PLATO and PARMENIDES

Parmenides’ *Way of Truth* and Plato’s
*Parmenides* translated with an introduction
and a running commentary

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attributes and parts and the whole arrangement of the Heaven, they collected and fitted into their scheme (Met. 983b, 27).

Here it may be noted that these 'resemblances' (συμμορφώμενοι) between things like Justice and the properties of numbers explain why Aristotle sometimes says that things represent (μιμοῦσα) numbers, rather than simply are numbers. A sensible body, as we have seen, can be said to be the unit-atoms composing it; but if a man says that 'Justice is the square number' he cannot mean that Justice is a plane figure composed of four unit-points; obviously he means that the square figure is a symbol which represents or embodies the nature of fairness, just as when an honest man was called 'four-square without reproach', no one imagined that his figure really had four corners. The two modes of describing the relation of things to numbers are perfectly compatible, being respectively appropriate to different orders of 'things'.

Shortly after this passage comes the statement about the elements of number and the generation of numbers from the unit, ending 'and numbers, as we said, are the whole Heaven'. The world-order, cosmos, in which cosmogony terminates was not conceived, as by the Ionians, as the arrangement of the four great concentric masses of earth, water, air, and fire. The Pythagorean sciences are arithmetic, geometry, astronomy ('spheric'), and music, the sciences which discover the element of number, measure, proportion, in the cosmos and are studied in order to bring the soul into harmony with the objects of its contemplation. Accordingly for them the visible world is not Anaximander's battlefield in which the warring opposites perpetually encroach on one another's provinces and pay the penalty of their injustice. Rather it is the harmonious disposition of earth and the heavenly bodies according to the intervals of the musical scale. The same sciences in Plato's scheme of higher education lead to the same end, the assimilation of the soul to principles of symmetry and concord. As Socrates says earlier in the Republic (500c): 'One whose thought is set on reality will not have leisure to look downwards upon the field of human interests, to enter into the strife of men and catch the infection of their jealousies and feuds. His eyes are fixed upon an unchanging order; the things he contemplates neither inflict injustice nor suffer wrong, but observe due proportion and order; and of these he studies to reproduce the likeness in himself as best he can. A man cannot fail to imitate that with which he holds converse with wonder and delight. So the philosopher, holding converse with the divine and orderly, becomes, so far as man may, both orderly and divine.'

PYTHAGOREAN COSMOGONY

The Ionian 'inquiry into the nature of things' had no bearing on conduct and no point of contact with politics. But Pythagoras, as Plato remarks in the only passage where he mentions him by name, was pre-eminently valued for his private converse with his disciples, to whom he bequeathed a 'way of life' which marked them out from the rest of mankind (Rep. 600a). This way of life was characterised by Aristoxenus: 'Every distinction they lay down as to what should be done or not done aims at converse with the divine. This is their first principle, and their whole life is ordered with a view to following God' (Ap. Iamb., VII. P. 137). The 'following' or 'imitation' of the divine has been variously construed in different religious systems. It is probable that the Pythagorean construction is faithfully reproduced in the Timaeus (99b):

'If a man is engrossed in appetites and ambitions and spends all his pains upon these, all his thoughts must needs be mortal and, so far as that is possible, he cannot fail short of becoming mortal altogether, since he has nourished the growth of his mortality.' But if his heart has been set on the love of learning and true wisdom and he has exercised that part of himself above all, he is surely bound to have thoughts immortal and divine, if he shall lay hold upon truth, nor can he fail to possess immortality in the fullest measure that human nature admits; and because he is always devoutly cherishing the divine part and maintaining the guardian genius (daemon) that dwells with him in good estate, he must needs be happy (eudaemon) above all. Now there is but one way of caring for anything, namely to give it the nourishment and motions proper to it. The motions akin to the divine part in us are the thoughts and revolutions of the universe; these, therefore, every man should follow, and... by learning to know the harmonies and revolutions of the world, he should bring the intelligent part, according to its pristine nature, into the likeness of that which intelligence discerns, and thereby win the fulfillment of the best life set by the gods before mankind both for this present time and for the time to come.'

