

*Is the Theaetetus an Aporetic or an Euporetic Dialogue?*

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Plato's *Theaetetus* is nominally an aporetic dialogue, ending without an answer to the question: what is knowledge? But unlike the aporetic so-called early Socratic dialogues, many scholars have argued that in fact the *Theaetetus* is an euporetic dialogue, that is, it gives us at the end a clear direction for finding the answer to the dialogue's central question. That direction is allegedly along the path of the last definition of knowledge as a type of belief (*doxa*) which includes some sort of account or *logos*. This interpretation, if correct, would make Plato a founder of what is today called the "standard analysis" of knowledge as justified true belief. In this paper, I argue against this interpretation, and show that the dialogue is genuinely aporetic. However, like the undisputed aporetic dialogues, there is significant philosophical content within the *Theaetetus*. This content explains why the proposed definitions of knowledge cannot be correct and why the dialogue as a whole is a *reductio ad absurdum* of the view that knowledge is to be defined in terms of sense-perception or belief. The *Theaetetus* provides a powerful negative argument for the radical separation of knowledge and belief in the *Republic*. This paper concludes with some remarks on how this conclusion illuminates certain features of the *Sophist*, in particular the inclusion of intellect in the realm of the really real at 249.