

Anti-Nominalism

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In this paper I introduce Anti-Nominalism, which is a weaker version of Seshatism. I explain how it relates to Nominalism critique and why it should be taken seriously by Platonists.

Assume that there are two sets of real things. One set contains all Concrete things and the other set contains all Abstract things. These two sets together form an Ontology of Concrete vs Abstract. If these two sets contain at least one common element, then this is a Mixed Ontology. If these two sets share no common element, then this is a Separated Ontology.

The empty set is written \emptyset . This gives the following definitions:

- Platonism: $\text{Abstract} \neq \emptyset$
- Seshatism: $\text{Concrete} \neq \emptyset$
- Nominalism: $\text{Abstract} == \emptyset$

Anti-Nominalism is inexpressible in the above system.

Seshatism implies Anti-Nominalism, but Anti-Nominalism does not imply Seshatism.

Platonism assumes the set of Abstract things is non-empty, because it is the belief in the existence of abstract objects. Seshatism assumes the set of Concrete things is non-empty, because it is the belief in the existence of concrete objects. Weak Platonism is the belief that all abstract objects are real. Likewise, Weak Seshatism is the belief that all concrete objects are real. An Ontology of Concrete vs Abstract might be thought of as assuming both Weak Seshatism and Weak Platonism. Platonism implies Weak Platonism. Seshatism implies Weak Seshatism. Neither Seshatism nor Platonism requires some set of real objects of the other, so they can be used independently of Ontology. With other words, both Seshatism and Platonism are authentic in themselves in sense of Heidegger.

Nominalism does not claim that there exists real Concrete objects. It merely states that there are none real Abstract objects. The two main versions of Nominalism is that there are none universals (or categories) and that there are none objects outside space and time.

Therefore, Seshatism and Nominalism are orthogonal positions in philosophy. Seshatism is not particularly concerned with the rejection of real Abstract objects. Instead, it focuses on real Concrete themselves. Nominalism does not disagree with Weak Platonism, but claims that there are none authentically real Abstract objects. In fact, to assert a Nominalist position, it requires first to assume Weak Platonism. This is because without a set of Abstract objects that are real, it is not meaningful to say that this set is empty.

Seshatism vs Platonism is a duality of language biases that are leaning toward Concrete vs Abstract Ontology, by assigning more weight to Weak Seshatism or Weak Platonism respectively. Hence, with Seshatism vs Platonism language biases, Concrete objects might be perceived as “more real” than Abstract objects, or vice versa. Path Semanticists use Joker Calculus to construct higher dualities of Seshatism vs Platonism, where one can use language perspective and layer operators.

Nominalism explains abstract objects through the use of symbols. In Path Semantics, when people use symbols, it can be thought of as a Logic extended with Path Semantics. Two symbols a, b are used when they are equal to each other. Path Semanticists writes this as $a \sim b$. Therefore, use of symbols are in Path Semantics associated with a specific operator \sim extending normal Logic.

In Path Semantics, Platonism can be thought of as $a \sim\sim a$ for some proposition a .
Likewise, Seshatism can be thought of as $\neg(a \sim\sim a)$.

This notation automatically assumes a Separated Ontology, such that no proposition a is both Concrete and Abstract at the same time. It follows from that $a \sim\sim a$ is a statement that a is Abstract and $\neg(a \sim\sim a)$ is a statement that a is Concrete. Since $a \sim\sim a$ and $\neg(a \sim\sim a)$ implies false when assumed for a , it is absurd to think of a as both Concrete and Abstract.

When assuming Nominalism in Path Semantics, there is no way to use two symbols a, b , unless they are already symbolic distinct. First, we assume that $a == b$. Second, we assume that a, b are symbolic distinct, which is written $sd(a, b)$. From the first and second premise, we get quality:

$$(a == b) \ \& \ sd(a, b) \quad \rightarrow \quad a \sim\sim b$$

Nominalism can be thought of all use of symbols to be constrained to this lifting mechanism. Therefore, it follows that no symbols can be intrinsically used e.g. $a \sim\sim a$ or $b \sim\sim b$, arrived at through some other mechanism. In that sense, there is no authentic Platonism.

This $\sim\sim$ operator is path semantical quality, which is a partial equivalence. It means, the operator has symmetry and transitivity. From $a \sim\sim b$, one can prove $a \sim\sim a$ and $b \sim\sim b$, by using symmetry and transitivity. However, one can not prove $a \sim\sim a$ nor $b \sim\sim b$ directly. This is why the two symbols are “qual” and not “equal”. The term “qual” refers to partial equivalence, where the missing “e” is the lack of reflexivity. Reflexivity is when $a \sim\sim a$ can be proved for a without making any other assumptions first.