In this passage Plato shows how the life of religions and moral aspiration was identified with the pursuit of truth about the order of the world. Philosophy is the achievement of immortality. The goal is attained by purifying the soul of lower desires and worldly ambitions, so as to set free the divine part to apprehend the harmony of the cosmos, and reproduce it in the harmony of the microcosm. The conception was first projected into external Nature, and then rediscovered there and set up as a pattern to be reproduced in socialised humanity.
CHAPTER II

PARMENIDES’ WAY OF TRUTH

We have now some picture of the cosmology which Parmenides, as a dissident Pythagorean, would be primarily concerned to criticize. His logical mind rebelled against the assumption which it shared with the other systems of the sixth century. They had all described the emergence of a manifold world out of an original unity, and also recognized within the world an opposition of contraries derived from some primitive pair: the Hot and the Cold, or Fire and Air, or Light and Darkness. To Parmenides it seemed irrational and inconceivable that from an original One Being should come first two and then many. Heraclitus, too, had protested; but he attacked from the opposite quarter, denying the reality of any unchanging being. He abolished the notion of substance; nothing remains the same. Accordingly, he too rejected any cosmogony starting from a One permanent being, and accepted the world of becoming with its struggling opposites as ultimate. Parmenides took the other alternative. He held to the notion of one substantial being with all the consequences deduced by his logic. If its unity and its being are taken seriously, it cannot become two and then many; no manifold world can proceed out of the One. Therefore plurality, becoming, change, motion, are in some sense unreal.

Parmenides’ choice is not that of a man of science. Aristotle calls him the antinaturalist (απιστικός), for “natural things” are things capable of motion. Parmenides’ Pythagorean training comes out in his preference for unity, rest, limit, as against plurality, motion, the unlimited, to which the Ionian physicist felt no objection. Rather than surrender these attributes of being, he will set all common sense at defiance, and follow reason against the evidence of our eyes and ears. But, although his central doctrine, “the real is one, limited, at rest,” is ultimately traceable to religious and moral preconceptions and the symbolism of his poem indicates that the search for truth is comparable to a religious activity, the truth he discovers is not animated by religious belief. He never calls his One Being ‘god.’ He is a curious blend of prophet and logician. Heraclitus was the prophet of a Logos which could be expressed only in seeming contradictions. Parmenides is the prophet of a logic which will tolerate no semblance of contradiction.

In the setting of his poem he follows the apocalyptic tradition: the truth is revealed to him by a goddess, whom he visits in a region beyond the gates of night and day. This attitude is not new. Hesiod had claimed to be taught by the Muses of Helicon. There may have been, as early as the sixth century, poems of the type of Orpheus’ descent to the underworld. This traditional attitude of the poet to his work is not a mere artifice of bloodless allegory. It may be compared with Heraclitus’ claim to reproduce in his treatise the Truth which stands for ever. But Parmenides is also, and above all, the man who reasons. He is the first philosopher to argue, formally deducing conclusions from premises, instead of making dogmatic announcements. His school were the originators of dialectic. The new method of argument must have been suggested by the demonstrations of geometry, which was taking shape in Pythagorean hands and gave the first specimens of rigid proof: “grant me certain assumptions and I will prove the rest.” The reductio ad absurdum was either invented or adopted by Zeno.

