

# Curriculum Vitae

Guus Willem Eelink

14 December 2018

## Personal data

Full name	Guus Willem Eelink
Date of birth	7 October 1990
Place of birth	Winterswijk, The Netherlands
E-mail	guus.eelink@merton.ox.ac.uk / guus.eelink@philosophy.ox.ac.uk
Website	www.guuseelink.com
Phone	+44 (0) 7947638175
Address	Merton College Merton Street Oxford OX1 4JD United Kingdom

## Education

2015–2019 (expected)	DPhil (/PhD) in Philosophy, University of Oxford (Merton College). Title: ‘Not bringing things to a standstill: Plato’s <i>Theaetetus</i> on how (not) to speak about a world in which knowledge is perception.’ Expected date of submission: May 2019. Expected date of defence: June 2019. Supervisors: Prof. Michail Peramatzis (primary) and Prof. Luca Castagnoli (secondary).
-------------------------	---

Jan. 2019– April 2019	<p>Visiting Assistant in Research at Yale University.          During the final months of my DPhil I will be a Visiting Assistant in Research at Yale University.          Yale Advisor: Prof. David Charles.</p>
2014–2015	<p>Master of Studies in Ancient Philosophy, University of Oxford (Wolfson College).          Graduated with distinction.          Thesis: ‘False belief and dialectical enquiry in Plato’s <i>Theaetetus</i>.’          Thesis supervisor: Prof. Michail Peramatzis.          Examination date: 25 July 2015.</p>
2012–2014	<p>Master of Science in Logic, University of Amsterdam.          Specialisation (‘track’): <i>Logic and Philosophy</i>.          Graduated with GPA 8.36 and 8.5 for the thesis.          Thesis: ‘Davidson on Belief, Truth, and the Skeptic.’          Thesis supervisor: Prof. Martin Stokhof.          Thesis defence: 8 September 2014.          Examination date: 9 September 2014.</p>
2009–2012	<p>Bachelor of Arts in Greek and Latin Language and Culture, University of Amsterdam.          Graduated cum laude (with distinction).          Minor programme (30 ECTS-credits) in Philosophy of Language, Logic and Science.          Thesis: ‘De vrije wil volgens Lucius Annaeus Seneca’ (in English: ‘Free will according to Lucius Annaeus Seneca’).          Thesis supervisor: Dr Charles Hupperts.          Examination date: 31 August 2012.</p>

## Academic profile

AOS	Ancient Philosophy.
AOC	Philosophy of Language, Logic, Ethics.

## Current research interests

My primary area of expertise is Plato's epistemology and metaphysics, with a specific emphasis on the *Theaetetus* and the *Sophist*. More broadly, my research interest is in ancient metaphysics, epistemology, and philosophy of language. Examples of my research projects are Plato's analysis of false belief in the *Theaetetus* and the *Sophist*, the relevance of change in the sensible world to Plato's epistemology and theory of Forms (and Aristotle's understanding of this in the *Metaphysics*), and Aristotle's engagement with Plato and the Presocratics in the *Metaphysics* (in particular books Alpha and Gamma).

## Abstract of the dissertation

In Plato's *Theaetetus* the interlocutors attempt to define knowledge, and the first definition they consider is 'knowledge is perception'. Socrates initially equates the first definition with Protagoras' Measure Doctrine ('man is the measure of all things'), and he introduces a metaphysical underpinning for the Measure Doctrine in the form of an allegedly Protagorean Secret Doctrine, a doctrine of flux. (151-160) The discussion ends with two refutations: a refutation of a radical variant of the doctrine of flux (179-183), followed by a direct refutation of the first definition (184-187). In the dissertation I defend interpretations of Protagoras' theory (chapter 1) and of the final two refutations (chapters 2 – 4).

In chapter 1, I argue that Protagoras is a *revisionary infallibilist*. According to revisionary infallibilism, (i) all beliefs are true (infallibilism) and (ii) the properties of things are relative to believers (a revisionary metaphysical view):  $x$  has a property  $F$  in relation to a believer  $a$  if and only if  $a$  believes that  $x$  has the property  $F$ . My interpretation contrasts with the influential relativist interpretation, according to which Protagoras holds that (a) no belief is true *simpliciter*, but (b) each belief is true *in relation to the believer*. I argue that Protagoras' theory does involve a form of relativism, but not relativism about truth: instead, Protagoras relativizes *the properties of things* to believers. I show that the Secret Doctrine underpins revisionary infallibilism with regard to perceptual beliefs. Further, I argue that my interpretation is able to account for the notorious alternation between two formulations of the Measure Doctrine ('all beliefs are true' versus 'each belief is true *for the believer*') and for the refutations of the Measure Doctrine.

