sides’ by introducing this self-identification and in so doing calls that identification into question.

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he had shortly after the war with a German professor; the professor asked him what the essence of a glass is:

‘I will give you the answer’ he said. ‘The essence of a glass is to be empty.’ I made a sign to our host who filled our glasses. This did not please the professor who remarked rather irritably that the essence of a glass with wine was not the same as the essence of a glass without wine. ‘I will put to you a deeper question. What is the essence of emptiness?’ ‘Ah,’ I said, ‘that really is deep’ and I went on to talk about the universities he had visited (Ayer, *More of my Life*, 26-7).

293 Murdoch, *The Sovereignty of the Good*, 76
When Theaetetus notes a resemblance between the philosopher and sophist the Stranger turns to a distinction between the tame and wild, and says: “[w]hy so has a wolf, the most savage of creatures to a dog, the gentlest. He who would walk securely must be persistently on his guard against analogies; of all things there is nothing more treacherous”. It is striking that only passages before the Stranger had lectured Theaetetus in the carefree use of analogies to argue that differences between the noble and base are of no concern to the philosopher. Here Theaetetus is rebuked for his careless use of metaphors and the difference between the philosopher and sophist seems to rest on just such a distinction.

It seems that the problem, which we have been facing, is not resolved. The problem is that we have to give an account of the difference between the philosopher and sophist in such a manner that we avoid sophistry ourselves; however, how are we to know whether a metaphilosophical account is sophistic? How is a division of kinds possible? How does the philosopher know that he acquires the nature of kinds when he gives such representations, rather than merely producing metaphors and images to inspire indignation? I might represent philosophy as the acquisition of kinds, but that definition is still open to re-interpretation, suspicion and critique so that one can interpret the definition in the context of sophistical distinctions. It is this central problematic that I want to turn to now. And I want to consider how interpretations of idealism might be thought to represent this problem and through that representation subordinate the problem to diaerésis (so that it is no longer a problem of defending division, but a problem that must be divided from philosophy). The next diaerésis of the sophist will be instructive.

Sophistry as Metaphysics, Metaphysics as Wizardry

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294 Plato, The Sophist, 231b
295 Ibid., 227a
296 The Stranger introduces a distinction that may be one of virtue rather than kind, if we assume that taming is a process of enculturation and that the distinction is between savagery and gentleness. It is left unsaid as to whether the philosopher is savage or gentle, whether he belongs to the city, or is untamed. But, nonetheless, the distinction can be seen as political, or rhetorical, because it seems to make use of people’s perspectives, without asking whether the wild is only savage and dangerous from a political standpoint. The same might be said of Russell’s assertion that: “… philosophy, if it is bad philosophy, may be dangerous, and therefore deserves that degree of negative respect which we accord lightning and tigers” (Russell, ‘Philosophy and Politics’, 9).
The Stranger begins (at *The Sophist*, 232b) by defining the sophist as a controversialist, one who teaches controversy in every discipline. The Stranger defines “… the art of controversy …” as “… a capacity of disputing anything and everything.”[^297] That the sophist appears in every discipline cannot mean that the sophist claims knowledge of all fields and arts, for if the sophist claimed knowledge of shoemaking, for example, it would not be difficult to assess whether he really did possess this *techné*, or whether he was pretending to possess it. The sophist does not claim knowledge of all individual arts, but knowledge of the unity of all ‘knowledges’. The sophist is competing with the philosopher and his concern with knowledge *per se* – its possibility, grounds and limits.

Our inability to exclude the sophist has perhaps revealed something about philosophy – that it is not akin to other occupations where we can clearly determine its practitioners from mere controversialist pretenders. Philosophy would seem to not be defined as a particular type of knowledge, but rather as possessing the nature of knowledge (and thus of ‘everything’) itself as its own question. Moreover, the question of *all* knowledge must include the question of philosophy itself. Philosophy is by nature, contentious; its incompleteness (its status as a *question*) poses, as it were, in the form of controversy. If desire for revelation of the ‘whole’ allows for sophistic mimicry, it is this concern that must be investigated.

Russell shares the concern. Russell argues that “… the opposition between a philosophy guided by scientific method and a philosophy dominated by religious and ethical ideas …” may be illustrated by “… the theoretical desire for a comprehensive understanding of the whole.”[^298] It is “[m]etaphysics, or the attempt to conceive the world as a whole by means of thought …”, that is the real outcome of the “… union and conflict …” of these “… two very different human impulses; the one urging men

[^297]: Plato, *The Sophist*, 232e. This definition apparently redeems *diaresis* for the multiplicity of sometimes-inconsistent definitions of the sophist. Among other inconsistencies we found that the sophist does and does not take fees, that he imports another’s products or produces his own within the city. Despite the contradictions within and between the *diareses*, the definitions seemed apt. This made *diaresis* appear less like a neutral division of *kind* and more akin to sophistic rhetoric (image-making). However, here the Stranger has defined sophistry as a capacity to appear everywhere; if the sophist speaks for all disciplines then he will be found wherever he presumes knowledge. The contradictions are due to the nature of sophistry, upon which *diaresis* reports.

[^298]: Russell, ‘On Scientific Method in Philosophy’ in *Mysticism and Logic*, 98 and 99. He also writes that “… the oneness of the world is an almost undisputed postulate of most metaphysics” (Ibid., 99).
towards mysticism, the other urging them towards science”. He argues that a concern for the ‘whole’ is a symptom of ‘mixture’ that also prevents effective ‘separation’; we will expand on why this may be the case in this section. Let us take our lead from the Stranger’s *diaeréisis*.

Stranger asks Theaetetus whether he thinks knowledge of all disciplines is possible, and Theaetetus replies “[n]ay, Sir, ‘twould be a blessed thing for our kind if it were so”. It would be a divine ‘blessing’ to possess comprehensive or complete knowledge of the ‘whole’. They conclude that the ‘whole’ cannot form a discrete object of study for mortals. We can see a continuity with Socrates’ forewarnings. Socrates warned that knowledge of philosophy might necessitate a divine perspective, which could be unavailable to mortals who are then left with images and disguises (or rather, they may not know whether they are faced with a disguise or a divine apparition). This raises the problem that we ended the last section with: how does the philosopher know that he acquires the nature of *kinds* when he gives representations, rather than merely produces images. This problem has now been

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299 Russell, ‘Mysticism and Logic’ in *Mysticism and Logic*, 1. Historically, ‘metaphysics’ has also been used to differentiate analytic from continental philosophy. In this section we will ask how metaphysics was understood such that it exemplified sophistic threats creating the imperative for its exclusion. To provide evidence for the critique of metaphysics we might note here a few quotations. According to Tom Rockmore the only stable charge against Hegel found in Russell’s work is that Hegel was a metaphysician (Rockmore, *Hegel, Idealism and Analytic Philosophy*, 51). For Geoffrey James Warnock, idealist philosophy is “… highly and ambitiously metaphysical” (Warnock, *English Philosophy Since 1900*, 3). On the other hand, the traits of the New Philosophy, in particular logic and empiricism, are, according to Hampshire, “… equally designed to exclude metaphysical speculation and metaphysical interpretations” (Hampshire, *Ideas Propositions and Signs*, 1). We are told that Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus* allowed Logical Positivism “… to sweep into limbo … all metaphysical philosophy in the Hegelian tradition.” (Ayer, cited in Magee, *Confessions of a Philosopher*, 36). Barry Gower says the same of *Language, Truth and Logic*: “… its main effect, especially in England, has been to curb any indulgence in speculative metaphysics” (Gower, ‘Introduction: The Criterion of Significance’ in *Logical Positivism in Perspective: Essays in Language, Truth and Logic*, 27). This feature also distinguishes the philosophers that are often appealed to as forerunners of analytic philosophy: for example, Russell claims that Hume and Locke despised metaphysics (see Russell, *History of Western Philosophy*, 633 and 669).

The pejorative use of ‘metaphysics’ was not new; we might look to a few examples of the English reception of the term. The first use of ‘metaphysics’ was taken from a treatise written by Sir Thomas More in 1532, and informed the first entry for ‘metaphysics’ in the *Oxford English Dictionary*. The treatise was a critique of Protestant reformers, which More accused of arguing metaphysically — that is, making supernatural and specious arguments. Samuel Johnson applied the term to early seventeenth-century poets, and he explains his use of the adjective as follows: “[t]he most heterogeneous ideas are yoked by violence together; nature and art are ransacked for illustrations, comparisons, and allusions …” for the purpose of novelty “… only to say what they hoped had been never said before” (Johnson, *The Lives of the Poets: A Selection*, 16). We might also note that in Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* it is by “… fate and metaphysical [supernatural and sinister] aid …” that the witches solicit Lord Macbeth to kill his king (Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, 1.5.26).

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300 Plato, *The Sophist*, 233a
301 Ibid., 233a
explained in terms of the desire for an impossible perspective upon the ‘whole’ (a desire that presumably the philosopher and sophist share).

Russell also argues that the attempt to conceive the ‘whole’ by means of thought is not possible. He argues that, when speaking of the ‘whole’, we can only ever speak of what is available to (our necessarily limited and partial) experience so that what ‘mystical philosophers’ speak of when they talk of the ‘whole’ can only be a reflection of their own subjectivity (their perspective, along with their human values) projected as ‘total’. The impossible request (for an account of the whole) made upon previous philosophies led to the problems of ‘mixture’ or the inability to separate poetic and personal images from a scientific grasp of the facts, for having recognized the influence of its subjectivity, philosophy was “…paralysed by its own recognition, and abandoned in despair the attempt to undo the work of subjective falsification”. The question to ask then is how we might, lacking an objective account of the ‘whole’ ourselves, separate ‘mixture’. Let us think about this in terms of the task of defining the sophist.

Since the Stranger and Theaetetus are agreed that the sophists (presuming they are mortal) cannot have knowledge of the ‘whole’, they must now ask what could characterise the sophist (if not knowledge of the ‘whole’). The sophists are characterised by means of “…their power to impress the young with the notion that they, and no others, are in every way the wisest of mankind”. They are believed to be men of ‘universal wisdom’, but since this knowledge cannot be possessed “…the sophist stands revealed as the possessor of a sort of universal knowledge which is a mere appearance but no true reality”.

How does the sophist ‘trick’ the public into believing that the sophist has knowledge of the ‘whole’? In answer, the Stranger moves from Theaetetus’ opening assumption (which reflected popular veneration of sophistry) that the sophist must have acquired knowledge to the art of sophistry as an art of production. The Stranger tells us that the sophist claims, on the strength of a single art, to be able,
not only to contest all things, but also “… to make or do everything whatsoever”.

Theaetetus is confused: what could the Stranger possibly mean by ‘everything whatsoever’? The Stranger explains: “… suppose this man should declare that he could make me and you and all the other creatures …”, as well as “… sea and land, sky and gods, and everything else as well.” And he will make them all in a moment too, I may tell you, and sell you them for a little small coin.” To this Theaetetus responds – this must be some kind of game! The Stranger replies: “… do you know any kind of game more artful and more amusing than mimicry?” Sophistry is “… a mimicry of reality”. Or, the sophistic account reveals that all we access are appearances and images that we ourselves produce, and in this sense we do ‘create’ everything.

Russell presents a similar account of ‘mystical’ philosophers. He argues that the mystic “… draw[s] from the fact that whatever we experience is experienced the conclusion that therefore everything must be experienced”. We can determine ‘mixture’ according to the degree in which the human perspective is privileged. On the extreme end of the scale, the mystic draws from the truism that everything that will be experienced has the property of being experienced, a metaphysical defence is given for the legislative power that sophistic philosophies lend subjective experience. That is, the truism leads to the belief that we only have access to the subjective, or the equally sophistic position that the real is the subjective.

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307 Ibid., 233d
308 Michael Devitt also speaks of ‘constructivism’ as entailing that we, literally, create ‘dinosaurs and stars’, he writes:

Many contemporary anti-realisms combine Kantianism with relativism to yield what is known as ‘constructivism’ … Contemporary anti-realisms tend to retain Kant’s ideas of things-in-themselves and of imposition, but drop the universality of what is imposed. Instead, different languages, theories, and world-views are imposed to create different known worlds. Goodman, Putnam and Kuhn are among the constructivists. Constructivism is so bizarre and mysterious – how could we, literally, make dinosaurs and stars? – that one is tempted to seek a charitable reinterpretation of constructivist talk. But, sadly, charity is out of place here (Devitt, ‘A Naturalistic Defence of Realism’, 21).
309 Plato, The Sophist, 233c–234a
310 Ibid., 234b
311 Russell, ‘On Scientific Method in Philosophy’ in Mysticism and Logic, 101
312 Russell applies this criterion to determine the degree to which ‘mixture’ in present in the work of Bergson and Nietzsche (see ‘Scientific Method in Philosophy’ in Mysticism and Logic).
313 Ibid., 101
It was common for analytic philosophers to interpret idealism as the position that holds philosophy, and knowledge generally, to be a form of production. Russell defines idealism as “… the doctrine that whatever can be known to exist, must be in some sense mental”. The interpretation of Kant’s Copernican Revolution is then one in which the ground of objects of experience is ‘dependent’ upon the nature of experience in that the nature of experience is formed by the nature of our minds. Thus, it is said, we are limited to the products of our psychologies.

Sophistry is likewise associated with this positive account: by making too sharp a division between phusis and nomos the sophist argues that we have no access to phusis (nature), and so reduces ‘truth’ to nomoi (laws and norms). The sophist might claim that even the idea of the natural is a specifically human idea, one among many. We find just such an interpretation of Kant’s distinction between noumena and phenomena. On Russell’s reading, Kant claims that we have access to the phenomenal, which is interpreted as that which is adapted by the norms of the mind, while having no access to the noumenal, which is interpreted as the natural object that somehow lies ‘behind’ the phenomenal. We are thus limited to our own

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514 Idealism is interpreted as a form of anti-materialism, closer to Berkeley’s empiricism, the philosophy that features in Moore’s ‘The Refutation of Idealism’, which begins “[m]odern Idealism, if it asserts any general conclusion about the universe at all, asserts that it is spiritual” (Moore, ‘The Refutation of Idealism’, 1).

515 Russell, The Problems of Philosophy, 19. Russell writes: “[i]n describing the world, subjectivity is a vice. Kant spoke of himself as having effected a ‘Copernican revolution’, but he would have been more accurate if he had spoken of a ‘Ptolemaic counter-revolution’, since he put Man back at the centre from which Copernicus had dethroned him” (Russell, Human Knowledge: Its Scope and Limits, 1).

516 While there are exceptions, such a view of Kant is consistently found throughout analytic philosophy. Strawson inherits Russell’s Kant and argues that transcendental idealism maintains “… not merely that we can have no knowledge of a supersensible reality. The doctrine is that reality is supersensible and that we can have no knowledge of it” (Strawson, The Bounds of Sense, 38). In Problems from Kant Van Cleve interprets Kant as saying that things in themselves exist independently of human perception; appearances exist only in being apprehended (Van Cleve, Problems from Kant, 49). Van Cleve quotes an anonymous ‘disenchanted’ student who extends this contradiction to ‘postmodernism’ (Ibid., 134).

517 This interpretation is ironic when considering the etymology of the terms: ‘noumena’ is from noun and can be taken to mean ‘object of the mind’ and ‘phenomena’ is from phanesthai (the ‘object form’ of appear). For Kant, the object of experience, is ‘phenomenal’. Kant often uses the term ‘appearance’ for this object, but we must be careful not to conflate two meanings of ‘appearance’. In this context ‘appearance’ is meant in the non-controversial sense of an appearing of the real, a ‘coming into view’ (Erschienung), not in the sense of illusion (Schein). We are talking of ‘appearing’ in the fundamental sense of ‘showing’, not the judgement of the reality or illusory nature of the ‘appearing’ (which is secondary).

Making the distinction between experience and the world as it is in itself can have significance only within the meta-discourse of transcendental inquiry. Using the distinction otherwise, we assume
minds, but our minds are made the measure of all. Kantianism is, for Russell, “… the belief … that propositions which are believed solely because the mind is so made that we cannot but believe them may yet be true in virtue of our belief.” Like the sophist Protagoras, Kant is understood to respond to what hinders knowledge: “… the obscurity of the subject and the brevity of human life …” with the maxim: “[o]f all things the measure is Man, of the things that are, that they are and of the things that are not, that they are not.”

Accusations of Protagorean relativism can also be found in interpretations of Hegel. According to Popper: “Hegel believes … that the Ideas or essences are in the things in flux; or more precisely (as far as we can treat Hegel with precision), Hegel a perspective free from experience that would also be informative. This is precisely an implication of ‘transcendental realism’ Kant is attempting to overcome.

Russell takes Kant to hold that if the constitution of our psychologies was to change, so could the fundamental truths of mathematics (Russell, The Problems of Philosophy, 48).

On Russell’s interpretation, Kant introduced the authority of human prejudice over independent fact; Kant claims the reality of ethical prejudice against which all else is held to be illusion, and so betrays another symptom of ‘mixture’: the identification of the good with the real. Russell tells a story in which Kant was not able to cope emotionally with the implications of Hume’s philosophy and invented a distinction between pure and practical reason, a distinction between what can be proved (pure reason) and what is necessary for virtue (practical reason), in order to safeguard reason. For Russell “[i]t is of course obvious that ‘pure’ reason is simply reason, while ‘practical’ reason was prejudice” (Russell, Ancestry of Fascism, 86).

Protagoras, quoted in Jacqueline de Romilly’s The Great Sophists of Paticlean Athens, 98. Sextus Empiricus tells us that what Protagoras meant by this maxim is that “‘[m]an is the criterion of all objects, of those which are, that they are, and of those which are not, that they are not’. And in consequence of this he postulates only what appears (ta phainomena) to each individual, and thus he introduces relativity …” (Sextus Empiricus, Outlines of Pyrrhonism, 83). Sextus Empiricus links this account to Heraclitean theories of flux (“[w]hat he declares, then, is that matter is in flux …”), however in Against the Mathematicians he writes:

Some authorities, also, have ranked Protagoras of Abdera among those philosophers who do away with the criterion, since he declares that all appearances … and opinions are true, and that truth is something relative, by reason of the fact that everything that has appeared to be the case or been opined by someone is immediately real to that person. At any rate, at the beginning of his work The Overthrowers (or Truth) he has stated that ‘Man is the measure of all things, of things that they are, and of things that are not, that they are not’. And to the truth of this even the opposite assertion seems to testify for if anyone claims that man is not the criterion of all things, he will simply be confirming the statement that man is the criterion, since the very person who is making the claim is himself a man, and in affirming what appears to him to be the case, he admits that this very claim is one of the things that appears to him (Sextus Empiricus, cited in The Greek Sophists, 14).

Sextus Empiricus goes on to associate with Protagoras the view that no argument can occur between different states, madmen or those asleep or those awake, from none of these states can we speak with authority over the others: “[i]f appearance is the criterion we can either agree with Protagoras that everything is true or with Xeniades the Corinthian that everything is false (Pluralists)” (Ibid., 15). Aristotle writes that everywhere “… will simultaneously be both true and false” (Aristotle, Metaphysics, IV, cited in The Greek Sophists, 18). He says, that as a consequence of Protagoras’ maxim, “… if all contradictory statements are true of the same thing at the same time, it is clear that everything will be one” (Protagoras, cited in The Greek Sophists, 18).
teaches that they are identical with the things in flux: ‘Everything actual is an Idea’, he says”. 321 This endorses historical and evolutionary relativism “… in the form of the dangerous doctrine that what is believed today is, in fact, true today, and in the equally dangerous corollary that what was true yesterday (true and not merely “believed”) may be false tomorrow”. 322 For Popper, Hegelianism holds that the true is true in virtue of its relation to the ‘whole’; if everything is ‘one’ then all things are either true or false. Or, rather, the distinction between truth and falsity becomes vacuous. The sophist traditionally holds that nothing can be spoken of as true or false, that all is justified by its existence in the whole circle of opinions. He weds knowledge to opinion (doxa) and enters into the currency of opinion.