Parmenides’ premise states in a more abstract form the first assumption common to all his predecessors, Milesian or Pythagorean: ultimately there exists a One Being. His thought is really at work upon this abstract concept; he considers what further attributes can or cannot, logically belong to a being that is one. At the same time, this One Being is not a mere abstraction; it proves to be a single continuous and homogeneous substance filling the whole of space. So far, as it seemed to him, reason will carry us, but no farther. Such a being cannot become or cease to be or change; such a unity cannot also be a plurality. There is no possible transition from the One Being to the manifold and changing world which our senses seem to reveal. His work is accordingly divided, after the poem, into two parts. The Way of Truth deduces the nature of the one reality from premises asserted as irrefragably true. It ends with a clear warning that the Way of Seeming, which follows, is not true or consistent with the truth. This second part, accordingly, is not in the form of logical deduction, but gives a cosmogony in the traditional narrative manner. The starting-point is the false belief of mortals, who trust their senses and accept the appearance of two opposite powers contending in the world. Unfortunately very few fragments of the second part survive; but it is probable that we possess nearly the whole of the
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Way of Truth, thanks to Simplicius, who copied it out in his commentary on the Physics because the book had become very rare. And it is with the Way of Truth that we are chiefly concerned.

Frag. 1. Proem.

We need not linger over the allegorical poem. Parmenides travels on the chariot of the Sun along a road, far from the beaten track of men, which leads through the gates of Day and Night. Beyond them he is welcomed by a goddess. Her dwelling on the further side of these gates must be symbolic.2 Light and Darkness are the two chief opposites in the world of misleading appearances. Parmenides' thought has travelled beyond the region of Seeming to what Plato in the Phaedrus calls the Plain of Truth, visited by the soul-chariots before incarnation. The goddess approves his coming and tells him:

'It is meet that thou shouldst learn all things—both the unmoved heart of rounded Truth and what seems to mortals, in which there is no true belief' (1, 28-30).

The Way of Truth and the Way of Seeming (as we may call it) are the two divisions of the poem: the deduction of the nature of the One Being and the illegitimate cosmogony.


The goddess thus announces two Ways that can be followed, and are followed in the sequel. But subsequent fragments mention another Way, which cannot be followed at all, being 'utterly undiscernible'. The following passage sets this impassable Way in contrast with the Way of Truth and finally dismisses it.

'Come now and I will tell thee—listen and lay my word to heart—the only ways of inquiry that are to be thought of: one, that <That which is> 3 is, and it is impossible for it not to be, is the Way of Persuasion, for Persuasion attends on Truth.

1 I cannot remember having seen in any account of Parmenides any notice of Prod. in Frag. IV, 34 (Coninx), who, following Syrus, says of Parmenides in Plato's dialogue, offering his own hypothesis for examination in the dialectical exercise, 'Δ' οὖτ' συνελάτων τὰς λεπτὰς δημάτων φέροντας διὰ ἀποστροφῆς τῆς κατὰ τὴν γεγονότα διάδεκαλας, καθὼς κινήσεις ποιήσωμεν τὸν πάντα παραλλαγήν ἐκεῖνον δὲ σημειοφέρεσθαι εἶναι διὰτοὺς καθόρις, καὶ οὐδ' ἐκεῖσεν, ὡς εἰ τὸ ὧν ἔστων ἐνδομάδει, ἡδ' ἐκεῖσεν ἔνειμα τοὺς τείχους. This seems to mean that Parmenides called his goddess 'the nymph Hypsiaple'. The 'high gates' must be the gates of Day and Night, which the poem so elaborately describes.

2 τὴν δὴ φῶς τοῦτο τέε (Simpl., τὸν γης, Procl.) καὶ ἐν τῶν δὲ τῆς μη εἶναι. The lack of any subject for ἐπισειζεῖται suggests that Parmenides wrote ἢ μὴ δέον μὴ εἶναι τοῦ τοῦτο.
INTRODUCTION

distinction, the Way of Not-being. It is dismissed, once for all, in the above fragments.

Frgs. 6, ll. 4-9; 7. Warning against the Way of Seeming.