The core axiom of Path Semantics tells how quality propagates between path semantical layers of propositions. Each layer can be thought of as a moment in time. Therefore, under Nominalism, all use of symbols come from a lifting mechanism at some point in the past. Now, Platonism can be thought of as $a \sim\sim a$ which indeed propagates between moments in time. However, this form of Platonism is more like a Weak Platonism with Mixed Ontology. There are abstract objects in space and time, but they are created accidentally through the lifting mechanism. These abstract objects are not causing anything to exist, but are mere side-effects of equality and symbolic distinction.

The core axiom of Path Semantics can be written in this form:

$$(a : c) \ \& \ (b : d) \quad \rightarrow \quad (a \sim\sim b) \Rightarrow (c \sim\sim d)$$

The operator $:$ can be thought of as a potential. Here, $a : c$ means a can potentially cause c . What actually happens is limited by potential, but actualized through use of symbols $a \sim\sim b$.

With other words, without use of symbols, nothing happens in space and time.
The proposition $a \sim\sim b$ can be thought of as “carrying” the propositions a, b in space-time.

Notice that $a \sim\sim b$ implies $a \sim\sim a$ and $b \sim\sim b$, so one can think about time moving forward as Platonic biased. The reason that the Concrete is associated with Seshatism, is because when we look for causality, we naturally think about the physical world in a sense of reversed time. To find a cause means to look back in history and find the initial configuration that explains later states.

By using model tollens, one can explain the connection between Seshatism and the Concrete:

$$(a \sim\sim b) \Rightarrow (c \sim\sim d) \quad \rightarrow \quad \neg(c \sim\sim d) \Rightarrow \neg(a \sim\sim b)$$

Now, $\neg(a \sim b)$ does not imply $\neg(a \sim a)$ nor $\neg(b \sim b)$, which is needed for Seshatism. The only way that Seshatism makes sense, is that when we use two symbols a, b , the proposition $a \sim b$ moving forward implies both $a \sim a$ and $b \sim b$. When we reverse time, we negate these two propositions into $\neg(a \sim a)$ and $\neg(b \sim b)$, such that we can start reasoning backwards. Using modus tollens, we can reverse the direction of time, but we can not reconstruct the original use of the two symbols a, b . Instead, we can only reason about causality after something has already happened. The reason we use Seshatism is to find some symbols a, b in the past that were used.

Through Seshatism, we can find out that some symbols were used, but we can not reconstruct the usage of the symbols. We can not think about the lifting of equality and symbolic distinction into quality in the past. This also protect us from making a logical contradiction, since Platonism and Seshatism can not be used about the same proposition. We either think about what happens using forward time or backward time, but never both moving in the same direction in space-time. However, in principle two different events can have reversed time directions, just not one event.

In General Relativity, one object can move in one direction of space-time while another object moves in the opposite direction. This reverses the time direction relatively between these objects. However, this is fine as long the two objects do not communicate. For example, when one object is inside a black hole and the other is outside. The curvature of space-time in black holes is so great that the arrow of time points in opposite direction inside the black hole relative to the outside world.

When we think about path semantical layers as moments in time, this is in approximate flat space-time, called Minkowski space, along some world-trajectory of an observer. This interpretation should therefore be considered an approximation to physical time, not a physically accurate one.

In philosophy, it is easy to think about Nominalism as a statement about Ontology, where the only real objects are Concrete. This means, it can feel like Nominalism negates Platonism entirely. However, Platonism is still around, but it just has the reverse direction of time compared to when we reason about causality. So, Platonism does not go away. On the contrary, Nominalism is a stronger position than Platonism, that implies Platonism. This might be surprising to some philosophers, that the actual dual of Platonism is Seshatism and not Nominalism. Nominalism is simply a stronger sense of Platonism, that says all abstract objects are due to use of symbols.

When we use an Ontology of Concrete vs Abstract, it is impossible to express Anti-Nominalism. However, using the Path Semantical approach, one can create a system where it is expressible:

- Platonism: $a \sim a$
- Seshatism: $\neg(a \sim a)$
- Nominalism: $a \sim b$
- Anti-Nominalism: $\neg(a \sim b)$

This system is nicer, because it does not restrict us to talk about whole sets of Concrete and Abstract real objects. Instead, the same object can be Platonic biased when viewed as moving in one direction of time and Seshatic biased when viewed as moving in the opposite direction. Other relative terms, such as Dynamic vs Static, also holds very well under this philosophical framework.