Through these doctrines, the ‘philosopher’ holds the sophistical view that one can remake the world in one’s own image. Philosophy is transformed into production, and the philosopher emerges as a despot.323 Rosen explains the identification of poetic production with tyranny as follows:

The identification of poetry and tyranny is thus explained … in the extreme case man desires to become, not merely the master or possessor of nature, but the producer of nature. He wishes to transform nature into an artefact or a poem. Co-ordinately the connection between the tyranny of desire and Eros is rooted in the primacy of production. In order to satisfy his desires completely, man must recreate the world in his own image. Eros is accordingly unmasked as narcissism.324

On this view, the idealist’s preoccupation with totality reveals totalitarian intent. We can see how the otherwise surprising link between Hegel and Nietzsche was

322 Ibid., 60
323 Russell’s book Power: A New Social Analysis has a chapter devoted to power-philosophers, to “… men who invent theories which veil their own love of power beneath a garment of metaphysics and ethics,” resulting in narcissistic systems that reflect and legislate their particular desires and beliefs as universal law (Russell, Power: A New Social Analysis, 209). Like “Alexander and Augustus [who] asserted that they were gods, and compelled others to pretend agreement” (Ibid., 173). This judgement is also evident in Russell’s treatment of Kant. Russell tells us that:

The Critical Philosophy, although it intended to emphasise the subjective element in many apparent characteristics of the world, yet, by regarding the world in itself as unknowable, so concentrated attention upon the subjective representation that its subjectivity was soon forgotten. Having recognised the categories as the work of the mind, it was paralysed by its own recognition, and abandoned in despair the attempt to undo the work of subjective falsification (Russell, ‘On Scientific Method in Philosophy’ in Mysticism and Logic, 99-100).
324 Rosen, ‘The Quarrel between Philosophy and Poetry’, 13
made. Recall that the essence of romanticism is said to be that the world can be moulded by the will.325

Further, continental ‘theorising’ and ‘system-building’ are implicated. Geoffrey James Warnock explains that the analyst’s hostility to Heideggerian ‘obscurity’, ‘rhetoric’ and ‘mystery-mongering’ was related to a “… certain distrust of ‘Theories’ …” which many analysts considered ‘distorting’.326 Ayer writes, “… it is moreover felt that theorizing is anti-liberal”.327 If we recall Russell’s particular judgements regarding philosophies that seek a unified vision or account of the ‘whole’, we can explain the suspicion of theory and system as follows. If an account of the ‘whole’ must always be an account that preferences the ‘human standpoint’

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325 Russell, Power: A New Social Analysis, 212. The revolt against reason and the cult of the heart is, for Russell, inherited by the aristocratic philosophy of Byron and Nietzsche, which, he writes, “… has inspired a long series of revolutionary movements, from the Carbonari after the fall of Napoleon to Hitler’s coup in 1933” (Russell, History of Western Philosophy, 775).

Russell tells us that “[t]he love of power is a part of normal human nature, but power-philosophies are, in a certain precise sense, insane” (Power: A New Social Analysis, 212). They are judged insane (in a ‘certain’ and ‘precise’ sense) not for any particular political view they hold, but because justifying their views is a doctrine regarding the unreality of the external, of which Russell writes: “[t]he existence of the external world, both that of matter and that of other human beings, is a datum, which may be humiliating to a certain kind of pride, but can only be denied by a madman” (Ibid., 212). Idealism is not then a philosophy, but an outcome of egoistic fanaticism, the same drive that is linked to political totalitarianism. Such solipsism may become the basis for social life, Russell argues, but “such a life can only be peaceful if we don’t have competition between individual ‘gods’”. When one’s omnipotence is challenged a “… bitter theological war …” breaks out. “I am Wotan” says Hitler. ‘I am Dialectical Materialism!’ says Stalin” (Ibid., 178). That is, there is no basis to engage in philosophical discourse, one falls into eristic conflict or a ‘theological war’ – the clash of beliefs and fundamental commitments.

326 Warnock, Morality and Language, 2-3

327 Ayer, ‘Philosophy and Politics’ in Metaphysics and Common Sense, 246. We find it common to employ metaphors of the speed of continental theory-building and oppose these to the slow, cautious application of the analytic method. Edmund Burke introduced the distinction between method and theory and he writes “[i]t is one of the excellencies of a method in which time is amongst the assistants, that its operation is slow, and in some cases almost imperceptible” (Burke, Reflections on the Revolution in France, and On the Proceedings in Certain Societies, 280). Burke’s method, Simpson notes, is “… almost identical with the slow passage of recorded time” (Simpson, Romanticism, Nationalism and the Revolt against Theory, 58). This means that it could be watched: “… by a slow but well-sustained progress, the effect of each step is watched; the good or ill success of the first, gives light to us in the second; and so on, from light to light, we are conducted with safety through the whole series” (Burke, Reflections on the Revolution in France, and On the Proceedings in Certain Societies, 280).

Burke’s zealous insistence upon the dangers of theory responded to the apparent excesses of French philosophy leading up to the French Revolution: “… the surfeit and indigestion of systems …” and “… the fashion of wild, visionary theories” (Burke, ‘Letter to a Member’, 20). After the fall of the Bastille, Arthur Young writes that his worst fear is “… visionary or theoretic systems” (Young, Travels in France: During the Years 1787, 1788 and 1789, 139). “Modern philosophy …”, he writes, “… is the scourge of human societies” (Young, An Enquiry into the State of the Public Mind amongst the Lower Classes and on the Means of Turning it to the Welfare of the State, 20).
then it may appear true. The sophistical philosophy makes use of this, converting the dictates of man into unassailable truths. Sophistry now becomes an art:

... one of argument, which can cheat the young, who are still at a distance from the truth of things, through the ear by argument, with a display of phantoms of arguments on all subjects, into taking what they hear for truth, and the man from whom they hear it, if you please, for the wisest of his kind in everything?328

The young are easily fooled, for they have not the experience gained from confronting “... hard facts encountered later in life”. The Stranger appeals to common sense, that is, to the recognition of ‘facts’, which develops in a piecemeal fashion with age (or experience).

I want to link the Stranger’s appeal to another indicium of analytic philosophy: “... the injunction to minimize one’s departure from empiricist respectability ...” and the appeal to common experience.331 That facts are independent from experience is, for Russell, definitive of the scientific approach:

[the kernel of the scientific outlook is a thing so simple, so obvious, so seemingly trivial, that the mention of it may almost excite derision. The kernel of the scientific outlook is the refusal to regard our own desires, tastes, and interests as affording a key to the understanding of the world.332

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328 Russell, ‘On Scientific Method in Philosophy’ in Mysticism and Logic, 101
329 Plato, The Sophist, 234c
330 Ibid., 234d. Blackburn characterises the postmodern attitude as an adolescent attitude and writes that this is an attitude “… especially appealing to the young” (Blackburn, ‘Derrida May Deserve Some Credit for Trying, but Less for Succeeding’ in The Times Higher Education, n.p.).
331 With Chase and Reynolds we could speak of a methodological empiricism – they write that “[i]n the early analytic context … empiricism functioned as a methodological constraint, rather than merely as a truth claim. Even non-empiricists among the early analytics – such as Russell at some times – took empiricist scruples very seriously as a mark of epistemic respectability …” (Chase and Reynolds, ‘The Fate of Transcendental Reasoning’, 30).

The lasting influence of this indicium, and its laudatory connotations, can be seen through attempts to argue in favour of ‘continental’ philosophers by arguing that they can be understood as naturalists. Consider, for example, Brian Leiter’s interpretation of Nietzsche. See the introduction ‘Nietzsche: Naturalist or Postmodernist?’ in Leiter’s The Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Nietzsche on Morality.

332 Russell, ‘The Place of Science in a Liberal Education’ in Mysticism and Logic and Other Essays, 42. Russell carefully distinguishes this ‘image’ from possible mimics. He makes a distinction between the philosophy that takes as its paradigm a scientific theory, and the philosophy that takes as its paradigm the scientific method, arguing that the former merely becomes an instance of epistemological subjectivism. Russell gives the example of Nietzsche and Bergson, both, on his account, take the theories of a science (evolutionary biology) to support epistemological subjectivism. This, he says, is to treat science not as providing testable hypotheses, but as metaphysical insight. We can recognise that this has occurred if the ‘unity’, or account of ‘the whole’ that is given, gives preference to the human standpoint, as is the case in these philosophies of evolution (see ‘Scientific Method in Philosophy’ in Mysticism and Logic’).
In recounting the analytic revolution, Russell writes, “... the first published account of the new philosophy was Moore’s article in *Mind* on ‘The Nature of Judgement’”; what he holds important about this paper is “... the doctrine that fact is in general independent of experience.” 333

Metaphysics and theorising were held to be, in some sense, distorting (indulging human hopes and fancies). On the other hand, empiricism was seen as pre-theoretically true “... and therefore because of its clear veracity it requires no falsification of our understanding of the world”; speculative metaphysics distorts for: “... in bending the world to fit your theory, and therefore your desires, you falsify the world you seek to represent”. 334 Following from this, we find the widespread assertion that empiricism supports liberalism. Russell writes: “[t]he only philosophy that affords a theoretical justification of democracy, and that accords with democracy in its temper of mind, is empiricism”. 335 Akehurst comments that “[i]t is not clear whether this is because these ideas are non-theoretical, or whether they are based on a theory of such purity that no distortion of the facts is required”. 336 The implicit claim is that

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333 Russell, *My Philosophical Development*, 42. The analytic revolution, or break with Idealism, could then seem to be centred upon the issue of whether facts are independent of experience. As Moore writes:

*What I think, namely that something is true, is always quite distinct from the fact that I think it ... That ‘to be true’ means to be thought in a certain way is, therefore, certainly false. Yet this assertion plays the most essential part in Kant’s ‘Copernican Revolution’ of philosophy, and renders worthless the whole mass of modern literature, to which that revolution has given rise (Moore, *Principia Ethica*, 132-133).*


335 Russell, ‘Philosophy and Politics’, 25, emphasis in the original text. Ayer also speaks of a correlation between empiricism and liberalism and even uses empiricism as ‘political empiricism’, opposing this to theorising: “I am using the word ‘empiricism’ not in the philosophical, but in the political sense, in which an empirical is contrasted with a theoretical approach – in that political science is reduced to a combination of economics and psephology” (Ayer, ‘Philosophy and Politics’, 242). Henry Price also saw:

*... some connection, both historically and psychologically, between Empiricism and Liberalism: I mean Liberalism in that large and non-party sense in which we say that the English speaking countries have a liberal tradition. Empiricism is hostile to humbug and obscurity, to the dogmatic authoritative mood, to every sort of ipse dixit. It does not conceive of Philosophy as a heresy-hunt directed against those who stray from the truths once for all delivered to our fathers; but as a free co-operative inquiry, where anyone may put forward any hypothesis he likes, new or old, provided it makes sense. The same live-and-let-live principles, the same dislike of humbug of the ipse dixit sort of authority, are characteristic of Liberalism too ... If Empiricist philosophy is strong today, perhaps we may hope to see a revival of Liberalism the day after to-morrow (Price, *The Permanent Significance of Hume’s Philosophy*, 8).*

336 *The Cultural Politics of Analytic Philosophy: Britishness and the Spectre of Europe*, 147. The belief that empiricism was in sympathy with liberalism seemed “... a belief that through a combination of untheorized scientific and commonsensical facts and logical rules analytic empiricism could provide evidence for liberalism’s veracity.” Akehurst explains: “[e]mpiricism is allied to liberalism because
Empiricism does not attempt to grasp the ‘whole’ by means of thought, but assumes a pre-theoretical ‘whole’. It does not favour or falsify, it is not productive, but purely acquisitive (and hence, not metaphysical).

Empiricism was also linked to the capacity to honestly encounter the hard facts of life, to accept the beliefs of everyday men. It was G. E. Moore that was said to embody the philosophical virtues associated with empiricism.337 Geoffrey James Warnock writes of Moore that “[t]hough he did not deny the legitimacy of metaphysical ambitions, he was himself entirely without them”. 338 Moore becomes the exemplary figure, because unlike Russell and the Logical Positivists “… he was entirely without a metaphysics”.339 Moore is portrayed as simple, direct, cheerful, and unperturbed by “… the ordinary beliefs of plain men and plain scientists”.340

Ernest Gellner critiques Ayer for accepting:

…the authorized and self-propagated image of Moore as a spirit so pure, unpretentious and straightforward that he would not allow himself to be bamboozled, as others were, by philosophical departures from common sense – the child who bravely cried that the emperor was naked.341

Both hold some subscription to truth … Is there a claim that the actual truth about the world does not favour extremism, and that therefore if one can get at the facts (via empirical methods), one sees that liberal politics is epistemologically superior?” (Akehurst, The Cultural Politics of Analytic Philosophy: Britishness and the Spectre of Europe, 140). Russell seems to acquiesce, writing that “[i]n every important war since 1700 the more democratic side has been victorious. This is partly because democracy and empiricism (which are intimately connected) do not demand a distortion of the facts in the interests of theory.” (Russell, ‘Philosophy and Politics’, 32) “There seems to have been a more positive, metaphysical belief in the alliance of truth and liberalism …” (Akehurst, The Cultural Politics of Analytic Philosophy: Britishness and the Spectre of Europe, 148). In the end this entails a connection between the True and the Good, which if you recall was, according to Russell, a sign of mixture and mysticism. Akehurst asks whether this account can be justified without moral subjectivism (a mixing of analysis and ethics) and suggests “… a Nietzschean reading of the analysts liberalism, one might argue that their faith in the power of modern science was unconsciously accompanied by the belief in the alliance between Truth and Goodness, upon which modern science was formed.” (Ibid., 148)

337 For Geoffrey James Warnock, like or dislike of metaphysics is largely a question of temperament. He claims that to grasp the denial and decline of idealism one needed to understand “… the character of Moore …”, “… the very powerful impact of his good sense, simplicity, directness, and argumentative rigour upon the china-shop of Idealism …” (Warnock, English Philosophy Since 1900, 28)

338 Ibid., 54-5
339 Ibid., 56. For Mary Warnock the Principia Ethica eradicated metaphysics by its method, and “[s]ince 1900 both here and in the United States, metaphysics has been virtually dead.” (Warnock, Ethics since 1900, 162)
340 Ibid., 14
341 Gellner, ‘Ayer on Moore and Russell’, 187. Gellner’s critique is of Ayer’s book Russell and Moore: the Analytic Heritage. Timothy Williamson also uses the story of the Emperor’s New Clothes. He suggests that continental philosophers are akin to the village people who, under the sway of some authority, trick themselves into believing that where there is really embarrassing vacuity there is something of worth and brilliance. Williamson places himself (in virtue of his analyticity) in the position of the innocent child that sees the truth of the situation. See the video interview cited earlier (URL: http://stfucontinentals.tumblr.com/).
As we have seen, the Stranger also appeals to our capacity to face facts. Theaetetus fears that due to his youth he may still be one of those who are at a distance from the truth of things. The Stranger defines a task for philosophy: to bring students closer to ‘the way things are’ without their having to wait for experience to teach this lesson. But before giving Theaetetus such a lesson, Theaetetus must answer whether he still wishes to assign the sophist knowledge or will accept him as a “… conjurer, a producer of a mimicry of reality”. In order to continue in his education he must judge the sophist an illusionist, conjurer and producer, and sophistry as mimicry of reality rather than as a field of knowledge.

We also find the representation of the continental philosopher as a quasi-magician in the discourse of the divide. Popper writes that Hegel abused the popular perception of philosophy as something magical and deceptive:

… philosophers have kept around themselves, even in our day, something of the atmosphere of the magician. Philosophy is considered as a strange and abstruse kind of thing, dealing with those mysteries with which religion deals, but not in a way which can be ‘revealed unto babes’ or to common people; it is considered to be too profound for that, and to be the religion and theology of the intellectuals, of the learned and wise. Hegelianism fits these views admirably; it is exactly what this kind of popular superstition supposes philosophy to be. It knows all about everything. It has a ready answer to every question.

Theaetetus assents to the characterisation of the sophist as a ‘magician’ and categorises him under one of the departments of ‘play’. Consider however that Theaetetus could only make the decision to hold the sophistic image as false or as mimicry if he had already been ‘brought close to things’ by apprenticeship in

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342 Plato, *The Sophist*, 234e
343 Ibid., 235a
344 Ibid., 234e-235a. The Stranger is saying that on authority, my authority, you must hold this opinion in order to continue in your learning. This is not too dissimilar to a professional philosopher listing a set of intellectual virtues, unargued for, for a new student to abide by (a kind of prose, clarity of expression) such that that student can be considered (by the appointed masters of his education) as ready to learn more. Another parallel would be telling the student not to be like those people (the continentals) for he won’t be accepted as one who has learnt to philosophize appropriately.
347 Plato, *The Sophist*, 235a

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philosophy, or with age, but being young, in order to gain this apprenticeship he is effectively led into making the Stranger’s preferred judgement. The only ground upon which he can make this decision is the authority of ‘the philosopher’ before him, the authority of the present image of philosophical education. But how might that image be judged accurate, or philosophical, if he has not already been ‘brought close to the nature of things’?

The suspicion I am here raising is that the philosopher, in the context of educating the youth or arguing for philosophical education, might adopt sophistic techniques. For example, the argument for piecemeal activities within ‘philosophy’ nonetheless makes use of an image of the ‘whole’ whereby such activity finds meaning and relevance in a broader context. The problem extends to empiricism: we might note the way in which arguments for empiricism (which is characterised by its indifference to human desires) were embedded in a political and nationalist discourse.

Why would it be the case that we cannot but help employ sophistic techniques? If the question of philosophy requires philosophy to be present, this seems to imply both that we need an account of the ‘whole’ and that a philosophical account of the ‘whole’ is not pre-philosophical or non-theoretical. If we cannot assume knowledge of a pre-philosophical domain (or ‘whole’) by means of which we could discern philosophy’s proper territory and against which we could judge transgressions, it is always possible that we simply produce sophistical images. How could we know?

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348 Derrida points out that the Greek word for wizard is pharmakeus. Jasper Neel writes “[a] psophist is a pharmakeus who uses the powers of wizardry to destroy truth, by changing truth (sophia) into opinion (doxa). This pharmakeus uses the pharmakon of writing to trick the reader by presenting the reader’s opinion as the truth” (Neel, *Plato, Derrida and Writing*, 85). The antidote, according to Derrida, is also a pharmakon, administered by another pharmakeus, another wizard (for Plato, this is Socrates). This pharmakeus reveals the method of the sophist: the fear of death (recall that Russell has the fear of death as a psychological cause of Kantian and Hegelian idealism). “Psophistry’s powerful hold over the modern writer comes from the fear that writing cannot close itself down in the presentation of truth” (Ibid., 86).

In our terms we might say that because metaphilosophical enquiry does not admit of closure, no one representation of philosophy could pass itself off as the final truth of the matter, and this incites a fear that any image is a mere opinion. Socrates’ work is to reveal that what we think we know is mere opinion. Thus he engenders a desire and respect for truth. However, the point is that the method is the same: Socrates has given an ‘image’ of philosophy and this leaves open the aporia of metaphilosophy and the threat of sophistry. Or, in other words, the pharmakon may have had the opposite effect, but only because it was the same pharmakon.

349 Iris Murdoch wrote that there was no philosophical reason to give up theories and that “[i]t therefore emerges that the choice made by our intellectuals [ordinary language philosophers] against the development of theories is a moral choice” (Murdoch, *A House of Theory*, 179).
that a given metaphilosophy is philosophical and not sophistical? Not by saying that
the sophist produces ‘images’ of the whole or preferences the human standpoint, for
the same may be true of the philosopher. In the following and final section of this
chapter, I want to think about how the Stranger and Russell understand the aporias
of metaphilosophy, by which the sophist has so far eluded us.

Two Images of Imagery: The Whole and Totality

The Stranger will attempt to divide *diaerétic* representation from its mimic: sophistic
image-making, beginning at *The Sophist*, 235d. He does so by distinguishing between
them as two opposed methods of representation, and this bears a striking similarity
to a distinction we will find in Russell between ‘mixture’ and ‘separation’
understood as competing understandings of representation.

Adopting the metaphor of painting, the Stranger names the kind of
representation belonging to *diaerésis*, and thus philosophy, as ‘portraiture’, which
reproduces the proportions of the original, and aims to be a true copy. It displays
fidelity to the facts, duplicates the geometry of the factual “… length, breadth and
depth”. A portrait is a true copy or icon of the original. Hearing this, Theaetetus
points out that surely all copyists aim to produce such veridical images – the Stranger
replies that copyists who model colossal figures cannot reproduce the exact
proportions of their subject, since this would amount to the effect of disproportion
in its viewing. The sophist’s object is said to be ‘colossal’; I think this refers back
to the sophist’s concern with the ‘whole’. Since the Stranger argued that the
‘whole’ could not form a discrete object of study, he implies here that the sophist
must incorporate disproportion so that the figure appears to the spectator to be
proportionate. We revisit the theme from the last section: that the ‘whole’ is only
made apparently ‘whole’ (is unified) by means of the experience of the observer.