The goddess next warns Parmenides against putting his trust in that Way of Seeming in which she has said that he must be instructed, as well as in the Way of Truth. It is the Way of mortal belief based upon sense experience. Frag. 6 continues:

‘But secondly (I hold thee back) from the Way wherein mortals who know nothing wander, two-headed; for perplexity guides the wandering thought in their breasts, and they are borne along, both deaf and blind, bemused, as undiscerning hordes, who have determined to believe that it is and it is not, the same and not the same, and for whom there is a way of all things that turns back upon itself (frags. 6, 4-end).

For never shall this be proved: that things that are not are; but do thou hold back thy thought from this Way of inquiry, nor let custom that comes of much experience force thee to cast along this Way an aimless eye and a docile ear and tongue, but judge by reasoning the much-debated proof I utter.3

There is only one Way left that can be spoken of, namely, that It is.’ (Here follows the whole Way of Truth.)

I have called this second way of the untruth the ‘Way of Seeming’ and translated μορίων δόξα (l. 30) ’what seems to mortals’, because ‘opinions’ or ‘beliefs’ is too narrow a rendering. ‘What seems to mortals’ (τὰ δοκοῦντα, l. 31) includes (a) what seems real or appears to the senses; (b) what seems true, what all men, misled by the senses, believe and the dogmas taught by philosophers and poets on the same basis; and (c) what has seemed right to men (σωφροσύνη), the decision they have ‘laid down’ to recognise appearances and the beliefs founded on them in the conventional institution of language. This decision is mentioned where the Way of Truth denies that any second being can arise alongside of the being that already exists: ‘Therefore all those things will be a mere word—all the things that mortals have laid down (σωφροσύνη), believing that they are true, namely becoming and perishing, both being and not being, change of place, and interchange of bright colour’ (8, 35-41). And again, where the Way of Seeming begins: ‘For mortals have laid down their decision (σωφροσύνη) to name two forms, of which it is not right to name one; and that is where they have gone astray’ (8, 53-54. followed by the description of the two forms, Fire and Night, and the whole cosmogony of the second part).

Parmenides means that all men—common men and philosophers alike—are agreed to believe in the reality of the world our senses seem to show us. The premise they start from is neither the recognition of the One Being only (from which follows the Way of Truth and nothing more) nor the recognition of an original state of sheer nothingness (which would lead to the impassable Way of Not-being). What mortals do in fact accept as real and ultimate is a world of diversity, in which things ‘both are and are not’, passing from non-existence to existence and back again in becoming and perishing, and from being this (‘the same’) to ‘being something else’ (‘not the same’) in change. The elements, they think, are modified or transformed on a ‘way to and fro’, that turns back upon itself.1 Becoming, change, and the diversity they presuppose must be assumed in any cosmogony. They will be assumed in the cosmogony of the second part. But Parmenides alone perceives that at this point error begins beyond the limits of truth.

Promises of the Way of Truth.

In these passages Parmenides has stated the premises from which the Way of Truth will deduce the attributes of the real. (1) That which is, is, and cannot not-be; that which is not, is not, and cannot be. The real exists and can never be non-existent. It follows that there is no such thing as coming-to-be out of non-existence or perishing into non-existence. ‘Being’ has for Parmenides a strict and absolute sense; a thing either is or is not. If it is, it is completely and absolutely; if it is not, it is simply nothing. There are no degrees of being; a thing cannot be partly

1 There may be a special reference to Hierocletus’ δᾶκη ἢν ἐκάθε, but Anaximenes’ Air also is rarified into Fire and condensed into Water and Earth.

1 There may be a special reference to Hierocletus’ δᾶκη ἢν ἐκάθε, but Anaximenes’ Air also is rarified into Fire and condensed into Water and Earth.
real and partly unreal. There can never be a state of not-being in which what is could ever be; and there can be no transition from not-being to being or from being to not-being. Nor can there be any change of that which is; for that would mean that it is not at one time what it is at another.