In chapter 2, I analyse the refutation of radical flux. I focus on two key issues. The first issue is why radical flux is supposed to lead to the equal correctness of contradictory characterizations of the changing thing (' $F$ ' and 'not  $F$ '). The second issue is why radical flux is supposed to undermine the possibility of definition: definitions concern universals, whereas only particulars seem to be in radical flux. With regard to the first issue, I argue that the text is ambiguous between an epistemic and an ontic reading. On the epistemic reading, changing things elude determinate characterizations due to their being too fleeting to be described in a determinate way. On the ontic reading, changing things elude determinate characterization due to radical flux's implying *ontic indeterminacy*: particulars do not instantiate universals. With regard to the second issue, I argue, against recent interpretations, that Socrates does not assume that universals (or meanings) are in radical flux. Instead, I argue that Socrates takes the impossibility of definition to follow from the repercussions of radical flux for particulars. I

argue that the inference is more plausible on the ontic reading (which indirectly supports the ontic reading): only the ontic reading implies that universals are not instantiated, and I argue that in the dialectical context of the refutation the non-instantiation of universals suffices to warrant Socrates' conclusion that definitions are impossible.

In chapter 3, I discuss the relevance of the refutation of radical flux. I argue that Protagoras is not committed to radical flux. I argue that the refutation bears on Protagoras' theory in a more indirect way: it shows that some of the fluxist claims in the Secret Doctrine ('the universe is change and nothing else', 'everything is changing') are exaggerations. Socrates first argues that only those who endorse radical flux are entitled to make such claims. He then shows that radical flux is incompatible with Protagoras' philosophical views, and indeed with any philosophical view. In effect, this confronts Protagoras with a dilemma: either he should give up his Heraclitean pretensions (by acknowledging that his theory in fact allows for, and indeed requires, stability as well as change), or he should stop making assertions altogether.

In chapter 4, I analyse the final argument. According to the final argument perception is not knowledge, as knowledge attains being and truth, and perception cannot attain being or truth. (Attaining being is necessary for attaining truth.) I argue against the two most influential recent interpretations: attaining truth consists in making true judgements (propositional interpretation) and attaining truth consists in making true judgements in a specific objective way (objectivity interpretation). Instead, I defend a variant of a third interpretation (recently only defended by Lesley Brown in unpublished work)<sup>1</sup>: attaining being and attaining truth are extensionally equivalent; the being and truth at stake are the being and truth *of something*; attaining the being and truth of something consists in grasping what it really is, i.e., grasping its essence. Whereas propositional interpretations see a connection between being as a *koinon* (common property) and concepts or propositions, I argue that the notion of being operative in the argument is not an epistemic or logical notion, but an ontological notion, significantly related to the notion of essence (what something really is). I argue that Socrates draws an increasingly specific contrast between perception and progressively more complex thoughts about perceptibles involving *koīna*, in particular being: ultimately, such complex thoughts may culminate in the success state of attaining the being of a perceptible, i.e. grasping its essence.

<sup>1</sup> In 'Plato's *Theaetetus* and the hunting of the proposition.' (ms) (Lesley Brown gave me permission to refer to her paper.)

## Academic employment

Dec. 2018	Interviewing with Prof. Michail Peramatzis for undergraduate admissions in philosophy at Worcester College (Oxford).
Oct. 2017 –Oct. 2018	Stipendiary Lecturer in Philosophy, Worcester College (Oxford). I taught Introduction to Philosophy for classicists, Moral Philosophy (introduction to Ethics for first-years based on Mill's <i>Utilitarianism</i> ), Ethics (advanced Ethics course), and Plato's <i>Republic</i> .
June 2018	Revision classes on Introduction to Logic for Merton College Philosophy, Politics, and Economics and Philosophy and Theology students (Oxford).

Oct. 2017 –Aug. 2018	Academic supporter for an MSt in Ancient Philosophy student, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Oxford.
Jan. 2018 –March. 2018	Revision classes on Plato’s <i>Euthyphro</i> and <i>Meno</i> for New College and Regent’s Park College Classics students (Oxford).
Jan. 2018 –March 2018	Tutorials in Aristotle’s <i>Physics</i> with a Junior Year Abroad student at Worcester College (Oxford).
Oct. 2017 –Dec. 2017	Tutorials in Ethics with a Junior Year Abroad student at Worcester College (Oxford).
Jan. 2017 –Mar. 2017	Revision classes on Plato’s <i>Euthyphro</i> and <i>Meno</i> and on <i>Introduction to Logic</i> for New College and St Hugh’s College Classics students (Oxford).
Dec. 2016	Interviewing with Prof. Michail Peramatzis for undergraduate admissions in philosophy at Worcester College (Oxford).
Oct. 2016 –Dec. 2016	Teaching Assistant for an Introduction to Logic class in Michaelmas Term, taught by Prof. James Studd, at Lady Margaret Hall (Oxford).
Sept. 2011 –Febr. 2012	Assistant of Prof. Rodie Risselada (University of Amsterdam) for a book project on Latin morphology for educational purposes within academia. Work consisted of limited research and typesetting.