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350 Plato, *The Sophist*, 235d-e
351 *Ibid.*, 235e. Interestingly, in the *Theaetetus* Theodorus tells Socrates that Theaetetus is very similar
to Socrates in appearance (Plato, *Theaetetus*, 143e). In asking Theaetetus what knowledge is, Socrates
advises that knowledge must have something to do with expertise. Socrates asks whether they should
take Theodorus’ remark that they look similar seriously for Theodorus may not have the kind of
expertise to judge - Theodorus is a mathematician and not a portrait artist (*Ibid.*, 145a). It is still a
philosophical question as to whether the sophistical image is more or less adequate than the
mathematical copy to determine a likeness of philosophy.
352 Plato, *The Sophist*, 235e
Unlike the philosopher, the sophist cannot take the object itself as the basis for his representations, but the relationship between the spectator and the object, as Xavier Audouard writes:

... those constructions that include the angle of the observer, in order that the illusion be produced at the very point where the observer is located ... It is ... this slight deviation, this slight dodge in the real image, that is tied to the point of view occupied by the observer, and which makes it possible to construct the simulacrum, work of the Sophist.353

By means of this ‘dodge in the real image’, ‘truth’ is relativised to the human perspective. We might call the resultant sophistic image a ‘phantasm’ to distinguish it from the philosopher’s ‘icons’. Note also that we associate with these two methods of representation two corresponding understandings of unity. To elucidate, let us look to Russell.

In *Mysticism and Logic* Russell makes a very similar division between two opposed understandings of representation; this serves as a diagnostic measure through which we can determine whether ‘mixture’ is present or whether ‘separation’ has been achieved. He divides representation into two by means of two accounts of unity: one belonging to the mystic, and the other assigned to the new (presumably analytic) philosopher. Russell argues that we can distinguish two kinds of unity, the one:

... we may call the epistemological unity, due merely to the fact that my experienced world is what one experience selects from the sum total of existence; the other that tentative and partial unity exhibited in the prevalence of scientific laws in those portions of the world which science has hitherto mastered.354

We might recognise the account of epistemological unity from the discussion of idealism in the previous section. Like the Stranger’s sophist, the idealist was assigned a doctrine: that the whole is unified only by means of a single consciousness (the spectator) so that truth is relativised to the subject, and the ‘object’ is revealed to be a construction or image (though, of course, using the word ‘image’ invokes an indefensible assumption of an ‘unavailable’ original).355

353 Audouard, ‘*Le simulacre*’, cited in Deleuze, ‘*Plato and the Simulacrum*’, fn. 5.
355 Ibid., 101. We can characterise ‘epistemological unity’ by means of Quentin Meillasoux’s notion of ‘correlationism’: “… the central notion of modern philosophy since Kant seems to be that of correlation. By ‘correlation’ we mean the idea according to which we only ever have access to the
In contrast, philosophical unity would be the unity of scientific law. The representation of a natural event, corroborated by empirical evidence, such that we can say that it holds of those things to which it refers. We find that the philosopher must uphold the unity of judgement in individual cases in spite of lacking an account of the ‘whole’. However, that I could speak of myself as lacking such an account only reveals that I assume the ‘whole’ as a pre-theoretical totality or a pre-philosophical domain. This assumption is evident in the language that Russell and the Stranger use to contrast the two types of unity. It is also required for tentative and partial study, which can be said to be true or false by its relation to the original.

But let us ask whether we can really separate these two types of representation. Attempting to represent accounts of representation is difficult since it doesn’t seem that I can assume a representation of these two types of representation without the question of that very representation being subject to one or other type of representation (and it is an open question as to which type it is subject to). As we have seen both the Stranger and Russell must assume a ‘whole’ higher than either type of unity such that they can speak of two kinds of unity. For

correlation between thinking and being, and never to either term considered apart from the other” (Meillasoux, After Finitude: An Essay on the Necessity of Contingency, 5).

We might also refer to David Stove’s GEM as an example of the sophistical argument that follows from this. Stove ran a competition to uncover ‘the worst argument in the world’ and, rather ironically, awarded it to himself for the GEM. Stove thought it an argument popularised by idealist philosophies and yet endemic to philosophy since Plato. Stove’s GEM argues from the premise that we only know objects in so far as they are related to us or fall under conceptual schemes to the conclusion that we cannot know objects as they are in themselves. See, The Plato Cult and Other Philosophical Follies, 144.

356 Carefully looking again to the earlier quotation, Russell says that the epistemological unity is “… due merely to the fact that my experienced world is what one experience selects from the sum total of existence” and the other unity is “… exhibited in the prevalence of scientific laws in those portions of the world which science has hitherto mastered” (Russell, ‘On Scientific Method in Philosophy’ in Mysticism and Logic, 101, my emphasis). We can see that to make the distinction Russell presumes a whole from which either selects: the difference is found in the selection process. The Stranger’s language also betrays this assumption: he calls the first image a ‘copy’; of the other he says that it “… would lose all resemblance to the alleged original, if one could only get an adequate view of its vast proportions …” (Plato, The Sophist, 236b, my emphasis).

357 The separation of representational types depends upon not asking after the representational status of the separated kinds. We might suspect that analysis cannot ‘go ahead’ where the metaphilosophical question asks after the validity or justification of analysis itself and yet, to ask after the validity or justification of it is to presume that one can separate out the valid from the invalid, which presumes the possibility of analysis. Following The Sophist, we have emphasised only one side of the aporia, but it is only an aporia because it cuts both ways. We have shown that metaphilosophical questions can be unjustly blocked by a naïve emphasis on analysis. It is also the case that one must, in asking metaphilosophical questions, ‘distinguish’ or ‘separate’ mixture through analysis. Metaphilosophical questions are not the questions that should be answered prior to analysis, but the questions we are continually posing and answering through analysis.
this reason, the sophist could also assume an epistemological account of unity and argue that the philosopher’s representation of the whole as totality is a mere phantasm.

As an example, let us think about the metaphor of painting: in order to name the sophistic phantasm mimicry, I need to assume a perspective upon the relationship between an image and the original. However, the sophist would argue that it is nonsensical to speak of an original that we could compare to images. The philosopher claims that the sophist accommodates the image to the spectator, but the sophist may retort that to think any image could appear without such an accommodation to our experience would only be to refuse it as an appearance. Even the copy must accommodate itself to ideas of correctness. Correctness here cannot mean complete fidelity to the proportions of the original, for if the copy were entirely correct this would mean that it accommodated itself to the original image to the extent that it would be indistinguishable from it, suggesting that the philosopher ‘creates’ the original.

The occupation of the sophist, from the Stranger’s perspective, is mimesis or image-making, but the sophist holds that all images, even the icon, are doxaminetic (mimicries of doxa). To define the sophistic image as a phantasm, or to think it falsifying, the philosopher must assume an independent domain or the ‘whole’ as totality, such that he can uphold the possibility of judgment. But this is precisely what the sophist denies.

One cannot argue that the account of the ‘whole’ as ‘totality’ is just what must be assumed to make philosophy possible (to uphold the possibility of true and false judgement), because that would be to concede to the sophist that the assumption is a useful fiction and so potentially a ‘mere image’. We might attempt the following argument instead: any ‘philosophy’ that attempts to speak of the ‘whole’, in the epistemological sense, lies beyond the limits of philosophical judgement, for the reason that in assuming this account one undermines the veracity of philosophical judgement.

Recall that Russell argues that no proposition can be judged true or false of the ‘whole’. Russell defines concern with the ‘whole’ as “… in essence, little more
than a certain intensity and depth of feeling". 358 If mysticism can be reduced to a private (aesthetic or ethical) *feeling* then it can be excluded from the public domain of philosophical account-giving. 159 Likewise, in explaining the sophistic phantasm the Stranger leaves behind the illusory effect of correctness to focus on the aesthetic (and perhaps also ethical) effect of beauty. The sophistic’s phantasm is no longer understood as motivated by the intention to appear correct from the perspective of the viewer, but by the intention to *appeal* to the viewer. 360 The ethical or aesthetic, concerned as it is with the distinction of better from worse, rather than with the distinction between *kinds*, is considered beyond the scope of philosophy.

However, arguing that sophistry lies beyond the limits of philosophical sense has proved continually problematic. The Stranger announces that the problem is the result of philosophy’s inheritance of Parmenides’ account of *being* or the ‘whole’. 361 Parmenides, who the Stranger speaks of as the ‘Great Parmenides’, ‘father Parmenides’ who talks to us as though we were children, represents the law that cannot be made an object of scrutiny, but must be obeyed. 362 As the philosopher of the ‘whole’, Parmenides prohibits us from taking the ‘whole’ as an object of study. It would thereby cease to be the ‘whole’. That is, any representation of the ‘whole’ would be merely partial.

Russell also argues that ‘mixture’ in philosophy is descended from the logical mysticism of Parmenides, which is also the mysticism of “… Hegel and his modern disciples”. 363 He writes:

An elaborate logic, beginning with Parmenides, and culminating in Hegel and

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358 Russell, ‘Mysticism and Logic’ in *Mysticism and Logic and Other Essays*, 3
359 Russell judges that:

... what is valuable ... is not any metaphysical theory as to the nature of the world to which it may give rise, nor indeed anything which can be proved or disproved by argument. What is valuable is the indication of some new way of feeling towards life and the world ... (Russell, ‘On Scientific Method in Philosophy’ in *Mysticism and Logic and Other Essays*, 109).

360 Plato, *The Sophist*, 2336a. The Stranger advises that “[w]hen … our craftsmen neglect fidelity to fact; they give their images not the true proportions, but those which will produce the illusion of beauty” (Ibid., 2336a).

361 Ibid., 237a
362 Ibid., 237a, 241d, 237
363 Russell, ‘Mysticism and Logic’ in *Mysticism and Logic*, 8. In *History of Western Philosophy*, Russell writes that “[w]hat makes Parmenides historically important is that he invented a form of metaphysical argument that, in one form or another, is to be found in most subsequent metaphysicians down to and including Hegel. He is often said to have invented logic, but what he really invented was metaphysics based on logic” (Russell, *History of Western Philosophy*, 67). Parmenides is here presented as the forerunner of ‘mixture’, as understood in *Mysticism and Logic*. 

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his followers, has been gradually developed, to prove that the universe is one indivisible whole, and that what seem to be its parts, if considered as substantial and self-existing, are mere illusion.\textsuperscript{364}

That is to say that the ‘whole’ does not admit of separation so that \textit{diaerésis}, or analysis, is revealed to be a form of image-making.

Parmenides’ prohibition creates the conditions for sophistry in philosophy. What for the philosopher is a prohibition, for the sophist is experienced as facilitation: that we cannot speak of the ‘whole’ allows all discourse to be equivalent, judged not according to truth, but only contingently or perspectively. Sophistry is “… just a garrulous expression of the silence of unity” in Parmenides.\textsuperscript{365}

We might relate Parmenides’ prohibition to Socrates’ forewarnings at the beginning of \textit{The Sophist}. In that context, the ‘whole’, in the sense of the grounds and possibility of philosophy, was not a pre-philosophical matter. If the question of philosophy is already a philosophical question then any particular account of philosophy is potentially a mere image (or, rather, we cannot divide images from the original). Problems of circularity and regress ensue. Moore critiqued Kant for making reason both the criticiser and the criticised: “… if we are to criticize reason, he claims, we need to do so from a standpoint which is not itself subject to criticism of the same sort”.\textsuperscript{366} Moreover, we are then unable to foreclose the sophistic challenge as we cannot determine, prior to philosophical discourse (now represented as the ability to determine this), philosophers from sophists. Rather, committed to a potentially endless self-reflexive enquiry, a final definition of philosophy is always deferred, allowing for sophistic controversy to mix with philosophical speculation.

\textsuperscript{364} Russell writes that "[t]he conception of a Reality quite other than the world of appearance, a reality one invisible and unchanging, was introduced into Western philosophy by Parmenides . . . and most subsequent metaphysical systems are the outcome of this fundamental idea (Russell, ‘Mysticism and Logic’ in \textit{Mysticism and Logic}, 19). Parmenides’ account of the ‘whole’ is taken to be the forerunner of the epistemological unity of the idealists. In the British Idealists Russell finds two theses that originate in Parmenides and that analytic philosophy was to oppose: "... the war was mainly fought over two related doctrines of British Idealism . . . The first doctrine is an extreme form of holism: abstraction is always falsification. Truth can be fully predicated of the absolute alone, not of any of its constituents . . ." (Gerrard, ‘Desire and Desirability: Bradley, Russell and Moore versus Mill’, 40). The second doctrine is that "... external relations are not real” (Ibid., 40). The latter is also said to be found in Kant. We are told that: "[m]any philosophers, following Kant, have maintained that relations are the work of the mind, that things in themselves have no relations, but that the mind brings them together in one act of thought and thus produces the relations which it judges them to have” (Russell, \textit{The Problems of Philosophy}, 51).

\textsuperscript{365} Rosen, ‘The Quarrel between Philosophy and Poetry’, 26

The Stranger, like Moore, recognises that for critique to be meaningful we must assume that the object of criticism (the unity of philosophy) is independent of the mode of critique. With that assumption in the background, we might understand metaphilosophy as the revelation of a kind, by which we could determine the limits of reason in advance of, and independently from, dialogue (this understanding is necessary if we are to exclude the sophist from philosophical dialogue, indeed, it is necessary for us to be able to speak of a sophist in the first place). Metaphilosophy is then to start “… one step earlier than the tradition, with a prior concern for what can be a problem in philosophy, exactly why it is a problem, whether the problem can be avoided, and whether it is a problem that can be solved by philosophy”. 367 Charles L. Griswold, Jr. writes that “[i]n the simplest terms, metaphilosophy is the effort to philosophize about how we reason about things and so to understand, ‘before’ we reason about them, what we can and cannot know”. 368 Once limits have been established, one can thereupon pursue a philosophical problem without asking whether and how it is a problem. Metaphilosophy should put an end to controversy.

We have then two alternative modes of representing metaphilosophy – one that allows for the sophistic threat and one that would promise its foreclosure. The first is the realization that metaphilosophy is both philosophy and the question of philosophy (thus the mixture), whereas the second is the separation as ‘metaphilosophy’ (named) distinct from philosophy in kind by means of its typifying question. The sophistic threat is that the name (in this instance ‘metaphilosophy’ or even ‘philosophy’) is just another name (for either philosophy or sophistry), not a different kind. Again we will struggle to ‘divide’ these two modes of representation. I cannot hold that limits can be drawn pre-philosophically, for then I am assuming

367 Pippin, ‘Critical Methodology and Comprehensiveness in Philosophy’, 199. Pippin is characterizing the understanding of metaphilosophy dominant in the analytic milieu. Such an understanding is also implicit in the language and structure of the divide, for, as we have seen, adopting the divide we assume that the philosopher possesses a standpoint by which to describe philosophies as analytic or continental prior to, and independently from, dialogue (since the divide is used in order to explain why there is lack of dialogue or to refuse dialogue). Moreover, these representations are typically not themselves subject to scrutiny, but are understood to be merely descriptive. They are also divorced from the question of their relation to philosophy as a ‘whole’; we simply describe the ‘parts’.

just what needs to be argued for. But if I argue for a pre-philosophical account, it is, for that reason, by no means ‘pre-philosophical’.

The aporia of original and image is then implied in that any account of the original could be an image. The problem of instituting a rule by exception also arises.\(^{369}\) If the metaphilosophical task is understood as involving an external perspective upon philosophy it can always be argued that the limits drawn are merely the dogmatic imposition of limitations.\(^{370}\) Kant recognises this as a problem and gives a metaphor for this vision of metaphilosophy (which he associates with Hume):

If I represent the earth as it appears to my senses, as a flat surface with a circular horizon, I cannot know how far it extends. But experience teaches me that wherever I may go, I always see a space around me in which I could proceed further; and thus I know the limits of my actual knowledge of the earth at any given time, but not the limits of all possible geography …\(^{371}\)

Kant calls Hume a geographer of human reason who has imagined that he has “… sufficiently disposed of this problem of reason’s transgression by setting it outside the horizon of human reason …” – a horizon that he is yet able to determine, supposedly without transgression.\(^{372}\) But this means that he may merely restrict the understanding without defining its limits.\(^{373}\) Moreover, one potentially excludes one’s own position, as the very position that ensures philosophical sense, from philosophical sense.\(^{374}\)

\(^{369}\) We might say that that the intelligibility of discourse itself cannot be ‘said’ by any discourse. Or, more pertinently, in attempting to represent the possibility of representation, the question of how we are able to represent nonetheless arises.

\(^{370}\) This problem arose in the last chapter: we said that the adoption of norms to identify a group is potentially problematic in that norms can also be called into question. Socrates, who worried that the Stranger may be a god in disguise, first introduced this problem. The Stranger may assume a position as a philosophical judge, yet a position that is not available for our judgement. Yet the imperative to ‘know oneself’ also begs the question of how one can know. It draws us into an investigation of what might be uncritically presupposed in setting limits.

\(^{371}\) Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A759/B787. Kant also writes that:

The sum of all the possible objects of our knowledge appears to us to be a plane, with an apparent horizon – namely that which in its sweep comprehends it all, and which has been entitled by us the idea of unconditioned totality. To reach this concept empirically is impossible, and all attempts to determine it \textit{a priori} in accordance with an assured principle have proved vain (Ibid., A759/B787).

\(^{372}\) Ibid., A760/B788

\(^{373}\) Kant writes that Hume “… merely restricts the understanding, without defining its limits, and while creating a general mistrust fails to supply any determinate knowledge of the ignorance which for us is unavoidable” (Ibid., A767/B795).

\(^{374}\) If I hold to the possibility of a domain of philosophical texts, which I might use to make right and wrong judgements about philosophy \textit{per se}, we still have to know what texts to select for judgement; that is, I have to know that these texts are \textit{philosophical} texts. I cannot presume to know this pre-philosophically or by external ‘pre-philosophical’ criteria, for it is the very matter in question. If I do
It is not possible, within the Parmenidean account, to represent intelligibility as such or being as such; it is also not possible to represent unintelligibility as such. We might now consider the problem of excluding the ‘sophist’ as a problem of non-being issuing from Parmenides’ prohibition. If we have no recourse to think the ‘whole’ as totality in order to determine its boundaries, neither can we be said to know what supposedly lies beyond those boundaries. For Parmenides, if all is ratified in the ‘whole’, then we cannot speak of the ‘false’ as such or, rather, of ‘that’ which would lie outside the domain of intelligibility. The Stranger and Theaetetus in defining the sophism as possessing an art of illusion or as a maker of false images, and as a phantasm of the philosopher, have inadvertently said that ‘non-being’ is and so fallen into self-contradiction. They imagine the sophist referring them to Parmenides’ prohibition, which the Stranger rehearses:

Never shall this be enforced,  
that the things that are not are;

From that wild way of thought  
thou must hold thy mind afar.

Russell refers to the same passage of Parmenides’ poem as a condition of ‘mixture’: “[t]hou canst not know what is not – that is impossible – nor utter it; for it is the same thing that can be thought and that can be” and “[i]t needs must be that what can be thought and spoken of is; for it is possible for it to be, and it is not possible for what is nothing to be.”

not allow this as a philosophical question, open to speculation, then this is just what instituting a rule by means of an exception means – the capacity for judgement is achieved, but at the cost of safeguarding from judgement the very grounds that I propose to support the capacity for judgement itself.

This is a problem more generally for adopting this metaphilosophical standpoint: “… the ability to set such limits seems to place metaphilosophic reflection outside the boundaries it sets for itself” (Pippin, ‘Critical Methodology and Comprehensiveness in Philosophy’, 200).

375 See the discussion in Plato, The Sophist, 237a-239a.
376 Plato, The Sophist, 237a. Likewise, when the ‘continental philosopher’ is said to speak nonsense or to speak ‘beyond the limits of sense’, we become embroiled in contradiction for we seem to need a philosophical conception of the non-philosophical. We used Pigden’s article to make this argument earlier in the chapter. Following The Sophist we will shortly baptise this third problem as a problem of non-being.
378 Russell, ‘Mysticism and Logic’ in Mysticism and Logic, 8. The Stranger’s interpretation of the problem is similar to Russell’s. For Russell, Parmenides introduces the problem of negative existentials. Russell understands the Parmenidean argument as follows:

The essence of this argument is: When you think, you think of something; when you use a name, it must be the name of something. Therefore both thought and language
Theaetetus has not grasped the profundity of this problem and he asks for it to be clarified further. He is asked to be brave and give an account of imagery (as the form of sophistry). Theaetetus answers plainly that by ‘images’ we mean the images in water and mirrors, or those produced by painters, but an enumeration of examples is not an account. When asked for a definition, Theaetetus answers that he means a semblance as opposed to genuine reality. The object is not true, and no real entity “... though it really is a semblance”. But the Stranger asks what is meant by ‘really’. This expresses a feeling about being; it is a sign of experience and not of knowledge.