(2) That which is can be thought or known, and uttered or truly named; that which is not, cannot. This premise is concerned with the relation of the real to thought and language. ‘It is the same thing that can be thought and that can be’. 1 ‘Thinking and the thought that “it is” are one and the same. For you will not find thought apart from that which is, in respect of which thought is uttered.’ 2 Thought is uttered in names that are true, i.e., names of what really is. In names that are not true no thought or meaning is expressed. You will not find thought (meaning) apart from something real, which is meant by the utterance of that thought in words. There is nothing else for words to mean. Frag. 8 continues: ‘For there is and shall be no other thing besides what is, since Destiny has festered it so as to be whole and immovable.’ (Since it is ‘whole’, complete and all-containing, there is no second thing beside it, to be thought or spoken of. And it is ‘immovable’ or unchangeable; so there will never be a second thing arising out of it. The real cannot cease to be just what it is and become something else. Therefore all those (names) will be a mere word—all the (names) that mortals have agreed upon, believing that they are true: becoming and perishing, both being and not being, change of place and interchange of bright colour.’ All these terms are dismissed as empty names which are meaningless, since they do not apply to what is, and there is nothing else for them to mean.

Only what can be thought or truly named; and only what can be thought can be. The real must be the same as the conceivable and logically coherent, what is thinkable by reasoning (λόγος) as opposed to the senses (frag. 7, 5). The real is the same as the rational. And the real is the only thing that can be named or ‘uttered’. In a sense Parmenides does not deny that it is possible to believe and say what is false; mortals are accused of doing both. But he appears to hold the view, which was maintained later, that all false statements are meaningless. Plato formulates it as follows: ‘To think (or say) what is false is to think what is not; but that is to think nothing; and that, again, is not to think at all.’ 3 In a word, it is impossible to say or think what is false, because there is nothing for a false statement to mean or refer to. So Parmenides holds that false names like ‘becoming’, ‘perishing’, are meaningless. Only thought (νοημα), as distinct from belief founded on the senses, has a real object.

(3) That which is, is one and cannot be many. This is a third premise, for which Parmenides gives no proof. Theophrastus 4 supplied it as follows: ‘What is beside that which is, is not; what is not is nothing; therefore that which is, is one.’ Theophrastus was probably following Aristotle 5: ‘Claiming that, besides that which is, that which is not is nothing, he thinks that that which is is of necessity one and there is nothing else’; and Aristotle himself was perhaps expanding Frag. 8, 36: ‘There is and shall be no other thing besides what is.’ That the real is ultimately one had been assumed from the outset of philosophy; that may be why Parmenides takes this premise for granted. What is new is his insistence that what is one cannot also be many, or become many. The unity of the real is affirmed as strictly and absolutely as its being. The real is unique; there is no second thing beside it. It is also indivisible; it does not contain a plurality of distinct parts, and it can never be divided into parts. There cannot be a plurality of things that are (πολλα δοτα).

**THE WAY OF TRUTH**

From the premises above stated we can now turn to the Way of Truth, in which their consequences are deduced. We possess here what appears to be a continuous fragment of 62 lines. It opens, like a geometrical theorem, with a sort of enunciation of the conclusion to be proved.

Frag. 8, 1–6. *Enunciation.*

There is only one Way left to be spoken of, namely that *it is.*

And on this way are many marks, that what is is unborn and

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imperishable; whole and unique, and immovable, and without end in time; nor was it ever, nor will it be, since it is now all at once, one, continuous.

The several attributes here enumerated are now established by a series of arguments.

Frag. 8, 6–22. No coming-to-be or perishing.

First comes the proof that what is is unborn and imperishable.

For what birth of it wilt thou look for? In what way and whence did it grow? 1

Birth and growth both suggest a living creature that grows by feeding on something from without. So Empedocles says of the sum of his four elements: ‘What could augment this all and whence could it come?’ (17, 32). Plato too declares that the world, though living, does not draw nourishment from outside (Tim. 33c). Both deny the Milesian doctrine of a boundless circumambient (ἐπιθέσον), from which fresh material could be drawn and into which the world’s substance could return when it perished. In the Pythagorean cosmogony, too, the world grew from a first unit or seed and drew in breath from the unlimited, which exists ‘outside the Heaven’. Parmenides is rejecting the notion that what can be born in this way and have grown to its present dimensions. It must always exist as a whole (ὅλος, l. 4).