When we talk about Seshatism vs Platonism, this generalizes to many forms of dualities used in science and society, such as Dynamic vs Static, Time vs Space, Female vs Male, Many vs One etc. Each side in such duality can be easily recognized as either Seshatic or Platonic biased. This approach makes Joker Calculus very useful for analysis of language biases across many different domains of human knowledge. We do not need to restrict ourselves to some particular definition of Seshatism vs Platonism, but can move flexibly between different kinds of dualities.

Nominalism and Anti-Nominalism must be seen as less important than Seshatism vs Platonism. Nominalism is a particular view of how to arrive at the abstract through use of symbols, which explains the Abstract through the perspective of the Concrete. However, it is technically not in contradiction with Platonism, because Separated and Mixed Ontology are relative in physics. You can not move both forward and backward in time, so this counts as a Separated Ontology. However, when reasoning about other events than yourself, it is possible to mentally reverse time or go forward again by need. This counts as a Mixed Ontology. With other words, Nominalism only negates Platonism in a very specific perspective of the local observer when time moves backwards. To get the correct version of Nominalism, you need time moving forward along with Platonism. Hence, when we view Nominalism as a negation of Platonism, what we are actually doing is Seshatism. When we view Nominalism through use of symbols, it is no longer incompatible with Platonism, but explains the Abstract fully through the use of symbols, affirming Platonism.

Every time we say that Nominalism claims that abstract objects do not really exist, except through the use of names and labels, we think backwards in time. The causal link between names and labels with abstract objects is something we search for in the past. We find that every time we talk about abstract objects, we use names and labels. Hence, it might seem reasonable that abstract objects do not really exist. Yet, in Path Semantics, you can not look back in time and find this causal link without use of symbols propagating forward in time first. This means, abstract objects do really exist, from the perspective of forward time. When you reverse time, abstract objects do not really exist. Whether you consider abstract objects as existing or not in space-time, depends on the direction of time.

To make this easier to reason about, we can think of Nominalism as a stronger Platonism, moving forward in time. Anti-Nominalism is simply how most philosophers think about Nominalism. Anti-Nominalism is a weaker Seshatism. Now, if we can control whether an object is seen as Concrete or Abstract based on some bit of information, such as the direction of time going forward or backward, then we can think of Anti-Nominalism as $\text{'Concrete'} == \emptyset$, under the condition that Abstract and Concrete objects have switched places. Hence, Anti-Nominalism and Nominalism in this perspective is the same thing, a self-dual idea.

Now, this would be fine, if we only talked about Ontology in Path Semantics. However, Path Semantics is not about Ontology. This causes a major problem with the non-dual Anti-Nominalism.

When Path Semanticists think about the core axiom of Path Semantics, it is just like any other axiom. We use the same theory for assuming axioms in Logic as for assuming axioms in general. This means, we study how people use symbols through the core axiom, but we do not speculate about the Ontology of the core axiom itself. Instead, prior to any Ontology, we need to assume the core axiom. In many situations, we can prove things using the core axiom without any Ontology. Path Semanticists prefer to avoid talking about Ontology, since it is not Path Semantics.

Therefore, it is not up to Path Semanticists to speculate whether the only way to talk about existence of abstract objects is through use of symbols. That is an Ontological loaded position. In general, being biased toward some particular Ontology in Path Semantics is usually bad design.

There is a reason why one writes $\text{'a} \sim \sim \text{a'}$ for Platonism in Path Semantics. We do not care about how one arrives at this statement, only that one assumes this statement and what can be proved from it. This can be through use of symbols, but it also might be the existence of some Platonic world of forms outside space or time, or perhaps a region of space-time that is timeless or periodic.

Now, while most philosophers think about Nominalism as Anti-Nominalism backward in time, it is possible for Path Semanticists to think about Anti-Nominalism forward in time too.

This means, two symbols `a, b`, might never be used `(a ~ b)`, as an Anti-Nominalist position.