The Stranger says that Theaetetus has obviously never seen a sophist, for Theaetetus is treating the sophist as though he had use of his eyes; however, if he had seen a sophist, he would take the sophist for a man who keeps his eyes shut or rather has no eyes. The sophist asks for a reason or account, but it seems that there is nothing intrinsic about the image itself that could confirm its derived status. The image can be no less real or true than what we take to be the original insofar as we hold that both are. If ‘imagery’ is the form of the sophist, just as we cannot define an image as a separable kind, neither will we be able to define the sophist and divide sophistry from philosophy.

In frustration we might represent the sophist as embodying the problem of representation, but that problem cannot simply be represented, for as we have seen this would involve us in self-contradiction. The sophist that has been presented

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379 Plato, *The Sophist*, 237c
380 Ibid., 239b
381 Ibid., 240b, my emphasis.
382 Ibid., 239e
383 The sophist is not available for representation; he stands in for the problem of representation. Just as ‘non-being’ stands in for perplexity and cannot be asserted. Thinking that we could simply represent the problem of representation through the figure of the sophist would be akin to trying to solve an aporia by representing it as a choice between two contradicting proposals.
throughout the dialogue is itself “… an example of a phantom in speech”. He reflects to us the aporias of metaphilosophy. We might say with Benardete that:

The sophist, whom Theaetetus has not seen and who seems to have his eyes shut or is even without them, can never either be seen or see. He is a construction … which came to be in the dialogue because of the necessity that sophistry be one art. Theaetetus believes that the sophist they are hunting is ‘real’; he is blessedly ignorant that the stranger is asking him to track down themselves.

Noting this is no solution: as a construction ‘the sophist’ reveals the possibility that all philosophy could be a construction and “… just as the sophist closes his eyes and challenges the consequences of our words, so too we must close our eyes to visual images and meet that challenge”. The representations of the sophist (and ‘continental’ philosopher) serve to represent the problem of representation. In the following chapter we depart from images of the sophist and philosopher (and the ‘continental’ and ‘analytic’ philosopher) to examine a possible solution to this problem. We have to be able to give a philosophical defence of philosophy as having access to kinds before we can again revisit the task of representing the difference between philosopher and sophist (and ‘analytic’ and ‘continental’ philosophy).

In this chapter I argued that the problem of sophistry is applicable to the divide between analytic and continental philosophy. I held that this is the case in two senses: first, I argued that the divide, considered in the context of its use, represents philosophy against sophistry. If those arguments have purchase, then the divide can be connected to a feature of idealist philosophy: the imperative to provide a critique of philosophy per se, to determine the legitimate against the illegitimate, and to determine philosophy’s “… immanent, legitimate uses, from its transcendent or illegitimate ones”.

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384 Benardete, The Being of the Beautiful, II.118. Throughout this chapter, the reader may have seen a similar conclusion appropriate to the divide. The ‘continental’ ‘sophist’ – through the demand that he should belong to a singular kind, separable from philosophy – may also be entitled a construction, a construction that is to represent the very problem of representation, and thus he involves us in self-contradiction and is a contradictory figure himself.

385 Ibid., II.118

386 Rosen, Plato’s Sophist, 205

387 Alberto Toscano, Fanaticism: On the Uses of an Idea, 120. We can also remark upon similarities with Enlightenment critique: “[i]f the Enlightenment can be regarded, from a certain vantage point, as the assertion of the this-worldly rights of immanence against the religious and political prerogatives of transcendent sources of authority …”, then the analytic critique of idealism as a critique of the
Secondly, I argued that any such representation faces the challenge of sophistry, which calls the philosopher’s very capacity to form apt representations into question. To conclude this chapter let us comment on the connection between these two senses in which I have said that the problem of sophistry is applicable, asking why the attempt to define the sophist against the philosopher also invites sophistic threats.

In the first section of this chapter I argued that to call someone a sophist is not merely to exclude them from philosophical discourse, I can only justify that exclusion on the basis of arguing for the impossibility of discourse. I said that the divide is also based on the impossibility of discourse so that those excluded resemble sophists.

To recall those arguments here, I said that because representations of analytic and continental philosophy are used to engage or disengage with philosophers to form a divide, the descriptive features and traits that are employed to represent these groups as unified and opposed will be such that they prefigure reasons and justifications for engagement or disengagement. In the context of the use of indicia I argued that we must pay attention to the way in which all the very representations and traits which allow us to ‘see’ the separate terms of the divide are themselves surreptitiously evoked as part of a rationale for why one should engage or disengage with one of the two sides. As has been argued, this rationale cannot originate from assumed transcendent authority of the continental philosophy (and his defence of the immanent in response), can be understood as an Enlightenment critique (Ibid., 120).

In fact, the images of sophistical philosophy that emerge in Kant’s own work are not dissimilar to those we have just finished exploring. We might refer to Alberto Toscano’s Fanaticism: On the Uses of an Idea, which gives a history of the uses of the term fanaticism. The idealist, in the minds of the early analytic, is a fanatic of sorts – he refuses to reason, or rather he ‘raves with reason’: he is possessed by an excess of reason that takes him beyond the limits of experience, where he dictates what are ultimately merely subjective doctrines.

Kant also “… inherits from the Enlightenment the concern with fanaticism understood as a pathology of transcendence, the delusion that reason may legislate about that of which it has no experience, that there is knowledge of the beyond”. In Kant’s Dreams of a Spirit-See fanaticism, or Schwämmerei, emerges as a problem of “… the intellectual construction of a universe” (Ibid., 125). And Hegel, according to Toscano, defines fanaticism as “… enthusiasm for the abstract” (Ibid., 126, see Hegel, ‘Who Thinks Abstractly?’).

If fanaticism is understood as an excess of reason, it is not then fundamentally foreign and extrinsic to reason, but a possibility intrinsic to philosophy. As Toscano recognises: Vigilance against unreason is no longer simply a matter of proper political arrangements or social therapies, of establishing secularism or policing madness, it is a matter intrinsic to reason’s own operations and capacities, a matter of separating its immanent, legitimate uses, from its transcendental or illegitimate ones (Ibid., 120).
the mere observation of the divide, because the rationale should explain the very 
formation of those groupings such that it is thought possible to note applicability in 
the first place; for example, it should explain why philosophers have supposedly 
placed themselves into groups, or why philosophers feel the need to enforce this 
particular division rather than make use of countless others that could provide more 
informed (because less general) exegetical groupings.

I have said that the analytic representation of continental philosophy must 
provide a reason to exclude this ‘type’ of philosopher from philosophical discourse. 
I argued that reasons such as differing interests or understandings of philosophy are 
not sufficient to exclude a ‘philosopher’, for so long as philosophy implies, and 
implicitly asks metaphilosophical questions, thus calling itself to make these 
questions explicit, and hence answer them, discourse over ‘metaphilosophical’ 
features has to be a possibility. If we refuse this possibility we risk converting 
philosophy into sophistry. Citing reasons of differing interests to disengage does not 
then justify disengagement, though it may provide contingent reasons to withdraw 
the obligation to enter into discourse. I argued that the only way in which 
disengagement could be thought justified would be if continental philosophers were 
represented not as philosophers, but as sophists, so that their inclusion in philosophy 
would be thought to frustrate philosophical discourse or even undermine the 
integrity of the discipline. On this basis, it seems that we would have a positive 
reason to argue for exclusion.

In the second section of this chapter we provided images of the sophist and the 
continental philosopher to show that they are represented in such a way that would 
anticipate the impossibility of unified philosophical dialogue. By representing the 
threat of sophistry, the philosopher may seem to achieve an externalisation of the 
aporias of metaphilosophy (aporias are represented as the problematic opinions of 
another) but, as we have seen, the aporia of original and image is merely replicated 
at the level of the representations. I said that the failure to represent sophistry (as 
other to philosophy) reveals the problem of philosophical representation. If 
sophistry is a problem regarding philosophy’s own ground and justification then 
critique must be a matter intrinsic to philosophy: any representation of sophistry as 
other to philosophy would again lead us to the question of how, on what grounds
and with what justification, philosophy is able to represent the difference. It seems that we cannot answer these questions with any given representation, but must move to the question of the grounds for justifying philosophical representation: to ask how such representation might be justified. It is to this topic that we turn in the following chapter.
CHAPTER THREE: METAPHILOSOPHICAL APORIA

While the previous chapter showed that the problem of sophistry is applicable, we now begin to apply the challenge of sophistry to the divide. That is, we are to consider what consequences the sophistic challenge may have for the use of the divide. The present chapter provides the necessary groundwork for that discussion, which will be undertaken in the following, concluding chapter.

In the first section of the present chapter, 'The Grounds of Diaeresis', we will look to The Sophist and to Mysticism and Logic for a refutation of the problem of sophistry (or 'mixture'). Thus far we have focused on, roughly, the first half of these texts, which both culminate in the problem of non-being. In both works, this is followed by a new doctrine, explored from various vantage points, which would provide a solution to the problems of sophistry. We are concerned with how one might ground diaeresis or philosophical representation against sophistic threats, such that one could define and thus exclude the sophist.

In the second and final section, 'From Irony to the Ideal', we ask after the limits of these doctrines and what their limitations might reveal regarding the metaphilosophical task. We will seek to critique them on that basis. This critique will inform the following and concluding chapter, which will show the consequences of, and relevance of, the problem of sophistry for our contemporary use of the divide.

388 The aporia of non-being is considered in the midway article ‘On Scientific Method in Philosophy’ in Mysticism and Logic and at The Sophist, 237b onwards.
389 In Mysticism and Logic the articles: ‘The Ultimate Constituents of Matter’, ‘The Relation of Sense-Data to Physics’, ‘On The Notion of Cause’ and ‘Knowledge by Acquaintance and Knowledge by Description’. We take up again the narrative of The Sophist at 241d.
3.1 THE GROUNDS OF DIAERÉSIS

The Stranger recognises that they need to transgress Parmenides’ prohibitions, if they are to bring the task of the dialogue to a close. The Stranger announces that he has a request to make of Theaetetus: “[p]ray do not look on me in the light of a parricide”; he says this, as they will be forced to challenge the words of Parmenides, and in doing so: “[s]elf-defence will compel us to put the doctrine of my father Parmenides to the question”.390 He asks Theaetetus to be brave: “… the guiding metaphor of the discussion is shifting from hunting to war. The Stranger is about to declare war on all of his predecessors”.391 The Stranger is to break away, not only from his own Eleatic tradition, but also from the ‘unity’ of the philosophical tradition understood in the Parmenidean sense.392

The Stranger will need to usurp the privileged position barred by Parmenides in order to find a way of speaking about the ‘whole’ as an independent totality.393 For Russell, we must replace the idea of the ‘whole’, not with “… the whole of things collectively …”, but with “… all things distributively”. That is, with: “… the assertion that there are properties which belong to each separate thing, not that there are properties belonging to the whole of things collectively”.394 But the problem is how we can assume this collectivity in order to speak of each separate thing. For example, the Stranger begins by critiquing his predecessors for

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390 Plato, *The Sophist*, 240d5. We can think about the break with idealism as analogous to the parricide of Parmenides, in that the early analytic philosophers forged an identity through their inheritance of British Idealism and the refusal of that lineage. Recall also that Russell draws a connection between Parmenides and idealism (as shown earlier in the thesis).

391 Rosen, *Plato’s Sophist*, 205

392 That is, the apparent subordination of the analysis to the question of the ‘whole’ or the subordination of our judgements about philosophers and sophists to the hospitality that the question of the ‘whole’ will be shown to require of us.

393 This can also be explained in terms of the hermeneutic task. The reader must interpret the meaning of a text, but this act is not a simple repetition of already accepted words – they must be paraphrased, explicated, judged and placed within the ‘whole’. In so doing the reader ‘usurps’ the position of the author.

394 Russell, ‘On Scientific Method in Philosophy’ in *Mysticism and Logic*, 111. Russell also writes: “[t]he philosophy which I wish to advocate may be called logical atomism or absolute pluralism, because, while maintaining that there are many things, it denies that there is a whole composed of those things” (Ibid., 111). Of course, Russell’s rejection of talk of the ‘whole’ also originates from his earlier work on the philosophy of mathematics and set theory. Talk of the ‘whole’ involves the contradiction of Russell’s paradox.
attempting to speak of being precisely. In doing so they construct a myth about being, reducing it to a being, or an image. In Russell’s terms, as we have seen, we cannot say anything true or false about the ‘whole’ or assign it any properties – philosophy is thereby converted into poetry or divine revelation. We begin with the question of how we might speak of being non-mythically or how we can acquire (rather than produce) the nature of originals.

Russell finds an answer in his account of knowledge by acquaintance, which is akin to the only account of being that the Stranger will leave unrefuted – that being is the power of affection. Russell holds that we have a direct cognitive relation to sense-data, which, though cognitive, does not give propositional knowledge or constitute a judgement. If the relation to sense-data is passive and non-propositional, then there is the possibility of a non-mythic knowledge of beings.

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395 The Stranger begins at The Sophist, 242c, by critiquing his ‘clumsy and popular’ predecessors who attempt to speak precisely about being or the ‘whole’ per se. They have done so by counting, claiming that there are one or two or three kinds of beings or they have given to being a property, claiming that, for example, being is ‘water’ or the ‘hot’ and ‘cold’ (Plato, The Sophist, 242d). Russell also began Mysticism and Logic with these pre-Socratic philosophies, to explore philosophy’s origin in ‘mixture’ and its connection to myth (Russell, ‘Mysticism and Logic’ in Mysticism and Logic, 2). For the Stranger, these philosophers have “… told us a kind of myth, as though we were children” (Plato, The Sophist, 242c). Rosen comments: “[l]ike a contemporary analytical philosopher, the Stranger chastizes traditional thinkers for their obscure language. Like the analyst, he wonders whether it is possible to understand what these myths say” (Rosen, Plato’s Sophist, 207).

Why do these philosophers fall into dogmatism, or, more precisely, create the conditions for philosophical dogmatism? In speaking precisely about being, they assign properties to being as either the ‘all’ or the ‘one’. The Stranger shows that when we assess these accounts we fall into contradiction: if we say that being is one countable property or the sum total of properties (the ‘all’), then in saying that, being has remained, in our saying, a term that is distinct. But if we say that being reduces to the ‘one’, we cannot account for our saying, which introduces multiplicity (Plato, The Sophist, 243e). To those who would claim that being is two principles (such as the ‘hot’ and ‘cold’), the Stranger argues that it is either the case that when we say both principles are being that being must be a third thing (in which case they assert that being is three), or it is the case that since this third thing must unite both principles as instances of being it must be the case that being is one (Ibid., 243e).

Throughout this interrogation the Stranger speaks of being as the ‘all’ (to pan), for he has been discussing countable elements, but being cannot be the ‘all’, for the discussion has shown that being is not countable. He turns to being as the ‘whole’ (ho holos) at Plato, The Sophist, 244c.

396 We will consider this definition in the context of the battle of gods and giants at Plato, The Sophist, 246a.

397 Russell, ‘Knowledge by Acquaintance and Knowledge by Description’ in Mysticism and Logic, 209. It is important to note that we have no acquaintance with being-as-a-whole. Talk about sense-data is not talk about what all being is like, nor do all sense-datum demarcate the totality of being – there may be particulars of which we are not aware. Russell says: “[w]hen I speak of a sense datum, I do not mean the whole of what is given in sense at one time. I mean rather such a part of the whole as might be singled out by attention” (Russell, ‘The Relation of Sense-Data to Physics’ in Mysticism and Logic, 147). Because they are all that we know does not mean that they are all that there is. Russell holds that “[i]f we could construct an impersonal metaphysic, independent of the accidents of our knowledge and ignorance, the privileged position of the actual data would probably disappear and
However, the sophist might again raise the aporia of original and image, by claiming that our relation to sense-data could be productive. The sophist may claim that if we know *being* through experience, and there are conditions to experience, then we are limited to an image of *being*. Any assertion of *being* as radically other to experience would return us to the problem that we began with: how could we then speak, non-mythically, about *being*.

For Russell, the dependence in question is not an *a priori* dependence upon conditions of the mind, but a causal dependence on the body. It is not sense-data themselves that are dependent upon experience, only our awareness of them (our awareness, since it is causally dependent on the body, is in any case something physical). This allows Russell to argue that sense-data are among the ultimate constituents of matter, that they are physical. The sophist might yet ask what is meant by ‘physical’ here. If everything given to experience is ‘physical’ does this not they would probably appear as a rather haphazard selection from a mass of objects more or less like them” (Ibid., 148).

Russell holds that a ‘sophistication’ leads to such a view. The psychologist shows us how what we see is dependent upon the mind and sense-organs and so she argues that *being* must be distinct from what we experience. It is “… argued by psychologists that the notion of a datum passively received by the mind is a delusion, and it is argued by the physiologists that even if a pure datum of sense could be obtained by the analysis of experience, still this datum could not belong, as common sense supposes, to the outer world, since its whole nature is conditioned by our nerves and sense organs.” (Russell, ‘The Ultimate Constituents of Matter’ in *Mysticism and Logic*, 127). In response, Russell writes that while “[s]eeing, smelling, perceiving is mental … it does not follow from this that what is seen etc must be mental” (Ibid.,127). Russell also makes the argument that we only gain knowledge of what is here affirmed – sense organs etc. – through the relationship to the external, which is nonetheless denied (Ibid., 127).

In this regard Russell writes:

Logically a sense-datum is an object, a particular of which the subject is aware. It does not contain the subject as a part, as for example beliefs and volitions do. The existence of the sense-datum is therefore not logically dependent upon that of the subject; for the only way, so far as I know, in which the existence of A can be logically dependent upon the existence of B is when B is part of A (Russell, ‘The Relation of Sense-Data to Physics’ in *Mysticism and Logic*, 152).

Russell argues that “[t]he existence of sense-data is logically independent of the existence of the mind, and is causally dependent upon the body of the percipient rather than upon his mind” (Russell, ‘Constituents of Matter’ in *Mysticism and Logic*, 143). In the article ‘On the Notion of Cause’ he argues that we cannot find anything *a priori* in so called ‘causal’ relations, which we should speak of instead as functional relations (Russell, ‘On the Notion of Cause’ in *Mysticism and Logic*, 207-208).

Sense-data are merely those among the ultimate constituents of the physical world, of which we happen to be immediately aware; they themselves are purely physical, and all that is mental in connection with them is our awareness of them, which is irrelevant to their nature and place in physics. Russell writes that “… if the physicist could describe truly and fully all that occurs in the physical world when there is a flash of lightning, it would contain as a constituent what I see, and also what is seen by anybody else” (Russell, ‘The Ultimate Constituents of Matter’ in *Mysticism and Logic*, 130-131).
mean that in experiences there are no images – whether accurate or inaccurate – so that all will be true?

In response to this objection, we turn to the dispute between those that would allow only the material to be called being and those who would argue that what is presented is actually a part of the subject, or, rather, is not physical, but mental. This dispute has “… something of the effect of a war of giants and gods”. The Stranger says that the battle over this issue, between the two armies, rages, as it has always raged, with unabated fury. The Stranger will attempt to overcome the opposition. To do this he will have to establish a connection between the groups to facilitate dispute. The Stranger begins by offering a definition of being on behalf of the giants (which, as I said, might be thought in a manner akin to Russell’s account of presentation):

… whatever has a native power, whether of effecting anything else, or of being affected in ever so slight a degree by the most insignificant agents, even

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402 Russell considers those philosophers who have spoken wrong-headedly about presentation. He considers the danger that: “… in speaking of presentation, we may so emphasise the object as to lose sight of the subject. The result of this is either to lead to the view that there is no subject, whence we arrive at materialism; or to lead to the view that what is presented is part of the subject” (Russell, ‘Knowledge by Acquaintance and Knowledge by Description’ in Mysticism and Logic, 210).

403 Plato, The Sophist, 246a. According to this myth the giants define being as the body: “… if anyone else should assert that there is anything incorporeal, they simply despise him and decline to hear another word from him” (Ibid., 246a). Their fearsomeness explains the caution of their opponents who hide in some invisible height. This group, the gods, insist, “… that genuine being is a number of incorporeal intelligible forms. As for the bodies their opponents call true reality, they pulverise them by their arguments, and pronounce them to be no being, but only an incessantly fluctuating becoming” (Ibid., 246b).