Nor yet, he continues, could it have come out of sheer nothingness.

Nor shall I let thee say or think that it came from what is not; for it cannot be said or thought that ‘it is not’.

What is can never have been in a state of not-being; for such a state is inconceivable and the assertion is meaningless: there is nothing for the words ‘it is not’ to refer to. So Melissus: ‘What was, was always and will always be. For if it had come into being, before it came into being it must have been nothing; and if it was nothing, nothing could ever come out of nothing’ (frag. 1).

And what need could have stirred it up, starting from nothing, to be born later rather than sooner?

Thus it must either be altogether or not at all.

1 μονογένες, ‘unique’, the only one of its kind. This is said of the world by Plato, Tim. 31b, 92c (in opposition to a plurality of worlds). Presently (l. 7–12) it will be proved that Being is (1) whole, for it does not come into existence part by part, but is ‘all at once’, and (2) unique, since no second being can arise alongside it.

2 ἀδεξυθ. Perhaps ἀδεξυθή (like μητή, 12, 5, and ἄοι, 8, 10) ἀδεξυθή, Wilm. 36

PARMENIDES’ WAY OF TRUTH

This is an acute and unanswerable objection to current cosmogonies. They all assumed a process of birth or becoming which started at some moment of time. They could give no reason why it should not have started at any earlier or later moment. The last line rejects any process of becoming during which being was growing to completion and at the end of which it would be all there. ‘It is now, all at once.’ ‘It must be altogether or not at all.’ He now adds: Granted that it is always there as a whole, nothing further can arise alongside of it and in addition to it. It is ‘unique’ (μονογένες 8, 4).

Nor will the force of belief suffer to arise out of what is not something over and above it (viz. what is).

This further something would have to come out of not-being; but that is impossible. At 8, 36, he repeats: ‘there is and shall be no other (ἄλλα) besides what is (πάντα τὸῦ ἀόρατος).’ with the inference that all becoming and change must be mere meaningless words.

The One Being exists always as a whole; nothing more and nothing different can be added. The multiplicity of forms (sensible opposites) and changes of quality which mortals believe in, cannot be real. The conclusion is that there is no way in which anything can come to be out of not-being.

Therefore Justice with her fetters does not let it loose or suffer 15 it either to come into being or to perish, but holds it fast.

The decision concerning these things lies in this: It is, or it is not. But the decision has been given, as is necessary: to leave alone the one Way as unthinkable and unnamable—for it is no true Way—and that the other Way is real and true.

This refers to the decision given in frag. 2, where the Way of Not-being was finally dismissed as ‘utterly undiscernible path’, because Not-being is unknowable and unutterable (p. 31).

And how could what is be going to be in the future? And 20 how could it come to be? For if it came into being, it is not; nor is it, if it is at some time going to be.

1 I understand μονογένες ἀόρατος to mean ‘alongside of what is’, ‘etwas anderes als eben dieses’ (Kranz), not ‘etwas anderes als eben Nichtsgegenstand’ (Diels). Cf. Emped. 17, 30, and ἀνεξαρτήτως (the 4 elements) αὐτός ὁ ἄρχων. [Ar.] MXX. 9744. 5, ἐν ἄνεξαρτήτως ἐν ἂνεξαρτησίας πᾶν ἐν καὶ μέρος ἐν ἕν καιρὸν ἐν ἑνὶ καὶ χρόνῳ ἐν ἑνὶ καὶ χρόνῳ. 2 μα δέ ἐν καὶ χρόνῳ ἐν ἑνὶ καὶ χρόνῳ; MSS. Diels. This suits the next line (cf. ἐν ἄνεξαρτήτως ἐν ἀνεξαρτησίας); but if some reference to perishing is thought necessary, ἐνεκτὸς ἀνεξαρτησίας ἐν (Karsten, Kranz) may be right. H. Gomperz (Psyche. Beob. 11) takes ἕν χρόνῳ to mean ‘if it once was (but is no longer).’
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Thus becoming is extinguished and perishing is not to be heard of.