This form of Anti-Nominalism is dual to Nominalism. It opens up a new world of thinking, where some things are unthinkable. Sometimes, some things are not allowed to happen forward in time, only backward in time. Now, it is possible to think of space-time where information is preserved, such that if something can happen forward in time, there is a way to reverse time direction such that one can derive exactly what happened in the past. No information is lost in such theories of space-time. This is studied too by Path Semanticists, but by using a modified core axiom:

$$(a : c) \& (b : d) \rightarrow (a \sim b) == (c \sim d)$$

From this modified core axiom it follows:

$$(a : c) \& (b : d) \rightarrow !(a \sim b) == !(c \sim d)$$

With other words, both Nominalism and Anti-Nominalism propagate in both directions of time.

Under such theories, it is not possible to lift into quality, without it propagating backwards to all prior moments through its potential. The “first moment” can be thought of as `0`, causing `1` and `1`. Such cosmological models describes matter and anti-matter separating into two universes, one where time moves “up” and the other where time moves “down”. In this sense, the “first moment” is defined as the moment when entropy is at the lowest in space-time.

In Theology, salvation might be thought of as `a ~ a`. There are two main paths toward salvation, either through direct Enlightenment, when `a ~ a` spontaneously occurs, or through a savior figure `a ~ b`. Nominalism might be thought of as a position of Theology where humans can not be saved by themselves, but only through some savior figure. In this sense, the view that the Abstract is only grasped through the Concrete, fits the idea that one can only receive salvation through concrete actions or rituals. The point is to control people socially through use of Theology, by restricting their choices of savior figures to the official ones promoted by some authority.

The evolution of religious beliefs into confessing faith in particular savior figures, can be explained scientifically by the need for groups of individuals to satisfy partial equivalence: Symmetry makes an individual A who helps an individual B increase the probability that B helps A. When they help each other, they live in symbiosis. By transitivity, if A helps B and B helps C, then A helps C. Social animals, e.g. humans, have weak reflexivity. Few individuals manage to survive on their own. Besides, sexual reproduction requires interaction between individuals and tends to drive the biological equilibrium toward group evolution. Therefore, social animals that reproduce sexually will naturally evolve religious beliefs toward savior figures supporting group identities.

Use of Nominalism in Theology supports particular actions or rituals, which strengthens groups sharing religious beliefs. However, this argument is only viewed as strong when people are surrounded by people who have similar beliefs. The problem with Nominalism here is that it can not justify particular abstract ideas, since all abstract ideas happen through use of symbols. With other words, people do not know which actions or rituals are more important than others. Original Platonism as it started historically, was competing with many other mystery cults, so its strength came from claiming a universal higher principle, which might be revealed to anyone who participated in their specific initiation rituals. Therefore, the motivation people had to study Platonism came partially due to the desire to discover and learn more about the universe in general. This worked well since Platonism was taught in schools of higher education, where people learned a wide variety of topics. Later, when these schools were shut down and only kept open to a small elite who held monopoly on medicine, Nominalism was more effective, used to keep people ignorant.

Anti-Nominalism in Theology can be thought of as a stance against oppression, by demanding that people have access to higher education. For example, by studying history, people can learn more about how oppression worked in the past, to help themselves recognize methods of oppression in the present. Furthermore, Anti-Nominalism is a weaker Seshatism. Anti-Nominalism is not incompatible with Platonism, because one can not prove Seshatism from Anti-Nominalism. Seshatism implies Anti-Nominalism, but not vice versa. This means, Anti-Nominalists can take on Seshatic views, but also embrace Platonism. This is flexible in Theology, because it acknowledges opposition against keeping higher education inaccessible to people through religion, but also, it can embrace the ideas that are taught in higher education, which often have Platonic language biases.

In this sense, Anti-Nominalism can be thought of as a more relaxed version of Seshatism.

However, there is also a radical version of Anti-Nominalism. This radical version claims that Nominalism has historically been used to silence the Seshatic position. For example, women often advocate Seshatic views, which have been given less space in public debates. As a result, on average, women have received less opportunities to get higher education than men. Nominalism is a male-centric philosophy that takes ideas that have been promoted for very long time outside the typical philosophical texts, long time before Plato and Aristotle, and representing them anew in a context that ignores prior thought. This takes away the voice of Seshatism, ignoring that Seshatism was the dominant philosophy going way back to the Bronze Age. Path Semanticists fix this by naming Seshatism after the Ancient Egyptian goddess Seshat of writing and wisdom, daughter of Justice (Ma'at). Seshat was ignored by Plato, who wrote about Thoth. The stories of Seshat and Thoth was meant to be retold side by side, to bring balance. This balance was disrupted when Plato only paid attention to one perspective. It is possible that Plato did not even know who Seshat was. The radical version of Anti-Nominalism is a Nominalism critique, playing emphasis on historical differences between Seshatism and Nominalism.