404 Plato, The Sophist, 246b-c. Although they begin with the giants, the Stranger has just said that it would be easier to begin with the ‘gods’, for “… to get a statement from those who are for the forcible reduction of everything to body will prove harder work, and may be all but impossible” (Ibid., 246c). The Stranger knows only one way of dealing with them: “[t]he best way of all, if only it were possible, is to make them really better men” (Ibid., 246d). This is important for “(a) concession from men of worth of course has more weight than one from inferior persons”. The Stranger slips into an appeal to authority, which he quickly corrects: “… our concern is not with their personalities; it is truth for which we are seeking” (Ibid., 246d). Theaetetus judges this approach ‘just.’ If it is not possible to improve the materialists, it is enough for the Stranger and Theaetetus to imagine the materialist better in order that they may give a civil answer on his behalf (Ibid., 246d). The Stranger will begin with the giants after all. He seems to forget that he was to start with the gods; one might say that he mixes up these levels or that the giants ‘usurp’ the position of the gods in the order of the dialogue. Theaetetus and the Stranger are to ask what these groups mean by being. They fear that the materialists will refuse to give an account, but simply make use of their weapons.
on one solitary occasion, is a real being… In short, I offer it as the definition of beings that they are potency, and nothing else.405

The giants may have refused the soul as something invisible, but if the giants acquiesce in this definition they must also now admit the soul, for it is only through the soul that we can speak of effect. As Russell argues it is probably the case that we have no awareness of ourselves directly; but he argues that nonetheless “… we are acquainted with acquaintance and we know it is a relation. That it must have an object-term and a subject-term”.406 The soul becomes the platform for agreement between the gods and giants or the common ground between the two groups.407 Nevertheless, the gods, the Stranger recognises, will claim that the subjective appearances of which we are aware are mere becomeings.408

For Russell it is nonsensical to ask whether sense-data exist.409 But, we might

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405 Ibid., 247e. The giants must now admit more than just the material into their newly acquired account of being. What the conceptual and the corporeal have in common is affect, by which they bring about a change.

Russell’s first response to the materialists is to admit universals into awareness. He writes: "[n]ot only are we aware of particular yellows, but if we have seen a sufficient number of yellows and have sufficient intelligence, we are aware of the universal yellow; this universal is the subject in such judgements as ‘yellow differs from blue’…. And universal relations such as up and down" (Russell, ‘Knowledge by Acquaintance and Knowledge by Descriptions’ in Mysticism and Logic, 212-213).

406 Admitting the soul succeeds in ‘improving’ the giants (this has the sense of making them better men), or, we might say, it has the effect of humanising and demythologising them.

407 What is common comes to light with the soul, for “… nothing is more shareable than knowledge.”

The Stranger’s argument against both the gods and giants “… lies basically in pointing to the Soul whose activities bridge the gulf between the visible and the invisible, and which is as much bound, on the other hand, to the realm of eternal significance, as it is, on the other hand, to the realm of bodily instantiation” (Findlay, Plato the Written and Unwritten Doctrines, 262).

408 The gods hold that potency is not compatible with being, but that action and passion belong to the body alone. Thus they would disregard the giants’ account of being as mere becoming. They oppose being to becoming. The latter we communicate with the body and the former the rational soul. While the latter is changeable, the former is one and unchanging (Plato, The Sophist, 248a).

This is akin to a view that Russell spends some time considering. The view supposes the ‘really real’ “… to be indestructible” and because “… the immediate data of sense are not indestructible but in a state of perpetual flux …” it is concluded that “… these data themselves cannot be among the ultimate constituents of matter …” or said to be ‘really real’ (Russell, ‘The Ultimate Constituents of Matter’ in Mysticism and Logic, 128). This introduces the divorce between the original and image, which, as we have seen, the sophist exploits.

409 If we assume presentation, then it would be meaningless to say that x exists (if x is a proper name and not a description). Russell considers the logical confusions that would be involved in calling something ‘real’ or making the judgement that it is mere illusion. He argues that to assign something ‘reality’ “… there must be in the world two sorts of objects, namely, the real and the unreal, and yet the unreal is supposed to be essentially what there is not” (Russell, ‘On Scientific Method in Philosophy’ in Mysticism and Logic, 121). Calling something ‘real’ or ‘unreal’ allows for the contradiction involved in asserting that non-being is. Russell provides another argument: the thing of common sense may be identified with the whole class of its appearances — where we must include among appearances not only actual sense-data, but also sensibilia. Since the ‘thing’ could not be identified with any single one of its appearances it was thought distinct. But Russell employs Occam’s
argue that there are illusions such as Theaetetus listed (images in water and mirrors, or those produced by painters), which, although they ‘present themselves’, we judge to ‘fall short of reality’. Russell would respond that “[t]hese have intrinsically just the same status as any other presentation, but differ as regards their correlations or causal connections with other sensibilia and with things”. For Russell it is meaningless to ask whether ‘illusions’ exist or are real, or whether semblance is distinct from being, for ‘there they are’, ‘what is’ appears. An image’s illusory nature is not due to something intrinsic about that image, but is due to a false inference. Russell defines an ‘image’ thus:

… an ‘image’ is an occurrence recognisably visual (or auditory or etc., as the case may be), but not caused by a stimulus which is of the nature of light (or sound or etc., as the case may be), or at any rate only indirectly so caused as a result of association. With this definition, I do not myself feel any doubt as to the existence of images.

Since we may legitimately be wrong with regard to the nature of inferred entities – sensibilia – the gods might still insist upon a divorce between sense-data and what is ‘really real’. Russell’s final response is to argue that we must assume a connection in order to explain the verifiability of science and uphold the possibility of knowledge. Russell makes a number of arguments of this kind; the Stranger will also present such an argument. The Stranger appeals to the passion for knowledge that he hopes he has instilled in Theaetetus. He asks whether “… knowing is an action”; if so, “… it follows of necessity that to be known is a passion. Hence on this theory, as being comes to be known by knowledge, in the same degree

\[\text{razor}^\text{ – if the class of appearances fulfils our needs then it is expedient to abstain from asserting substratum (Russell, ‘The Relation of Sense-Data to Physics’ in Mysticism and Logic, 155).}\]

\[\text{410}^\text{Ibid., 179}\]

\[\text{411}^\text{For example, dreaming is awareness of sense-data, but not the sensibilia that the dreamer supposes. The Stranger explains dream images as fragmented reflections of existing things (Plato, The Sophist, 266b-c).}\]

\[\text{412}^\text{Russell, An Outline of Philosophy, 202-203}\]

\[\text{413}^\text{Russell, ’The Relation of Sense-Data to Physics’ in Mysticism and Logic, 179. Or, we might say, “… its hypotheses, though unverifiable where they go beyond sense-data, are at no point in contradiction with sense-data, but are ideally such as to render sense-data calculable” (Ibid., 172).}\]

\[\text{414}^\text{Plato, The Sophist, 248e. The Stranger argues from the possibility of philosophical discourse to the necessity of the mixture of being with beings. He presents what could now be called transcendental reflection from the fact of discernment to the necessary conditions for discernment (Ibid., 248e).}\]
to which it becomes known, it is moved”. 415 We must hold that being mixes with knowledge, only with this assumption can we uphold the possibility of philosophy.

It is to the mixture of being with knowledge that we now turn in order to account for true and false judgement. Let us focus first on the Stranger’s account. In order to defend philosophical discourse, there must be the possibility of making true judgments. Therefore, being must be able to be known, and for this, being must combine with representation, and yet, representation cannot exhaust being (or we would have only images). The aporia or “… the perplexity of nonbeing is initially that it must be; the perplexity of being cannot ever be about the that of its being”. 416 Non-being must in some sense be, or combine with being, in order that we can make false judgements (and so speak of false images). Let us turn to the Stranger’s account of commixture to follow him in the resolution of this perplexity.

First, we must assume that logos mixes with being and if we assume this we must also make way for knowledge by admitting that there is a commixture of kinds. It is sufficient for our current purposes to follow the Alfred Edward Taylor translation and define kinds as “… the all-pervasive categories, the most universal characters of objects of knowledge”. 417 The Stranger proceeds to the philosopher’s knowledge of kinds. He argues that when considering kinds such as movement and rest we cannot say that both are without falling into contradiction: being must be distinguished from identity. 418 ‘To be’ cannot mean ‘to be the same as’. 419 The Stranger argues that each kind is other than the others and the same as itself. 420 This takes us to an investigation at The Sophist, 254e, of further kinds: otherness and sameness. Each kind, we are told, is other than the rest in virtue of its participation in otherness and not by means of its own character. If a kind can be other to all other kinds it can also be other to being. 421

415 Plato, The Sophist, 248e. As Russell would say, sense data, which are physical, can be neither static nor indestructible, but are impermanent and in flux. The soul, out of its passion, makes being mobile and available to knowledge.
416 Benardete, The Being of the Beautiful, II.137
417 Taylor, in Plato, The Sophist, 156 fn.
418 Plato, The Sophist, 252a. If motion is identical to $x$ and we can predicate $x$ to rest then we can say that rest moves. If $x$ is identical to motion it must be the opposite of rest, so we can also say that motion rests. The Stranger argues for a distinction between being and identity. If he did not, to say that rest and movement are, would be to risk their identification and the ensuing contradictions.
419 Ibid., 255b
420 Ibid., 252e
421 Ibid., 255e
The Stranger will conclude “… in each of our kinds there is an abundance of being, but also a very infinity of not-being”. Non-being is construed as otherness, which runs across the whole series of kinds. Its purpose is to make each kind other than each other and other than being, and hence not-being. The Stranger concludes: “[t]hen being itself, we shall have to say, is other than the rest of these kinds”; “[t]hus we see that as often as the others are, being is not. Being is not they, but its single self, and the others, in all their numerical infinity, are not”. 424

The Stranger will then argue that non-being is not the contrary of being, but something other. We can now say “… not-being was and is not-being, and has its place as one form among the multitude of them all”. In their disobedience to Parmenides they have said not only that non-being is, but also what it is: other than being.426

The Stranger and Theaetetus set about defining judgement to argue that it combines with otherness so that “… there is the possibility of false judgment and false discourse. In fact, falsity as a character of thought or language is precisely the thinking or saying of what is not”. The Stranger argues that “[w]henever there is a discourse, it must inevitably be a discourse of something; it cannot possibly be a discourse of nothing”. A false discourse does not say ‘the nothing’, but refers to something other than what is the case. Falsity allows for deception “… and if deception exists, it must follow at once that the world is full of empty images, copies, and illusion”.429 The sophist is revealed to reside there.

Before returning to the community of kinds in the next section of the chapter, let us first consider Russell’s version of how true and false judgement is possible.

422 Ibid., 257d. In other words, to paraphrase Alfred Edward Taylor, there must be a multitude of statements to be made of the form ‘this is x’, but there must also be an infinite number of negations to be made of the form ‘this is not y’ (Taylor, in Plato, The Sophist, 165, Fn.).
423 Plato, The Sophist, 256d-e
424 Ibid., 257a
425 Ibid., 258c
426 The Stranger concludes:
There is intermixture of the various kinds, and being and otherness pervade them all and pervade each other; hence, as participating in being, otherness is, in virtue of this participation; yet it is not that in which it participates, but something other, and as other than being, must of manifest necessity, be not-being. Being, in turn, as partaking of otherness, must be other than our remaining kinds; as other than all of them, it is not any one of them, nor all of them together, but only itself (Ibid., 259a-b).
427 Ibid., 260c
428 Ibid., 262e
429 Ibid., 260e
We might begin with Russell’s insistence, which mirrors the Stranger’s, that a discourse is always a discourse of something. 430  We might take “[a] judgement … to be a relation of a mind to several entities – the entities that compose what is judged”. Russell says “[w]henever a relation of supposing or judging occurs, the terms to which the supposing or judging mind is related by the relation of supposing or judging must be terms with which the individual in question is acquainted”. 431

Although judgement must be judgement of something, the judgement must not be a direct relation to that something, but it may describe it (for the same reason that representation should not exhaust being, we must assume distance between representation and being in order for there to be a difference between original and image, in order that we may determine truth from falsity). 432 This is to say that “[w]e need acquaintance with the constituents of the description, but do not need acquaintance with its denotation”. 433 We might know that there is an object and know that it has specific properties without being acquainted with it, although we will be acquainted with the constituents of the description (which may be concepts). We might say that the description approaches the object, but cannot meet it entirely. 434 The inevitable distance allows, of course, for the falsity of our descriptions: we may speak of something that does not exist, and we may talk of something as other than it is. Sophistry can now be understood as saying that which is other than what is.

Although we now have an account of how truth and falsity are possible, we still need to apply this account to diaerésis, which could be a form of sophistry.

430 For “[i]t seems scarcely possible to believe that we can make a judgement or entertain a supposition without knowing what it is that we are judging or supposing about” (Russell, ‘Knowledge by Acquaintance and Knowledge by Description’ in Mysticism and Logic, 219).
431 Ibid., 220-221, emphasis from the original text. However, this assumption raises the very problem of non-being as Russell understands it. He writes that the essence of Parmenides’ argument is the assumption that “[w]hen you think, you think of something; when you use a name, it must be the name of something. Therefore both thought and language require objects outside themselves” (Russell, History of Western Philosophy, 56). If this is so, it seems that from the fact that we can speak of x it follows that x is. And the consequence is the sophistic position that everything is true.
432 We can recognise that this is the case because we may know a proposition without being acquainted with the denotation and we can talk of non-existent objects.
434 Russell says “… we often wish to reach the denotation, and are only hindered by lack of acquaintance; in such cases the description is merely the means we employ to get as near as possible to the denotation” (Ibid., 230)
Approaching a defence of *diaerésis*, let us first think back to the distinction made between two types of unity. We recognised that to meet the sophist’s challenge we must affirm a unity for knowledge as a paradigm for *diaerésis*, one that allows us to speak (truly or falsely) of particulars. However, when attempting to speak of the conditions for truth and falsity we broke Parmenides’ prohibition and were referred to the ‘epistemological’ unity of knowledge.

In response we have said that although we cannot know the ‘whole’ or being as such (in the language of *The Sophist* we might say that being is always other than any given demarcation) we do possess a direct cognitive relation to that which has affect and is selected by our awareness. While this knowledge by acquaintance does not constitute a judgement, we must assume for *diaerésis* or analysis to be possible that acquaintance forms the basis of our knowledge.435 The philosopher, we might say, in the language of *The Sophist*, possesses analysis or *diaerésis*, as the art of revealing kinds as the constituents of judgements.

Knowledge of kinds and their intermixture must be, the Stranger says to Theaetetus, the ‘supreme science of all’.436 To elucidate this science, the Stranger speaks through analogies of musical notes and alphabet letters, components that break down a symphony, or a syllable, into its constituents.437 The musician, or the man of letters, possesses the art of knowing how these constituents ‘mix’ in order to form wholes – that is, which notes belong together to form a harmony, or which letters combine to become the right words. As we now know, judgements can also be broken down into their constituents, and some constituents combine and are compatible, and others not; so, likewise, there will exist a science of division and combination.438

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435 For Russell the “… fundamental epistemological principle in the analysis of propositions containing descriptions is this: Every proposition which we can understand must be composed wholly of constituents with which we are acquainted” (Ibid., 219). Although, as we have seen, this assumption need not commit us to suppose that we are acquainted with the denotation of a given phrase. For falsity to be possible we must be capable of speaking of things as other than they are.

436 *The Sophist*, 253c

437 Ibid., 253b and 261d. Russell also adopts the analogy of musical notes within a symphony to explain logical constructions (Russell, ‘The Ultimate Constituents of Matter’ in *Mysticism and Logic*, 130).

438 Plato, *The Sophist*, 253c. The Stranger says:

… a man will need a science to guide him through the realm of discourse if he means to explain correctly which kinds are concordant with which, and which incompatible … More especially, if he is to tell us whether there are some which serve as all-
The Stranger exclaims, with an oath, that they have come upon the philosopher, and that he is the one who possesses this art of *diaerésis* as the ability to determine *kinds* and their commixture, for “… to divide things by their kinds, not to take one and the same form for different, nor different forms for the same, that, shall we not say, is the business of the science of dialectic?” Diaerésis is “… the perception of combining forms … of distinct forms combined into a unity”.

I said that *diaerésis* resembles a traditional conception of analysis; we can now appeal to Russell’s logical atomism as an account of the veracity of analysis. Logical atomism incorporates a methodological commitment to a two-stage analysis: a decompositional stage wherein a complex is broken down into its simple parts (with which we assume acquaintance and which are supposedly unanalysable), and a stage in which a reconstruction or synthesis of these parts occurs.

This is complemented by an ontological thesis: the thesis that holds that the world is composed of independent particulars, which together form facts. Postulating the *theoretical possibility* of an ideal language where linguistic simples would represent ontological simples brings these two commitments together; this would potentially make the expression of truth perspicuous and evaluable by a one-to-one correspondence between atomic sentence and atomic fact.

Postulating this as, if only in principle, possible, promises to remove the ‘dodge in the real image’ by which the ‘epistemological unity’ is introduced and through which the sophist constructs his simulacrum. It is possible now to reconstruct the ‘whole’ as a ‘totality’ (as the sum of its parts). The unity of knowledge is now made subordinate to analysis in the sense that it is both a necessary

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439 Ibid., 253d
440 Ibid., 260a. The philosopher possesses this “… keen vision that discerns a single form everywhere diffused through a multitude of which each preserves its own distinctness” (Ibid., 260a, my emphasis). I have emphasised ‘perception’ and ‘vision’ to foreground the idea that the grounds of *diaerésis* are experiential – this will assume importance in the next section.
441 See Russell, ‘Constituents of Matter’ in *Mysticism and Logic*.
442 Russell, *Our Knowledge of the External World*, 50
443 This extends to the treatment of matter, Russell writes:
A complete application of the method which substitutes constructions for inferences would exhibit matter wholly in terms of sense-data … This however must remain for the present an ideal, to be approached as nearly as possible, but to be reached, if at all, only after a long preliminary labour of which as yet we can only see the beginning (Russell, ‘The Relation of Sense-Date and Physics’ in *Mysticism and Logic*, 157).
assumption and is posited as the ideal result of its method. The philosopher is raised to the perspective that Parmenides had barred.

With this method in place it is now the philosopher’s discourse that we look to in order to justify or refute. It is also philosophy that can discern the difference between originals and images, icons and phantasms. However, in the following section I will argue that sophistic irony remains with regard to the justification of this discourse.
In this section we turn to a critique of the above doctrines. The critique will not be conducted for its own sake. We have appropriated arguments from the Stranger and from Russell as possible answers to the threat of sophistry, and the purpose of critique is to reveal the necessary assumptions and consequences that follow from these doctrines when they are considered as answers to the sophistic challenge; for this may throw light upon the nature and limits of that metaphilosophical task more generally and so, by extension, upon the divide.

The Stranger has defined the philosopher as the one with keen vision – who is able, on an apparently perceptual basis, to recognise kinds and their intermixture, and thus is able to distinguish original from image.\footnote{Likewise we have seen that the divide is posited as removed from, or prior to, philosophical enquiry. That is, we tend to take it that the divide is pre-philosophical or merely descriptive, due to the philosopher’s keen vision and capacity for correct division. We said that this assumption discourages self-reflection, but also for that reason avoids the circularity of the traditional task, which does not seem capable of foreclosing the sophistic threat.} We adopted the doctrines of Russell and the Stranger as accounts that provide the conditions necessary for the philosopher’s perception of kinds, and thereby the resolution of the aporia of original and image. In providing a critique, we might think first about that which grounds these accounts – acquaintance with sense-data in Russell, and the definition of being as affection in The Sophist.

Recall that when Theaetetus provided visual examples of illusions – images in water and mirrors, or those produced by painters – to expound the nature of falsity, the Stranger warned that the sophist would refuse to open his eyes or would feign ignorance. Footnoting this passage, Alfred Edward Taylor writes that the sophist: \footnote{Taylor, in Plato, The Sophist, 131 fn.}

\begin{quote}
\ldots who professes not to understand what you mean by referring to a pool or a mirror would hardly be content to know what follows from these examples. The meaning appears to be \ldots that he will demand a purely rational definition in which no appeal is made to unanalysed and undefined data of sense.
\end{quote}
Why might this be the case? The sophist is sceptical about the role of unanalysed and undefined sense-data in providing an answer to the epistemological, justificatory question (i.e. the question “how do we know that…?”).

Let us apply this scepticism to Russell’s procedures. Without an account of intellectual intuition or of how abstraction from acquaintance is possible, Russell has not answered the request for a rational account, but has instead asserted unanalyisable particulars. If these are to play a justificatory role, this attracts Wilfrid Sellars’ critique of the myth of the given.446 The ‘given’ can be taken as empirical, as atomic sense-data in phenomenal experience, or as universals.447 We can then extend the concern not only to sense-data, but also to unanalyisable simples that are treated as given, and so to kinds. The ‘given’ is thought to be epistemically independent, justificatory and efficacious for any empirical knowledge that it supports.448 But what is thought given, as radically independent and non-cognitive, cannot also be justificatory.449 Sellars will argue that something can only be efficacious if it can serve as a reason for \( x \) and something can only serve as a reason if it can act as a premise in an argument for \( x \), and it can only do this if it has propositional form.450 The non-propositional is epistemologically inefficacious; therefore, the non-propositional (experience, sense-data, universals) cannot be ‘given’ (in the epistemological sense). deVries and Triplett use the word ‘belief’ for “… propositionally structured candidates for the given”.451 No inferential belief (since it is inferential) is epistemologically independent. Since all empirical beliefs are either inferential or non-inferential neither empirical belief nor any proposition can serve as the given; therefore nothing can play this role.452 This is to say that the problem of original and image remains, because the mere assertion of an original is, if merely asserted, itself a type of myth.