## Selection of talks, presentations, conferences, etc.

21 June 2018	Title: ‘Protagoras in the <i>Theaetetus</i> : a revisionary infallibilist reading.’ A Graduates in Ancient Philosophy Work in Progress (GAPWiP) conference (21 June 2018), University of Oxford. I convened this conference.
16 January 2018	Title: ‘Not bringing things to a standstill: the <i>Theaetetus</i> on how (not) to speak about a world in radical flux.’ Conference on Language and Reality in Ancient Philosophy (16-17 January 2018), University of Groningen.
19 Oct. 2017	Title: ‘ <i>Theaetetus</i> 184-186 on the limits of perception.’ Workshop in Ancient Philosophy, University of Oxford.
26 May 2017	Title: ‘The Refutation of Extreme Flux in Plato’s <i>Theaetetus</i> .’ Classics Work in Progress Seminar, Classics Faculty, University of Oxford. A Work in Progress seminar for graduate students in classics.

9 March 2017	Title: ‘A Man is the Measure of all Things’: Understanding Plato’s Protagoras.’ Talk for an MCR colloquium series, an academic event organized by the Merton College Middle Common Room.
8 March 2017	Title: ‘The Secret Doctrine in Plato’s <i>Theaetetus</i> .’ Talk for the Ockham Society at the University of Oxford.
20 May 2016	Paper: ‘Perceiving and Judging in <i>Theaetetus</i> 184b-187a.’ Conference: British Postgraduate Philosophy Association (BPPA) Masterclass 2016 (20-21 May 2016) on ‘Perception and Perceptual Appearances in Ancient Philosophy’ at the Classics Faculty, University of Cambridge.

## Teaching capacity

In Oxford I have teaching experience at the undergraduate level in ethics, in various subjects in ancient philosophy, and in logic. Given my background in contemporary analytic philosophy (MSc in Logic) I would also be able to teach philosophy of language and an introduction to logic at the undergraduate level.

## Students’ appraisal

During my Stipendiary Lecturership at Worcester College (Oxford) (2017-2018) students nominated me for the Oxford University Student Union Teaching Awards.

## Academic service

Oct. 2018 –Dec. 2018	Graduate Mentor in Philosophy (Merton College, Oxford).
Oct. 2016 –Oct. 2017	Committee member of the Ockham Society (Faculty of Philosophy, University of Oxford).
Sept. 2013 –June 2014	Co-organizer of the biweekly Logic Tea Seminar (Institute for Logic, Language and Computation, University of Amsterdam).
Sept. 2011 –Sept. 2013	Editor/author for <i>Wau</i> , student periodical by and for students and professors of classical languages at the University of Amsterdam.

## Scholarships / grants

- August 2018 *For Yale University, Visiting Assistant in Research, January - April 2019:*  
Financial support of the Hinton Clarendon Research Fund, Worcester College (University of Oxford), in the region of US \$1735 - 2000.  
*Awarded by:* Hinton Clarendon Research Fund, Worcester College (University of Oxford).  
*Specifics:* funding for my stay at Yale University as a Visiting Assistant in Research (January - April 2019).
- August 2018 Merton College Doctoral Completion Bursary, £1,300.  
*Awarded by:* Merton College (University of Oxford).  
*Specifics:* funding for my stay at Yale University as a Visiting Assistant in Research (January - April 2019).
- August 2018 Merton College Graduate Research Grant, with Supplementary Travel Grant, £1,650.  
*Awarded by:* Merton College (University of Oxford).  
*Specifics:* funding for my stay at Yale University as a Visiting Assistant in Research (January - April 2019)
- March 2015 *For the DPhil in Philosophy:*  
Merton College/Faculty of Philosophy Scholarship 2015.  
*Awarded by:* Merton College (University of Oxford) and Faculty of Philosophy (University of Oxford).  
*Specifics:* for three academic years (9 terms) Merton College (University of Oxford) fully funds living expenses and the Faculty of Philosophy (University of Oxford) fully covers all fees.
- June 2014 *For the MSt in Ancient Philosophy:*  
Cultuurfondsbeurs (Culture Fund scholarship).  
*Awarded by:* Prins Bernhard Cultuurfonds (Prince Bernhard Culture Fund), funded by the Marta Gnyp Fonds (Marta Gnyp Fund), a fund for students in the humanities.  
*Specifics:* the Cultuurfondsbeurs is a scholarship for Dutch students who want to study abroad for a second postgraduate degree. I was awarded a scholarship that almost fully covered all fees for the MSt in Ancient Philosophy.
- June 2014 Oxford Graduate Scholarship, supported by the Higher Education Funding Council for England.  
*Awarded by:* University of Oxford, partially funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England.  
*Specifics:* Scholarship for the MSt in Ancient Philosophy, fully covering all living expenses and fees.

## Languages

Dutch	Native
English	Fluent
German	Complete passive understanding, basic active skills
French	Reading knowledge
Ancient Greek	BA degree in Classics
Latin	BA degree in Classics

## References

Mrs. Lesley Brown (University of Oxford)  
Prof. Luca Castagnoli (University of Oxford)  
Prof. Gail Fine (Cornell University, University of Oxford)  
Prof. Michail Peramatzis (University of Oxford)