Anti-Nominalism is also very interesting regarding Ontology. If Nominalism is viewed as compatible with Platonism, where the Abstract can only be grasped through the Concrete, then Anti-Nominalism questions how there can be Separated Ontology between the Concrete and the Abstract. Anti-Nominalism points out that when Nominalists claim there are no real Abstract objects, this is used like a magic trick, to explain away Abstract objects through use of symbols, as if there are no real Abstract objects in language. Why not be more honest and claim a Mixed Ontology instead? The motivation to perform this magic trick seems to be precisely to confuse people and avoid critique of a Mixed Ontology, which was scientifically discredited over time. Anti-Nominalists claim that Nominalism tries to hide behind a false history. From this perspective, Anti-Nominalism can argue for a clear Separated Ontology, with no way to connect the Concrete with the Abstract. For example, instead of considering the equation of a perfect circle for an Abstract object, it can be viewed merely as a Concrete object. That said, Anti-Nominalists do not need to deny the existence of Abstract objects, outside space and time. It is simply irrelevant, as the equation of a perfect circle exists inside space and time and this suffices for all practical purposes. The fact that we use symbols to describe a perfect circle is also irrelevant. In fact, we use symbols in all descriptions, perfect or not. Why should we pay attention to descriptions of perfect objects and view them as Abstract?

In this sense, the Anti-Nominalist position can be defined as the belief that when people use symbols, this usage of symbols always happens inside space and time.

This definition of Anti-Nominalism can be thought of as a weaker Nominalism in one sense, which is not necessarily aggressive against Platonism. Instead of being self-dual, Anti-Nominalism is a broader form of Nominalism, but oriented toward the Concrete instead of the Abstract. Nominalism here does not imply Anti-Nominalism, because Nominalism does not say whether usage of symbols is Concrete. It is easier to see how Seshatism is a stronger version of Anti-Nominalism.

Platonists should consider Anti-Nominalism a serious position, because it more clearly separates the Ontology of the Concrete vs Abstract. Formally, one might work with a Platonic biased theory:

$$sd(a, b) \rightarrow (a \sim a) \& \neg(a \sim b) \quad \text{for all } a, b$$

The symbolic distinction `sd(a, b)` represents Separated Ontology, because `a, b` can be thought of as different propositions, `a` being Platonic biased and `b` being Seshatic biased, relatively. In this theory, the specific relative Seshatic bias is Anti-Nominalistic. All distinct symbols are unequal:

$$sd(a, b) \rightarrow \neg(a = b)$$

Proof: From `sd(a, b)`, one can prove `a ~ a` and `!(a ~ b)`. Also, one can prove `sd(b, a)` using symmetry of symbolic distinction. Hence, one can prove `b ~ b` too. Assuming `a == b`, one can prove `a ~ b`, which is absurd since one `!(a ~ b)`. This proof uses conversion of `a ~ a` into `~a` and `b ~ b` into `~b`, followed by using definition of quality `a ~ b := (a == b) & ~a & ~b`.

Therefore, in this Platonic biased theory, all symbolic distinct propositions are unequal (original).

This is an interesting theory, because normally we use Seshatism `!(a ~ a)` to get `!(a ~ b)`. The Platonic biased theory is stronger in a sense, since it can prove `!(a == b)` from `sd(a, b)`. Both theories model originality in some sense, but Platonic originality is bit unusual. Normally, we think of Platonic objects as copyable, but here there is a kind of uncopyable property that is related to things that can not happen physically. In a way, it gets closer to the Abstract Platonic world where every Idea exist in perfect form and only in one place for each object.

Summary: Platonism is usually associated with ideas that can be expressed, but not demonstrated without flaws. We can reason about these ideas as if they exist, like we reason about physical objects. This property of thinking abstractly has fascinated philosophers for a long time. Nominalism is a reaction against abstract thought, but this negative approach also makes it less useful. Anti-Nominalism takes a more nuanced position that is oriented toward the Concrete, supporting Seshatism without excluding Platonism in all cases. Anti-Nominalism can be used in combination with Platonism to talk about Platonic originality. In some ways, it helps to get closer to the original promise of Platonism. Therefore, Anti-Nominalism has value on its own, not just because it shines better light on Nominalism as a critical position.