Interestingly, in speaking of philosophers who assert a given, Sellars speaks of ‘myth’, even a necessary ‘myth’. The Stranger had critiqued all previous

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446 See Sellars, ‘Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind’, I am using Willem deVries’ and Timm Triplett’s invaluable ‘The Master Argument against the Given’ to summarize Sellars’ arguments (see deVries and Triplett, Knowledge, Mind and the Given, 104-105).
447 deVries and Triplett, Knowledge, Mind and the Given, xxi
448 Ibid., xxxi
449 Ibid., xviii
450 Ibid., xxxi
451 Ibid., 104. Sellars uses the term ‘report’ (Ibid., 104, fn. 28).
452 Ibid., 105
philosophers for constructing myths and thus had implied that he would provide the first non-mythic account, but it is highly unusual for Plato to present a non-mythic account of the grounds of our knowledge (think of the myth of recollection). Julius Elias in *Plato’s Defence of Poetry* argues that Plato is aware that any system involves indemonstrable and unprovable axioms; rather than construe these dogmatically, he introduces myths as the unanalysable elements involved in a proposal. One might argue that *The Sophist* is a counter-example, but we must not forget that the Stranger is a character in a dialogue and so his character, his status as a stranger, bears upon the doctrine that he presents. We shall return to this point.

First, let us take an example of the use of myth in the doctrine of indemonstrable axioms, for this might reveal what I will call the ‘mythic’ dimension of the Stranger’s, and Russell’s doctrines. We might refer to Socrates’ dream in the *Theaetetus* (the dialogue that, in terms of narrative, directly precedes *The Sophist*) in which Socrates pre-empts the Stranger.

Socrates and Theaetetus discoursed upon the question of the nature of knowledge and the grounds of knowledge. In this dialogue Socrates tells Theaetetus of a dream of analysis — the dream of reconstituting the whole from unanalysable parts. Rosen comments:

Socrates … is also dreaming that thinking, and therefore philosophy, is equivalent to analysing … to dianoia or logismos. It is this premise that leads Socrates to insist that knowledge of a whole is the same as knowledge of the sum of its parts. In this case, if there is to be knowledge at all, it must result from the analysis of a complex into its essential parts.

By ‘Socrates’ dream’ we mean “… the attempt to define philosophy exclusively as analytical thinking”. As we can see, Socrates’ dream is a premonition of the Stranger’s final account of philosophy as analysis. If philosophy is expressed, as in Socrates’ dream in the *Theaetetus*, as a method of analysis able to make intelligible the whole, by matching and expressing everything necessarily true of it, the

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451 Elias, *Plato’s Defence of Poetry*, 74
454 Plato, *Theaetetus*, 201e-202c
455 Rosen, *Socrates’ Dream*, 161
456 Ibid., 162
457 The account found at Plato, *The Sophist*, 260a, in which the Stranger defines the philosopher as the possessor of diaeresis, through which he can ‘perceive’ the combination of distinct forms into unity. Along with Hans Meyerhoff, we might also say that it is a premonition of logical atomism. According to him the dialogue also foresees the demise of logical atomism (Meyerhoff, ‘Socrates’ Dream in the *Theaetetus*, 131-132).
intelligibility of the whole is reflected in the nature of the proposal, and, in the
*Theaetetus*, that proposal is the consequence of a dream.\(^{458}\) Or, in other words, there
is an irreducible, for want of a better expression, ‘mythical’ dimension to this
proposal that undermines the demand for an *exclusively* analytical philosophy. This is
the case because the ‘whole’ (and by this we mean to also refer to the grounds of
philosophy) cannot be an object of intuition, or an outcome of analytic method. Let
us consider why I say this, beginning with the former assertion.

How can we talk about *intuition* of the whole as a totality? Socrates warned
that if the philosopher assumes such a position to judge philosophy as a whole he
assumes the position of the ‘wise’ and becomes indistinguishable from the sophist.\(^{459}\)
Let us apply this to Russell’s atomism and say, in a post-Kantian context, that to
ground analysis upon direct acquaintance, as Russell does, we would suppose our
intellect to be intuitive. This would be to hold that our intellect is archetypal rather
than ectypal (a reproduction or copy). But this would imply a divine intellect
(according to a philosophical construction of what a divine intellect might be like); it
implies that direct intuition is an act of spontaneous creation (we perhaps get an
image of such an intellect in dreams).\(^{460}\) And we might then say that the sophist
could be right: that the philosopher creates originals, which is equivalent to saying
that everything is an image.\(^{461}\) Adopting a *perspective* on the whole as a totality does
not protect against sophistry, but leads directly to threats of sophistry, precisely for
the reason that the ‘whole’ is made subordinate to thinking and perception.

The ‘whole’ cannot be a product of analysis, for it must be presupposed to
render analysis significant and intelligible. For this reason, understanding philosophy
as analysis, and taking this to contrast with synthesis, is misleading.\(^{462}\) Take, as an

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\(^{458}\) Or of hearsay – Socrates tells of a dream in which he has heard of a dream of such analysis (Plato,
*Theaetetus*, 201c).

\(^{459}\) This is again the problem of enforcing a rule by means of an exception, where, in attempting to
take the position of the divine philosopher, one may oneself be identified as the sophist.

\(^{460}\) I am thinking about a ‘philosophical construction of what a divine intellect might be’ in terms of
Kant’s account of intellectual intuition. Interestingly, to take dreams for reality (or the dreaming up
of ‘realities’) is the metaphor by which Kant frames his enquiry into intellectual fanaticism in *Dreams
of a Spirit-Seer*.

\(^{461}\) This is why transcendental realism (the belief that reality as such is accessible through an archetype)
is, in the last analysis, empirical idealism (the production of reality and the identification of reality
with the individual psychology). They become both dogmatic and interchangeable positions because
it remains a *decision* which perspective one endorses as fact.

\(^{462}\) As Sellars argues: “… a purely analytic philosophy would be a contradiction in terms …” since:
… it implies that the essential change brought about by philosophy is the standing out
example, the intelligibility of discourse in the Stranger’s example of the alphabet: it cannot be reduced to the combination of letters into syllables (just as the meaning of Socrates’ name is not reducible to its letters or sounds). Philosophical analysis cannot be a piecemeal activity that magically arrives at the ‘whole’. Rather, the idea of the ‘whole’ as ideal is implicated in philosophical analysis in order for it to be taken as philosophically sound. Rosen writes:

> If thinking is analysing, then significance cannot be an end or intention; it must be given to analysis from the outset. For, otherwise, the end of analysis will be an element. If it is simple, then it will be unknowable; if again complex, then our calling it an end is purely conventional, since every complex is subject to further analysis.  

This is to say, “[a]nalysis cannot arrive at its own justification” or have the significance and meaning of analysis as the result of its own procedures. This is also to say that analysis can never be equivalent to philosophy, for we require an account of the significance of analysis that is not itself the result of any given analysis.

According to Russell’s biographer Alan Wood, Russell gave up trying to define philosophy, and used it in two senses, or had two ways of understanding it: “a) as analysis, as clarifying the ideas of science” and, quoting Russell, b) “Philosophy … is something intermediate between theology and science … a No Man’s Land”. Wood explains:

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463 In relation to the Stranger’s explication of diairesis through the metaphor of the alphabet at The Sophist, 253b and 261d, Rosen writes: “[w]e could say that the name of the syllable formed from the letters S and O is SO. Hence the name ‘Socrates’ might be woven together from the names SO, CRA, and TES. But the meaning of the name ‘Socrates’ has nothing to do with the names of its syllabic constituents” (Ibid., 185-186).

464 Ibid., 164. Rosen writes: “[a]nalytical thinking requires simple elements. Yet, if we restrict ourselves to analytical thinking, simple elements are impossible. Whatever we may say of a simple element is actually an assertion about a compound of elements. This does not mean that the doctrine of simple elements must be rejected, but that it cannot be explained in its own terms” (Ibid., 164).

466 Wood, ‘Russell’s Philosophy: A Study of its Development’ in Russell, My Philosophical Development, 276. The internal quote is from Russell’s History of Western Philosophy, 10.
When he was thinking of philosophy in the first way, (a), he wrote that logic was ‘the essence of philosophy’. In the other way, (b) he made such startlingly contradictory statements as that ‘Logic, I maintain, is no part of philosophy’, and that ‘Nine-tenths of what is regarded as philosophy is humbug. The only part that is at all definite is logic, and since it is logic it is not philosophy’. One can imagine someone writing in one context that ‘You cannot read without knowing your ABC’, and in another context that ‘A knowledge of the ABC has nothing to do with appreciating literature.’… As Russell himself once put it ‘Logic and mathematics … are the alphabet of the book of nature, not the book itself’.  

It seems that we cannot reconstruct the ‘whole’ as a totality, without admitting an irreducibly ‘mythic’ element. If we take ourselves as able to achieve such a perspective this can only be asserted as a ‘dream’, or an act of hubris, that is not subsequently ratified, although must be presupposed. If we simply propose such a perspective our proposal is not reducible to what we propose (or cannot be the outcome of analysis).

The central irony of Mysticism and Logic is that division of mixtures involves mixture. The central irony of The Sophist is the fact that the Stranger does not engage with the mythic dimension of his own account. Both assume they give a non-mythic account, but “… such a dream is unable to deal philosophically with itself as a dream”. This irony allows for the problems of sophistry to remain: one cannot exclude the sophist as beyond the bounds of philosophy, without admitting a mythical element into philosophy.

Let us turn to why this ‘mystical’ or ‘mythical’ aspect is not so easily excluded from philosophy. We might consider this by returning to the question of why Plato typically gives a poetic or mythic defence of philosophy and how we might square

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467 Wood, ‘Russell’s Philosophy: A Study of its Development’ in Russell, My Philosophical Development, 276-277. The internal quotations are not referenced. If Wood is correct in saying that Russell held these two views of philosophy throughout his life then he also claims that Russell held Mysticism and Logic to have failed (even if Russell thinks that, from the logical perspective, division must be attempted), for the task of Mysticism and Logic was to divide the ‘mystical’ from analysis and deny the ‘mystical’ a place in philosophy. Here we have an account of why the text may have failed: in saying that appreciating literature is not reducible to knowledge of the alphabet Russell suggests that the ‘whole’ is not reducible to its parts.

468 Rosen, ‘Socrates’ Dream’, 162. Rosen also writes:

One either ignores the questions of context, or of the nature and significance of analysis, or one attempts to restate them as technical problems, internal to analysis itself. It is assumed that the rhetorical mode of presentation of philosophical analysis is like Wittgenstein’s (or Hegel’s) ladder to the absolute. Once we have arrived at the destination, we may kick the ladder away. Analytic philosophy is then able to defend itself against charges of a lack of self-consciousness only by sustaining these charges or by a kind of ironical rudeness toward its accusers … (Ibid., 162).
this with the apparently intentionally non-mythic account of philosophy in *The Sophist*. In discussing this, the question is: how might we “… deal philosophically with … [metaphilosophy] as a dream”\(^{470}\) Or, how might we think, philosophically, about that irreducibly mythic element in metaphilosophical defences of philosophy.

Let us look to *The Sophist*.

After defining philosophy in terms of the *vision of kinds*, the Stranger concedes that both philosopher and sophist are hard to recognise, for:

The one takes cover in the darkness of *non-entity*, and makes a shift to adjust himself to it. ‘Tis the obscurity of his habitat that makes detection difficult … Whereas the philosopher ever attaches himself by his rational thinking to the form of *being*, what makes it no easy task to discern him is the excess of light in which he resides. The mental eye of the vulgar cannot bear the vision of the divine.\(^{471}\)

I want to consider what this paragraph reveals about the nature of the Stranger’s solution, beginning with the question of why the philosopher is still said to be hard to discern, and then asking the same question with regard to the sophist. Insofar as philosophy is defined as the vision of the Ideas or *kinds*, the dialogue should terminate here, for how do we give Idea of an Idea? It seems that we could only give an image of an Idea.\(^{472}\) But there is a further difficulty: metaphilosophical questions still arise, such as ‘what are the Ideas?’ or ‘how does one show that one knows the Ideas and so

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\(^{469}\) Griswold writes that:

[the Pl atonic discussions of the matter [of metaphilosophy or philosophical defences of philosophy] tend also to be stated in a literary of poetic form (philosophy as ‘midwifery’, and so forth) … That is, there is a close connection between Plato’s dialogue form of writing and his seeming inarticulateness in metaphilosophical matters (Griswold, ‘Plato’s Metaphilosophy: Why Plato Wrote Dialogues’, 147)

\(^{470}\) Rosen, ‘Socrates’ Dream’, 162

\(^{471}\) Plato, *The Sophist*, 254a

\(^{472}\) The *Chermides* raises the question of an *ἐπιστήμη of ἐπιστήμη* but ends in aporia. We might also refer to the *Meno*, in which:

Meno is to learn not the solution of the geometrical problem but the solution to a ‘meta’ problem about learning. The slave boy is said to recollect the solution to the former; but in spite of Socrates’ remark, … Meno does not recollect that the boy is recollecting. There is no meta-recollection. Nevertheless, Socrates’ indirect demonstration to Meno confirms his view that philosophical knowledge cannot be taught in the way that other kinds of knowledge can be (Griswold, *Platonic Readings*, *Platonic Writings*, 159).

There needs to be two conversations: one between Socrates and the boy and one between Socrates and Meno in order for us to recognise that the language of recollection is an image. The language of recollection and the accompanying *myth* is necessary, but it is not itself a recollection. The philosopher introduces a distinction between myth and Idea only at the cost of recognising that speech about Ideas is mythic. It is the philosopher that recognises this mixture and seeks to retain the integrity of the vision. However, in denying the form of its expression the vision can never come into view and the crucial distinction cannot be maintained.
convince others that one is a philosopher?’ If the philosopher attaches himself to
being, the implication here is that just as being is known only through otherness, as that
which is other than all other kinds, the philosopher is only recognised through the
figure of the sophist (through images), but as other to the images he produces. Or,
we might say that to provide a metaphilosophy, one must employ sophistical means.
The ‘results’ of these means are prima facie not the expressed revelation of
‘philosophy’, only the means to the recognition that philosophy is other to those
‘results’ thus otherwise revealed.

Let me expand on this: if the philosopher resides in the light of being, the
‘mixture’ of philosophy and sophistry is implicated, in that, to draw the distinction,
the Stranger has to admit the commixture of being and non-being. However, while
it seems that with every determination being becomes non-being (and philosophy
becomes sophistry), there is a possible remainder: “[i]f … not-being is unlimited in
its range, and therefore not wholly determinable, being is just that which escapes
determination. Being is the name for what we do not know. It is in the strictest
sense that which is always sought”.

Although wisdom escapes us, it could “… not be sought unless it in some way confronted us and already disclosed itself to us. The
name for a being in its partial disclosure is the stranger”.

The ‘partiality’ of the Stranger’s ‘disclosure’ (his status as a stranger) also calls
us to seek the wisdom that escapes us. Recall, yet again, that Socrates said that the
Stranger could be a god. The Stranger stands in for the ideal of philosophy as
wisdom, the possibility of total intelligibility. But we must also recognise, as

473 We might refer to the Stranger’s metaphor of the alphabet: if consonants are akin to kinds, which
must ‘mix’ with vowels, a consonant cannot be ‘said’ alone without it mixing and if we try to
represent consonants and vowels (in script) we lose the distinction.
474 Benardete, The Being of the Beautiful, II.153.
475 Ibid., II.153. In ‘From Indeterminacy to Rebirth: Making Sense of Socratic Silence in Plato’s
Sophist’ J. Caleb Clanton argues that the Stranger serves the purpose of enveloping the whole
philosophical project in indeterminacy by using difference/otherness to weave together the forms.
He writes that:

[It] is no coincidence that when Levinas, for example, identifies a figure who, like the
Stranger in the Sophist, disrupts my attempt to give determinate discourse the final
word, he calls that figure ‘the Stranger.’ For, clearly enough, strangers themselves by
definition tend to be fundamentally other and as such – even without meaning to do so and
simply by the nature of who they are for me – sow in me a sensitivity to otherness itself
(Clanton, ‘From Indeterminacy to Rebirth: Making Sense of Socratic Silence in
Plato’s Sophist’, 51).

We might then refer to Levinas. In Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority he writes that “[t]he
metaphysical relation cannot properly speaking be a representation, for the other would therein
dissolve into the same” (Levinas, Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority, 38).
Socrates implied, that the Stranger’s divine status, because divine, can only be presented through an image or ‘myth’ and so is immediately called into question. I am arguing then that through the figure of the Stranger, Plato provides a ‘myth’. However, the status of the Stranger, as a stranger, is revealing, in regards to why Plato typically presents us with such metaphilosophical myths. The status of ‘the other’, as ‘other’, reveals the dream of the revelation of philosophy as ideal and not given. That ideal is hidden from perception, but comes to light as a condition of (or ideal presupposed in) discourse. Or, to repeat the Benardete quotation from earlier, “[b]eing is the name for what we do not know. It is in the strictest sense that which is always sought”. By acting in accordance with the ideal of the ‘whole’ our images are orientated in accordance with the reason’s implicit normativity. The image we offer to do this, insofar as it is an image, fails to be what it intends. We might call ‘the remainder’ (the otherness) – the ideal – a normative requirement that orients philosophical discourse. This is expressed as an imperative, as what we should attempt to achieve, and what we do in fact presuppose in philosophical dialogue with an ‘other’, but not what we perceive or know (not as a possible object of perception or knowledge).

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476 Benardete, The Being of the Beautiful, II. 153
477 Although we cannot assume a ‘divine perspective’ of the ‘whole’ as a discrete ‘whole’, we can form the idea of such a perspective as that which is sought and in doing so we must take up a position as if such a perspective were possible in order to uphold the possibility of philosophical (as opposed to sophistical) dialogue. It is this vision that led to the parricide of Parmenides. The philosopher must violate Parmenides’ prohibition; he must violate in spite of not being able to gain a view of the ‘whole’. This is why “[t]he assault on Parmenides is in a sense against the grain of being” (Ibid., II.121). It is this point of violation at which the Stranger adopted a move we might call ‘transcendental’ – he acted as if such a perspective was possible. That is, knowing that there is philosophical dialogue, he attempted to show the grounds for the possibility of that dialogue ‘from within’, so to speak. The protection of the ideal also involves a violation - philosophical dialogue is a ‘speaking as if’. This ‘transcendental’ reading of the parricide is suggested by Clanton, who says:

> Obviously the interlocutors are not willing to forfeit the possibility of philosophical discourse ... They employ something parallel to Kant’s transcendental method. They know that they have discourse; however, they must answer this question: what are the conditions that render discourse possible and legitimate? The answer seems to be wrapped up in non-being (Clanton, ‘From Indeterminacy to Rebirth: Making Sense of Socratic Silence in Plato’s Sophist’, 39).

478 Just as we might say that it is indispensable that we have an idea of the given or operate with a conception of intellectual intuition

479 Likewise, Kant’s antinomies bring Reason (in its transcendent employment) into self-contradiction and thus challenge the conception of Reason as a disclosive faculty. Legitimacy cannot be decided upon attempts to get to the real per se (we cannot compare the intelligibility of the whole with anything). Reason may not disclose a fact, but it legislates an ought. What is a mystery for theoretical reason is, precisely for the reason of its mysteriousness, a revelation for practical reason.
Recognising that what we are offered is a myth, or is ‘foreign’ or ‘other’ to us, forms a requirement to hospitality, to attempt to transcend that image (as in Socrates’ early reference to Homer). That is, to recognise the Stranger as a stranger so that his otherness implies that one is not in possession of the truth and yet one ought to be for its revelation or arrival. We, along with Socrates, seek the meaning of philosophy in the figure of the other.

I said that the philosopher is only ‘recognised’ otherwise to the images of philosophy. Diaeresis is a form of image-making, but we distinguished between constructing icons and producing phantasms (a distinction that the sophist denies). How do we understand and determine the difference? We cannot hold that icons are the same as the original while phantasms are other, for both icons and phantasms must partake in otherness; they must both be “… marked by the property of not being what they resemble.” Otherwise icons are equivalent to originals, which is also to hold the sophistic doctrine that everything is an image or that we create originals. The difference lies in this very point, the philosopher who constructs icons, recognises a distinction between the image and original, that is “… icons identify themselves as images, whereas phantasms do not”. Just as we cannot think the icon is the original without falling into sophistry, we cannot think the representation of philosophy (or the ‘ideal’) as actual – this would be to treat the philosopher as factually wise and again risk sophistry.

For the sophist, sophistry is wisdom; only for the philosopher is there a sophist in the sense that we have been discussing. We might say that the philosopher introduces a gap between wisdom and sophistry. He comes to light only through this negation (he is wise in being not ‘the wise’ and so he is also not the sophist). This is to say that sophistry is only a copy of philosophy, because philosophy is a striving for wisdom that, in the process, produces copies of ‘wisdom’. If philosophy were not a copy of wisdom, but wisdom as such philosophy would be indistinguishable from sophistry. But this also means that in order to maintain his difference from sophistry the philosopher must recognise himself in the sophist and so recognise the ideal as ideal and not as given. We said that the sophist

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480 Rosen, Plato’s Sophist, 309
481 Ibid., 309
482 That is, if sophistry is wisdom no problems of sophistry arise. Only for the philosopher is sophistry a problem or a question (if not the defining question).
is an image of the philosopher as wisdom actualised, and thus as wisdom reduced to images. In recognising herself in the sophist the philosopher retains her otherness and preserves the ideal of philosophy.

These arguments parallel Socrates’ defence in the Apology. In the Apology Socrates will defend himself by saying that while the sophist must know a great deal (given his title), and would not admit to ignorance, Socrates is not wise and so cannot be a sophist (but neither can he be a sage). Socratic irony is in play; it is only because Socrates recognises himself in the figure of the sophist that he can be distinguished from the sophist. The sophist claims to know, while Socrates claims he does not know. Socratic ignorance introduces a distinction between sophistry and wisdom. Socrates has a negative conception of philosophy (and his silence in The Sophist is a corollary of that conception). “Socrates gains an acquittal before the bar of philosophical justice by remaining silent in the presence of the Stranger”. However, I do not mean to say that the Stranger adds no more to our understanding of philosophy than is found in Socratic ignorance and irony. Rather, the Stranger presents to us the conditions, consequence and necessity of that irony.

I offer it as a hypothesis that the reason the philosopher is said to be hard to discern is because he is an ideal. There is no image of an ideal: an ideal only comes to light or is actualised in practice – as that which orients discourse. We might say that: “[t]he given is the fact of philosophy not the ‘what’ of philosophy”; the ‘what’ of philosophy is only ever an image, and hence potentially sophistical: “… philosophers do not define themselves, as do professors, for example, by stating their field of specialization. To say ‘I am a philosopher’ is not even an identification, but an enigma or an act of hybris”. Only through practice, that is, in philosophical

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483 Ibid., 324
484 Likewise, for Kant, philosophy, unlike mathematics, is not a system of knowledge (arising a priori from reason), which might be learnt. ‘Philosophy’ is the idea of the system (or unity) of all philosophical knowledge. This idea is not given so that “… philosophy can never be learned, save only in historical fashion; as regards what concerns reason, we can at most learn to philosophise” (Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, A837/B865). That is, we learn this ideal historically through the diverse and ‘subjective’ means by which ‘philosophers’ have endeavoured to approximate the ideal, and what we learn is that the ideal must be taken as objective and is so taken when we ‘philosophise’. In the ideal sense of the term Kant judges that “… it would be very vainglorious to entitle oneself a philosopher, and to pretend to have equalled the pattern which exists in the idea alone” (Ibid., A839/B867). Interestingly, he names the natural philosopher and the logician (the scholastic philosopher) “… artificers in the field of pure reason” (Ibid., A839/B867, my emphasis). One might say that they are, or create, a false image of the ideal as actual.
485 Rosen, Plato’s Sophist, 330-1
dialogue, is the ideal of philosophy actualised, as a demand that exceeds any claim to identity.

If philosophy is the adoption of an ideal (of wisdom as other than sophistry), the ideal is not the result of a technical definition or argument, but must be assumed to give significance to argument and discourse. Of course, we already operate with such an ideal by taking arguments and discourses as philosophically significant. The ideal cannot be the special possession of the philosopher, it is not an answer to ‘what’ the philosopher is, but makes possible the fact of philosophy.

We might note that in the paragraph of The Sophist that we are considering, the Stranger reintroduces the ethical distinction (between better and worse or noble and base) that he had tried, with little success, to disown. He says that philosophy is hard to discern because “… the mental eye of the vulgar cannot bear the vision of the divine”, suggesting that the final distinction here is not technical, but ethical after all. Socrates insisted that the philosopher is disguised to the public. After calling the Stranger a potentially disguised image of divinity Socrates says that this commits us to hospitality. That is, it commits us to seek philosophical dialogue with the other; only then is philosophy ‘visible’. The commitment to dialogue is an ethical and not merely technical commitment (for example, we cannot know before dialogue the philosophical worth of that dialogue). I will come back to what this might mean for the relationship between the philosopher and sophist.

Let us first ask why the sophist is also said to be hard to recognise. As we thought the account of being to be, let us say, a ‘metaphor’ for the philosopher, we might consider the Stranger’s account of non-being as equally revealing of the sophist. Given the Stranger’s final account of falsity, the sophist is right to say that there is nothing inherent about an image by which non-being itself comes to light. An image is not ‘nothing’; it is simply ‘other’ in the context of our discourse and intentions. This seemed to resolve the problem of ‘non-being’ that arose when excluding the

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486 Plato, The Sophist, 254a
487 Ibid., 254a. In the diaeresis the issue of public and private speech assumed importance as a way to distinguish the philosopher from the sophist. However, although the philosopher has been characterised as a participant in public speech, one must first, at least, treat oneself and one’s interlocutors as if they could be philosophers – there is no speech that would remove the private and intimate nature of the decision.
sophist from philosophical sense. However, if ‘otherness itself’ does not make sense the problem is merely repeated.

While all forms must partake in otherness, otherness cannot partake in all forms. Otherness cannot be the same as itself. For otherness to be the same as otherness it must be other to otherness and therefore different from otherness. We cannot ‘see’ or ‘speak’ pure or abstract nothing and neither can we say what is other per se. This is to say that otherness cannot be made clear and distinct as a separate and determinate kind, and by extension, the sophist, who is defined as other, cannot be given a unique account. There is no singular, unified image of the sophist. When we make a shift to adapt the sophist to this habitat or kind (by, say, expelling the sophist from philosophical sense) we do so at the cost of self-contradiction. Or the sophist emerges as a contradictory figure. To avoid self-undermining talk of ‘pure nothingness’, the Stranger distinguishes between pure nothingness and otherness. The latter is that indeterminacy that allows for sense or the weaving of kinds. We have committed ourselves to speak not of a sophist, but of what is other about our own speech. Adopting talk of ‘otherness’ has meant that we cannot expel the sophist from philosophical sense (as the other of the philosopher); the sophist does not come to light as an actual figure, but as an element or dimension of philosophical discourse.

I offer then the following reason why the sophist is said to be hard to discern: we might say that the sophist is meant to be the contrary of the philosopher, but if we identify with the ideal of philosophy and exclude the sophist, he is in that domain not ‘visible’, but obscure. To render him ‘visible’ he must be treated as one would a

488 Clanton, ‘From Indeterminacy to Rebirth: Making Sense of Socratic Silence in Plato’s Sophist’, 44
489 Hegel makes a similar distinction between abstract and determinate nothingness. Allowing the sceptic only a determinate nothingness to remove the ironical work of the sceptic/sophist, he says in the Phenomenology of Spirit:

This is just the scepticism which only ever sees pure nothingness in its result and abstracts from the fact that this nothingness is specifically the nothingness of that from which it results. For it is only when it is taken as the result of that from which it emerges, that it is, in fact, the true result, in that case it is itself a determinate nothingness, one which has a content. The scepticism that ends up with the bare abstraction of nothingness or emptiness cannot get any further from there, but must wait to see whether something new comes along and what it is, in order to throw it too into the same empty abyss. But when, on the other hand, the result is conceived as it is in truth, namely, as a determinate negation, a new form has thereby immediately arisen, and in the negation the transition is made through which the progress through the complete series of forms comes about of itself (Hegel, Phenomenology of Spirit, 79).
philosopher (capable of true and false speech). That is, one must enter into
philosophical discourse, which is directed toward the ideal. However, this means he
is not visible as a sophist (as wholly ‘other’ to the philosopher), for he must be made
to share in the ideal of philosophy through discourse.

This is also to say that we cannot defend philosophy from sophistry by means
of a doctrine or by recourse to a standpoint over and against which we could
determine the difference. We cannot say that the ‘sophist’ is otherness so as to license
his expulsion; we call ‘sophistical’ what is other to the ideal of ourselves (for in
doing so we recognize the possible separation within ourselves between the ideal and
the actuality – the separation or distinction which is necessary to be orientated to the
ideal), and this commits us to hospitality, for it is only through the figure of the
other, or in discourse with the other, that philosophy is recognised as an ideal and
not as a right or a matter of mere description or identification. This is to say that we
can only defend philosophy dialogically; that is, by entering into dialogue with the
’sophist’, who can no longer, for the very reason that he is included in philosophical
discourse, be treated as a ‘sophist’.490 “It seems … that Plato’s great insight is that,
because such questions cannot be answered for once and for all, the philosophical life
is justified”.491

490 If so, we might say with Kant that philosophy “… is able to justify itself … in a manner that
ensures it against all interference” (Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, A739/B767). I think that Kant means
that one cannot say, sophistically, ‘all philosophy is unjustified’, for the question of philosophy’s
justification is a philosophical question. If one has to engage philosophically, philosophy cannot have
any external interference or aggressors. “The [sceptical] move is supposed to take place within the
system of reason itself and be grounded in its own architectonic. It is a move from one function of
rationality to another, compensating for the failure of the first and sublimating the intellectual drive
underlying this failure” (Yovel, Kant and the Philosophy of History, 290).

Likewise, for Hegel, the sophist is not the contrary of the philosopher: he is himself to be
treated as a philosopher – that is, philosophically. Hegel recognises that the sophist represents a
challenge for philosophy, the challenge that a philosophical doctrine can always be shown to rest upon
unsupported assumptions or a leap of faith. But sophistic tropes can only concern that type of
philosophy that posits something determinate as the foundation (Hegel, Lectures on the History of
Philosophy, 363). Hegel calls this ‘dogmatic’, which “… is nothing else than the opinion that the True
consists in a proposition which is a fixed result, or which is immediately known” (Hegel, The
Phenomenology of Spirit, 23). Alternatively, philosophy cannot presuppose; it must begin in doubt, in
scepticism (Hegel, The Phenomenology of Spirit, 51). This is to say that sophistic scepticism is ‘internal’
to philosophy – it cannot be met with by a doctrine or a dogmatic assertion. One can only answer to
the sophist dialectically. Sophistry, because it is not something other per se, cannot be answered by
means of any given doctrine, but only by the justification found in philosophical activity.

491 Leavitt, Socrates’ Silence: Plato and the Problem of Sophistry, 96
Here we will consider what consequences the preceding study has for the divide. I began this thesis by arguing that representations of analytic and continental philosophy may be sophistical. This motivated us to engage with the prescriptive and metaphilosophical dimension of our discourse, because it was only through such critique that it seemed possible to justify the divide as a *philosophical* means to represent philosophy. We have arrived, however, at the following conclusion: if we enter into critique of the divide we cannot, without risking sophistry ourselves, have as our goal the preservation of these representations. In critiquing them, we must, in some sense, transcend them.

This conclusion is consistent with what has just been said about metaphilosophy in general. That is, in order to avoid the threat of sophistry (the threat that any representation of philosophy could be sophistical) representations of philosophy must be subject to philosophical critique. However, this critique cannot have as its end those representations, because philosophy cannot differentiate itself from sophistry by providing a representation of itself: its difference only comes to light in an unlimited commitment to critique.

Contemporary scholarship tends to assume that the divide demarcates *kinds* and so takes up the goal of their delineation and description. I have suggested that this presupposes a conception of metaphilosophy as determining the ‘what’ of philosophy (giving representations or accounts of philosophies) and that, in adopting such a conception, we are led directly to the ironical work of the sophist.

To give a final perspective on the arguments hitherto presented, I would like to refer to Gadamer’s *Plato’s Dialectical Ethics* to show that using the divide as a framework for its own investigation might lead to what Gadamer calls ‘degenerate’ forms of speech. Gadamer associates these forms of speech with sophistry. His first example issues from identifying oneself as having “… disposition over the *strongest* logos”.

If I have a presupposition of a group and I endorse that presupposition

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492 Gadamer, *Plato’s Dialectical Ethics*, 46, emphasis in original text
through my membership, I also endorse myself as a member. I may presuppose a
group has “… disposition over the strongest logos” while maintaining ‘pluralism’ (I
hold that there are other philosophers who cannot be so endorsed). But consider the
following argument from chapter one: if I hold that a philosophical argument is the
strongest, this would imply that the argument reveals a true state of affairs in such a
way as to, rationally, commit others.

To maintain pluralism I assume that philosophers need not be concerned with
strong argument to be identified as philosophers, but then I compromise my own
self-endorsement by undermining the universality that presumably would make a
given argument ‘strong’ (that it should convince everyone of a true state of affairs).
The endorsement of argument is potentially reduced to the norms of argument
(along with the opinions and beliefs) adopted by a particular group. That is, I cannot
be a pluralist (hold that there are kinds) and identify myself as belonging to the kind
that has a “… disposition over the strongest logos,” if I mean ‘strong’ in any
meaningful sense.493

If I am speaking of a mere disposition to technical ability I still divorce
argument from a concern with truth. Gadamer writes that the effect in conversation
is to cause an “… apprehensive holding back from talk that presses toward
discovering the true state of affairs …” whereby I risk reducing philosophy to eristic
(argument for argument’s sake).494 Consider that I produce no particular argument,
but the general argument that I am better in argument, that “… our arguments are
better than theirs.”495 This recalls the ironical ‘argument’ between ‘Superior

493 This is the case even when I use the trait descriptively. For example, I might say that there are
philosophers who are concerned neither with argument nor with the true state of affairs – in which
case I might identify as having “… disposition over the strongest logos” (Ibid., 46). However, insofar as
I describe them as philosophers, I commit to dialogue, which involves potentially withdrawing my
identification with that trait by examining their reasons for not endorsing it. This goes for any trait
that I might endorse: by endorsing it I hold that all philosophers should follow suit.
494 Ibid., 45
495 I have taken this quotation from Jerry Fodor. Fodor wonders why continental philosophy, rather
than analytic philosophy, is fashionable among the general public. He wonders why this is the case,
since “… most of us [analytic philosophers] write better than most of them …” and “… our
arguments are better than theirs” (Fodor, ‘Water’s Water Everywhere’, n.p.). He writes:

Sometimes I wonder why nobody reads philosophy … it’s mainly the laty that seems
to have lost interest. And it’s mostly Anglophone analytic philosophy that it has lost
interest in. As far as I can tell, ‘Continental’ philosophers (Derrida, Foucault,
Habermas, Heidegger, Husserl, Kierkegaard, Sartre and the rest) continue to hold
their market. Even Hegel has a vogue from time to time, though he is famous for
being impossible to read. All this strikes me anew whenever I visit a bookstore. The
Argument’ and ‘Inferior Argument’ personified in Aristophanes’ *The Clouds*. In *The Clouds* the personified arguments cannot follow shared norms of argument, but have to appeal to the audience. On this basis ‘Inferior Argument’ wins the argument, making it perhaps superior to ‘Superior Argument’. The irony is that one does not enter into argument with such presuppositions, and so the assertion of being better in argument becomes rhetorical.

These problems are a symptom of holding that I can represent the other (and myself) without the nature of that representation being a topic of dialogue for those represented. For Gadamer, such an approach leads to another form of degenerate discourse. He writes:

… a person who thinks that he understands another person who contradicts him in some way and that he understands him without agreeing with him has by that very means protected himself from the other person’s contradiction. That is, in understanding oneself – an understanding that essentially always involves contrasting oneself with others in this way – one rigidifies oneself in ways that make one, precisely, unreachable by the other person.497

In *representing* the other’s objections through a framework that I decide is sufficient to represent them, I tend not to answer to their potential objections, for I never adopt these as questions *for me*, but as confirmation of a pre-given difference.498 If this
difference is already one that would frustrate dialogue, then identification is self-fulfilling (i.e. identifying the divide is divisive).

Take as an example the ‘conversation’ in Rorty between an advocate of normal discourse (governed by an agreed-upon set of norms) and an advocate of a species of abnormal discourse (the edifying philosopher who sees no need to adopt a set of commensurating rules for changes in normal discourse). Rorty initially sets up hermeneutics as “… the study of an abnormal discourse from the point of view of some normal discourse …” in the hope of generating a conversation regarding abnormal discourse.\footnote{Rorty, Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature, 320} But hermeneutics soon collapses into edifying philosophy: “[t]he reason for this collapse is surely that Rorty understands hermeneutics from the start as generating a conversation that does not reach for Truth or Agreement in the sense assumed by the advocates of normal discourse”.\footnote{Griswold, ‘Plato’s Metaphilosophy: Why Plato Wrote Dialogues’, 291-292, fn.41} This will lead to problems of sophistical relativism and incommensurability.

If I refuse the possibility of shared understanding from the outset, as I must if the divide is my end, then I potentially undermine the unity of philosophy more profoundly.\footnote{The metaphor of ‘bridging the divide’, so frequently advocated as a goal of contemporary scholarship, is instructive: it implies that I leave all differences and identities intact, and merely introduce a third element by means of which I can move between one conception and the other as mutually exclusive positions. This implies that understanding does not alter one’s self-image or the image one has of the other that one is presumably seeking to understand. It hypostatises the groupings, which can only be done if I take it that I already understand them or I take it that I can represent without understanding. It already precludes, in so far as it represents as divided, a shared understanding.} Without a metaphilosophical discourse regarding these categories, I leave the choice between them to be made on an extra-philosophical basis – by preference, allegiance or fashion. In the example from Rorty, one could side with the ‘edifying’ ‘philosophers’ and hold that the adoption of truth is just one discourse amongst others, in which case I risk relativity. On the other hand, I might uphold

My concern is that treating the divide as given and as a way of framing philosophies as opposed, we do not allow that framework to be a matter of dialogue, where a critique of that framework would be instructive. We might think about Gadamer’s critique of the method of comparison, he writes that:

> comparison essentially presupposes that the knowing subjectivity has the freedom to have both members of the comparison at its disposal. It openly makes both things contemporary. Hence we must doubt whether the method of comparison really satisfies the idea of historical knowledge. Is it not the case that this procedure … is being promoted from a subordinate tool to central importance for defining historical knowledge, and that it often gives false legitimacy to superficial and arbitrary reflection? (Gadamer, Truth and Method, 227).

the norms of a ‘normal discourse’, but insofar as I allow that other philosophers need not endorse these norms, they are potentially reduced to something akin to conceptual schemes, in which case the problem of incommensurability follows.

I said that these problems arise when I hold both to pluralism (there are different kinds of philosophies) and understand the task of metaphilosophy as the representation of those kinds and their evaluation by comparison. I may seek then to resolve these problems by giving up on pluralism. To revisit Gadamer’s example: claiming that one group has ‘disposition to the strongest logos’ is now tantamount to claiming that that group is the philosophical group tout court and I now imply that the others who would be called ‘philosophers’ even when they are weak in argument, are not philosophers, but sophists.

We began chapter two with this second option. I said that we could justify the exclusion of the other only if the traits that identify him are such that they would frustrate dialogue or threaten the unity of philosophy in the ways we have been considering. Philosophy’s plurality and thus its incommensurability and relativism are now sophistries against which I must defend philosophy.

But we have encountered continual difficulties in providing such a defence. I argued that the operative assumption was still that philosophy formed a discrete kind and that if we could determine its defining features and delineate its limits we would ascertain its difference from sophistry. We might argue that philosophers seek good argument, while sophists are not concerned with argument, but with persuasion. But the problems that we have encountered merely reassert themselves: the sophist could always interpret this, not as an argument, but as a piece of rhetoric. The philosopher, the sophist might conclude, merely constructs images of his difference. This is again the problem of images.

I might respond to this threat by explaining sophistry as the production of imagery through rhetoric, while explaining philosophy as having access to originals or kinds. For the former, one gives an eisegesis (an account of contingent and pre-philosophical factors or feelings), whereas the latter requires one to give an exegesis (a rational reconstruction by which I unify philosophical dialogue). But allowing

502 We have continually attempted to unmask sophistry as born of psychological motives. One does not give a rational account of the sophist: one either reads their work as poetry or, if one seeks to reconstruct it theoretically, one provides an eisegesis. We see this move in the eisegeses or
this inconsistency creates the conditions for dogmatism or the hypocrisy of enforcing a law by means of an exception, for we allow our own “... particularity [to] affect [our] application of universals: applying different normative standards to doings just because they happen to be [our] doings.”\textsuperscript{503} I have simply withdrawn my commitment to philosophical dialogue, without giving an account of why an eisegesis is appropriate in the sophist’s case and not in my own case.

I am now called to engage philosophically with sophistry. I may refuse by claiming that the sophist is beyond the limits of philosophical account-giving and dialogue, but how can we philosophically affirm that which lies beyond the bounds of philosophical knowledge? We raised this as a problem of 'non-being'.

In the previous chapter we thought about why these difficulties arise and I argued that they issue from an understanding of the metaphilosophical task as a task of representing pre-given \textit{kinds}. The commitment to treat philosophy as a \textit{kind} is, I suggested in the introduction, akin to treating it as an \textit{epistêmê}, which may be defined by the field of study that it delineates, along with the methods that govern it. And the assumption is that as “[f]or Aristotelian science [it] is characterized by its lack of

\textsuperscript{503} Brandom, ‘From Irony to Trust: Modernity and Beyond’, n.p.
need for any explicit agreement on the part of a partner: it is a showing, based on a necessity, which is not concerned with the actual agreement of others”. 504 If metaphilosophy were a ‘showing’ of this kind, then this holds out the possibility of its final distinction from sophistry.

In fact, it seemed that for philosophy to be different from sophistry it had to be a kind. We found in The Sophist, and Mysticism and Logic, an account of diaérésis, or analysis, as the revelation of pre-given kinds. I will not rehearse my critique of that account here, but let us consider the final diaérésis of the sophist, beginning in The Sophist, 264d. I will show the ironies that remain.

Sophistry as a Phantasm of Wisdom

Having defined philosophy in terms of access to originals through diaérésis, the Stranger is in a position to return to the two forms of the art of image-making – the making of copies (icons) and illusions (phantasms) – with the question of which art to assign the sophist.505 The Stranger begins with the arts of production.506 Production can be divided according to whether that which is produced is an imitation or actuality. There are two types of production: human or divine.507 Next we divide both laterally and longitudinally to produce four types: real things made by God, real things made by man, images made by God, and images made by man.508 The last is divided into the making of copies and the making of illusions. Illusion is then subdivided according to whether it is affected by means of an apparatus or whether one’s own person affects it. The latter is named mimicry.509 They have not yet reached an unanalysable form; they can still divide by means of whether the mimic thinks that he has knowledge or not.510

The sophist is the ironical mimic – who suspects that he does not know that which he nevertheless mimics.511 The Stranger divides this mimesis by whether it

504 Gadamer, Plato’s Dialectical Ethics, 18
505 Plato, The Sophist, 264d
506 Ibid., 265a
507 Ibid., 265b
508 Ibid., 266a. The examples of real things made by man are buildings and paintings (Ibid., 266c). The examples of images made by God are optical illusions and dreams (Ibid., 266b-c).
509 Ibid., 267a
510 Ibid., 267b
511 Ibid., 268a. Alfred Edward Taylor comments:
occurs in public or in private. In public the mimic gives speeches before a crowd, in private the mimic employs “… brief discourses in which he drives his interlocutor to contradict himself”.\textsuperscript{512} The public mimic is called, not statesman, but demagogue. The private mimic is called, not sage, but the sage’s mimic – the sophist.\textsuperscript{513} The Stranger gives the final definition of sophistry as:

\textit{... an art for creating contradictions belonging to the consciously insincere [ironical] type of mimicry based on mere opinions deriving from that branch of illusionism which is concerned with the making of images, by taking for its peculiar province the undivine and merely human productivity concerned with the production of the verbally portentous.}\textsuperscript{514}

But consider that we may yet ask whether the Stranger is being ironic. \textit{Diaeréosis} alone cannot determine whether an image is an icon or phantasm (they are not separable \textit{kinds}), but “… icons identify themselves as images whereas fantasms do not”.\textsuperscript{515} The question is whether the philosopher is sincere. However, \textit{diaeréisis} cannot make ethical distinctions and it excludes matters of intention and end. While this exclusion was motivated by the avoidance of sophistry, it now also means that the Stranger could be a sophist.

Socrates opened the dialogue with this concern, raised through references to Homer: given that the Stranger has a positive conception of philosophy, he is open to the threat of sophistry, precisely because he is also potentially the sage.\textsuperscript{516} The Stranger also closes the dialogue with a reference to Homer. This reference acts as a confession.

The Stranger concludes the dialogue with the words: “… such, it should seem, may be said with perfect truth to be the ‘blood and lineage’ of the genuine

\[\text{[l]iterally an \textit{ironical mimic}. The fundamental meaning of \textit{irony} to the Greek is \textit{insincere self-depreciation made as pretext for evading one’s responsibilities. The word thus conveys the suggestion of ‘humbug’, and by an \textit{ironical mimic} Plato means one who is all the time more than half conscious that his imitation is an \textit{imposture}, not really like what it professes to be like (Taylor, in Plato, \textit{The Sophist}, 186 fn., emphasis in the original text).}\]

\textsuperscript{517} Plato, \textit{The Sophist}, 268b
\textsuperscript{518} Ibid., 268b-c
\textsuperscript{519} Ibid., 268d, emphasis in the original text
\textsuperscript{520} Rosen, \textit{Plato’s Sophist}, 309
\textsuperscript{521} As Marina McCoy recognises, we are to ask whether the Stranger and Socrates are sophists. Encountering the problematic that propelled the dialogue, we must decide whether the definition given is a veridical or sophistical image (McCoy, \textit{Plato on the Rhetoric of the Philosophers and the Sophists}, 163).
‘Blood and lineage’ is a reference to Glaucus’ descent in Book Six of The Iliad. Glaucus and Diomedes are on opposing sides of the battlefield. Seeing Glaucus in gold armour, Diomedes exclaims that he must be a god. Glauce assures Diomedes that he is mortal by naming his ancestors. On hearing his lineage, Diomedes drives his spear into the ground. Their forefathers had been friends! He proposes that they should, in memory of that friendship, agree not to enter into combat. In recognition of their agreement (and to ensure that they recognise each other during the battle) they swap their armour.

Through this reference, the Stranger confesses, against Socrates’ original suspicions, that he is not a god. His finitude has come to light in the fact that we could give an eisegesis of his speech. In confessing his finitude the Stranger leaves intact his conception of philosophy as wisdom, but that conception is no longer embodied by the Stranger, it is ideal.

In Socrates’ Homeric references, recognition of our finitude and the ideality of philosophy call us to hospitality. Here too, Glaucus and Diomedes, appeal to an ideal that is no longer present (the friendship of forefathers) by which finitude is recognised. They are thereby committed to re-enact that ideal by seeking a unity that transcends and transgresses given unities (the unity of groups on opposing sides of a battle). They symbolically uphold this agreement by relinquishing their armour, or the images they have of themselves (images which are used in battle as a way of protecting oneself). They are protected from the other by giving to him their own ‘image’.

I suggested in the previous chapter that we could resolve the ironies involved in the diaereses by committing to hospitality or dialogue. Let us take the divide as an example, for I have argued that here too we have assumed that philosophy is a kind and this has also led to irony. We return to my opening argument, in which I

517 Plato, The Sophist, 268d
518 Homer, The Iliad, VI, 128
519 Ibid., VI, 150-211
520 Ibid., VI, 215
521 Ibid., VI, 226
522 Ibid., VI, 230
523 The Stranger’s own forefather is Parmenides. We said that Parmenides is the philosopher of the whole, but holism undermined the capacity for discernment – for negative judgement. As in the Homeric reference and the argument of the previous chapter, it is only by means of the absence of the whole as a given whole that the unity of philosophy can be recalled as an ideal.
claimed that by recognising this irony, which is a sign of finitude, we must commit ourselves to a critique of the divide whereby we transcend images of philosophy in search of a higher unity. To elucidate, let us return to Gadamer’s account of the conditions for philosophical dialogue.

We began with the divide as a matter of fact, or *kinds*. However, I raised the threat of sophistry by claiming that we could give an *eisegesis of kinds* by interpreting them as the product of finite, pre-philosophical conditions. Recognising that any image I give *may* be sophistical is recognising finitude. Gadamer writes that I am therefore accountable and must display “… an unlimited willingness to justify and supply reasons”. That is, I must take my proposal of what philosophy *is* as a hypothesis only. I cannot use it to decide beforehand who I am answerable too. My willingness to justify myself before the other must be *unlimited* (the investigation may be ethical, historical or technical), for I do not know in what manner I will be called into judgement.

I cannot offer a descriptive justification by arguing that I am simply representing the conception a certain tradition endorses. This argument is not compelling and would only serve to frustrate dialogue. I must intend that my account be understood, for I speak to the other person with a view to her response. Account-giving cannot be a matter of something I know and that the other must learn, but something that we are both seeking to know and which would (ideally), in the end, be true or false for both of us:

What is in question is not a knowledge that one person has and another does not have, that one person claims and another does not claim; that is, it is not knowledge by which only the ‘wise’ are distinguished but a knowledge that everyone must claim to have and must therefore seek continually insofar as he does not have it.

Moreover, the account or reasons that I offer must be assumed to potentially act as accounts or reasons that would compel the other: “[w]hen it presents something together with reasons or causes for it, talk makes the distinctive claim to assert something universal and necessary about an individual entity. In doing so, such talk

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524 Gadamer, *Plato’s Dialectical Ethics*, 52. The task is to not allow “… our fore-having, fore-sight, and fore-conception to be presented to us by fancies and popular conceptions, but rather to make the scientific theme secure by working out these fore-structures in terms of the things themselves“ (Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 153).

525 Gadamer, *Plato’s Dialectical Ethics*, 52-53
is, in a distinctive way, *a speech that lets the other person speak too*”. That is, because I must address myself to the other, such as to compel her, by appealing to what would be universal, she is able, given that appeal to universality, to address my proposal insofar as it seems to fall short of universality for her.

Just as the presupposition cannot be the difference between traditions or kinds, neither can we have this as the projected end of the conversation. The intended universality of my reasons corresponds to the intended singularity of that which is under discussion (in this example, philosophy). That is, I must assume the ideal unity of philosophy:

Before one can come to an understanding or give an accounting of how one ought to think about or deal with something in a particular respect, there needs to be assurance that it is understood in whatever it is by virtue of its being. Thus the first concern of all dialogical and dialectical inquiry is a care for the unity and sameness of the thing that is under discussion.

I must assume that in investigating my hypothesis both my interlocutor and I are concerned with philosophy as unified, and we are concerned to know whether all philosophers should endorse the trait under discussion (even though, of course, they may not). My hypothesis must be understood in the ideal such that it would include the other (all others). If it fails to include all others (if it need not be endorsed) then my hypothesis is not adequate to the ideal of philosophy. This is why I have said that taking up dialogue with regard to the divide (rather than framing dialogue by means of the divide) commits us to transcend any given grouping. I must give the other a power over my self-image and the other the power of that self-image in order that we may work toward a higher unity.

We might say that the lack of dialogue that is the perceived manifestation of the divide, along with the conversion of communication into controversy, of dialogue into comparison, is only a symptom of the rejection of the dialogic unity of philosophy. Philosophy is not akin to an object that we describe, and so cannot be recognised by ‘checking’ attributes or traits, but must be akin to a claim or right that can be heard as philosophical and that calls on me to respond philosophically in turn.

In the introduction I said that if the question of philosophy and sophistry cannot be determined before one enters into philosophical debate this leaves

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526 Ibid., 28
527 Ibid., 64, emphasis in the original text.
metaphilosophy in an apparently aporetic situation. We said that for Aristotle metaphysics arises out of aporia. Dialectics, in contrast to diaerésis, which is a ‘showing’, “… lives from the power of dialogical coming to understanding – from the understanding of others who go along – and is sustained every step of its way by making sure of the partner’s agreement”. Thinking out of aporia, we are committed to dialogue whereby the unity of philosophy comes to light.

On the one hand this unity is merely due to making explicit what is implicit in dialogue. On the other hand, unifying should also be understood as a task. As a task, unity may be refused: for example, I may withdraw my commitment to enter into conversation. Or the task might fail: I may be unable to reconstruct the philosophical unity of another’s claims. This ideal unity may never eventuate; this is why I have called it ‘ideal’, for it is that projected unity that orients dialogue and not the given and actual unities of traditions or kinds. Failures are entirely possible, if not inevitable, but they must be understood as failures and confessed as failures.

Using the divide we attempt to justify failures by providing pre-conceived ideas of the other, and of oneself, such that failures are expected or are taken, not as failures, but as enlightening. The divide negotiates the ethical question for us, and it thus becomes akin to a technê of the just and unjust, like diaerésis. We resist this technê by admitting to ‘not-knowing’, admitting ignorance, such that the ethical commitment exceeds one’s capacity to represent the other.

528 That is, the question of whether philosophy is possible, the metaphilosophical question, contains the ground for the very possibility of philosophy. In much the same way as Gadamer writes:

[...] only because knowledge is dialectical in this comprehensive sense can there be a ‘dialectic’ that explicitly makes its object the antithesis of yes and no. Thus the apparently over-specialized question of whether or not it is possible to have one and the same science of contraries contains, in fact, the ground of the very possibility of dialectic (Gadamer, Truth and Method, 359, emphasis in original text).

529 Gadamer, Plato’s Dialectical Ethics, 18

530 We also find these conditions of dialogue in degenerate or sophistic dialogue. Gadamer writes that … we remain trapped by a false estimation of rhetoric … The rhetoric that we can call the art of speech or persuasion does not … consist in a body of rules according to whose application and adherence we can achieve victory over our opponent … The art of speech or persuasion consists, rather, in the innate ability of being able to actually communicate with others and persuade them of the true without being able to prove it (Gadamer, A Century of Philosophy: A Conversation with Ricardo Dottori, 51).

We might imagine that the sophist replaces the ‘true’ with the ‘useful’, but I would argue that we need a notion of the truth to speak of the useful. Likewise, the sophists might replace the ‘good’ with the ‘better’, but we need an idea of the good to speak of (or to search for) the better. We might say that the relinquishment of ‘the true’ and ‘the good’ is a function of the philosophers own construction of the sophist as an external figure. We cannot define the sophist as the one who persuades, because the one that persuades is not trying to “… compel the other, but to reach a consensus with him” (Ibid., 41).
I cannot refer to any pre-given image of philosophy to justify the refusal of dialogue, because the nature of philosophy is precisely what is in question (and is always a question for philosophy). The complaint that the other is beyond the limits of philosophical discourse now simply tells me that 'philosophy has not happened'. That is to say, that we cannot expel the sophist by constructing an image of him as transgressing the bounds of philosophy. In fact, by doing so we would fall into sophistry ourselves. It is only through the commitment to discourse – in spite of inevitable failures – that I can answer to sophistic threats. But, for the reason that I have committed myself to the possibility of discourse, I cannot treat the other as a sophist.

It is through the promise of a shared inquiry that we also resolve the sophistic problems of incommensurability or relativism in practice. I have said that to treat an account as philosophical I must provide for it an exegesis as opposed to an eisegesis; I must treat that account as aiming for the universal and not as the outcome of extra-philosophical or psychological conditions. The particularity of philosophical discourses (that they are undertaken between groups with certain preconceptions) must not be considered a hindrance to the universality that is intended. We might say that a given philosophy, account, or dialogue must not be thought a barrier to knowing that which is, but must be understood as the means of knowing it. In dialogue, philosophies must be thought “… open to every possible insight and hence to every expansion of [their] own world picture[s], and … accordingly available to others”. This provides a way of resolving, if only in practice, the aporia of original and image.

However, at the same time, we cannot ‘say’ the intelligibility of language as such, but must assume intelligibility by speaking (by making ourselves intelligible to the other and seeking to understand her). For this reason, we might also say that the object of metaphilosophy is ideal: it is not the image we give in any one discourse, but the condition for the possibility of discourse. In other words, we recognise, as Bernard Stiegler does, that “… there is an irreducible inadequacy between knowledge and its object …” where “… this inadequacy or incompleteness is a conception of understanding as desiring its object: the object of knowledge is infinite

531 Gadamer, Truth and Method, 444

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because it is the object of desire”. For Stiegler, the object of philosophy must be an object of desire (or, in our terms, it must be orienting and ideal). Stiegler writes:

The philosopher loves wisdom precisely to the degree that it escapes and transcends him: wisdom is philosophy’s object of desire in proportion – and disproportion – to its being chimerical, persisting for the philosopher as an endlessly renewed interrogation … The predicament – the aporia – of philosophical teaching is, then, to mark the difference between the teaching of what would be philosophy and the object that can never be the telos of straightforward teaching, … but that must become an experiment, indeed a way of life: an asceticism, a care …

The labour toward that ideal may be infinite, precisely because it is not the labour of apprehending something given or actual, but seeking in the other a further expansion of the ideal that will always be open to revision. We must be on guard against dogmatism.

While this infinitude might be displayed as an impediment to human understanding, it is also the means by which philosophy transcends the particular and the sophistical, albeit only at the cost of admitting an essential proximity to sophistry. Gadamer writes: “[t]hat any insight can be confounded has always been and still is the experience we have in discourse, in which medium alone, all philosophy must take place”. It is also this proximity that allows us to move toward the resolution of those contradictions expressed by the ‘problem of non-being’, by speaking not of that which has no being, but that which is ‘other’ (the philosophical stranger) and thus calls us to account (or, to philosophy).

It is our ignorance with regard to the ‘what’ of philosophy (the impossibility of any final metaphilosophy) that commits us to the question of philosophy and to the

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532 Stiegler, Taking Care of the Youth and Generations, 121
531 Ibid., 121. The term ‘philosophy,’ Giovanni Reale writes “… was certainly coined within a religious milieu. The milieu presupposed that ‘wisdom’ as a secure possession was possible in its highest form only for the gods, whereas it considered that human beings could only tend toward wisdom, and so continually draw near to love it” (Reale, The History of Ancient Philosophy: From The Origins to Socrates, 17).
534 The attempt to ‘say’ intelligibility as such or the attempt to give a metaphilosophical picture created the conditions for dogmatism or the institution of a law by means of an exception. This was an exception to the law in the sense that it may be disputed, but that it may be disputed is decisive, for in any philosophical disputation the ideal of philosophy is presupposed.
535 Gadamer continues “[p]hilosophy had to put itself on the very same basis from which the danger of sophistic verisimilitude arose and therefore finds itself in the constant company of its shadow, sophism” (Gadamer, Dialogue and Dialectic: Eight Hermeneutic Studies on Plato, 123).

Glendinning also argues, “… what answers to the idea of Continental philosophy (the risk of sophistry and illusion) is not something that can be radically expelled from any philosophical tradition. Qua possibility it is a threat that philosophy must always risk” (Glendinning, The Idea of Continental Philosophy: A Philosophical Chronicle, 91).
possibility of a shared enquiry that anticipates the unity of philosophy. Gadamer says that recognition of our ignorance in the Platonic dialogues is also:

... the first point of agreement ... the first precondition for gaining genuine knowledge. For this precondition implies two things: a shared ignorance and a shared need to know – that is, an understanding of the necessity of being able to make a genuine, rationally defensible claim to knowledge. To that extent already, then, refutation in the Socratic style is positive: not a process of reducing the other person to silence so as, tacitly, to mark oneself out as the knower, in contract to him, but a process of arriving at a shared inquiry.536

In this thesis I have called into question that which is usually taken for granted in scholarship on the divide – the existence of philosophical kinds and the appropriateness of demarcating them – in order to offer contemporary scholarship the question of the divide as a pressing metaphilosophical question. I have done so in the hope that admitting ignorance would also begin an inquiry that must, of necessity, be a shared inquiry.

I have said that current scholarship treats the divide as a framework that we adopt for representing others and ourselves, and that this indicates an impoverished understanding of metaphilosophy as a task of simply representing ‘philosophies’. I offered a rationale for this understanding by seeing it as a rejection of the philosopher’s proximity to sophistry. However, adopting this metaphilosophical approach that seeks to apparently foreclose the threat of sophistry simultaneously forecloses the question of philosophy and of sophistry. By foreclosing these questions we risk sophistries ourselves.

In contrast, in this thesis, I hope to have shown the relevance and significance of these questions for our discourse of the divide and the necessity of maintaining them as questions (if we are to avoid sophistry). Adopting them we have to relinquish the divide as a means of negotiating the sophistic threat. However, I have also argued that it is only by having the question of philosophy and sophistry at the kernel of our enquiries that we distinguish philosophy from sophistry, and, through the self-reflection and dialogue that such questions require of us, resolve sophistic threats in practice.

536 Gadamer, Plato’s Dialectical Ethics, 59
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