The statement in the enunciation, 'Nor was it ever, nor will it be, since it is now all at once,' is here echoed. Only the present 'is' may be used, for there is no process of becoming starting at one time and ending at another, during which we could say that it is not yet all there, but is going to be all there in the future. Aristotle summarises the Parmenidean argument, where he remarks that his own account of becoming out of potential existence is the only solution of the problem. 'The first philosophic inquirers into the truth and the nature of things turned aside, as it were, into another way, into which they were thrust by lack of experience. They say that nothing is either comes into being or perishes, because what comes to be must so either from what is or from what is not, and both are impossible. For what is cannot come to be, because it already is; and nothing could have come to be out of what is not, for there must be something present as a substrate. So too they exaggerated the consequence which follows and denied the very existence of a plurality of things, saying that only Being itself is.' (Phys. 194a, 25.) Parmenides intended his denial of becoming to include all change; for in change something which was not comes to be, and something which is so-and-so comes to be not-so-and-so but different and such as it was not before. All this seemed to him irrational.

The universal assumption of previous cosmogonies is thus rejected. No one, indeed, had believed that something could come out of nothing; and the philosophers of the sixth century had regarded their primary Being as a permanent and imperishable substance.

But, not content with that, they had professed to derive from this

1 This interpretation is supported by Melissus, frag. 2. el μη τα ἐν εἰσαγωγῇ, ἀρχὴν δὲ ταὐτόν (ἐν οἰκεῖον τὴν ἀκούσειν) καὶ τῆς ἀρχῆς (ἐν ἀρχὴν τὴν ἀκούσειν). See Aristotle, Phys. 194a, 25. We understand ἄρχοντα (and ἀρχήν) γὰρ τὸ γενόμενον οἷον τὸ γενόμενον ὑπὲρ τῆς ἀλήθείας. testimony, if we understand ἄρχοντα (and ἀρχήν) γὰρ τὸ γενόμενον οἷον τὸ γενόμενον ὑπὲρ τῆς ἀλήθείας. witness, if we understand ἄρχοντα (and ἀρχήν) γὰρ τὸ γενόμενον οἷον τὸ γενόμενον ὑπὲρ τῆς ἀλήθείας.

2 Parmenides' Way of Truth was, after all, misleading.

PARMENIDES' WAY OF TRUTH

one Being a manifold and changing world, which they had regarded as real. Out of a One, which always is, had come a many, which were not before and will again not be. And this had begun to happen at some moment of time. Parmenides declares all this to be not only inexplicable, but impossible. Their real primary Being admittedly never began and will never cease to exist. But besides this a real ordered world of things was to be born and grow. Out of what? Not out of the original real Being, for that already was, absolutely and completely; no second being could come out of it. Not out of nothing, for all agreed that nothing could come out of nothing. Therefore a changing world of many real things can never arise.

This first conclusion: 'No becoming or perishing of anything real', was accepted by subsequent thinkers. They agreed that the ultimately real factors—elements, atoms, etc.—could not begin or cease to exist. But they evaded the conclusion that a manifold world could never exist by making their ultimately real things a plurality instead of a unity, and by reducing the 'becoming' of things composed of them to a rearrangement of the ultimately real factors.

Frag. 8, 22-25. What is, being one and homogeneous, is indivisible.

The last paragraph showed that no second being could arise out of nothing by way of addition to the Being that always exists. Next, it is denied that this unique Being could become many by way of division, which would not involve any fresh being, but only loss of unity. Being is one, homogeneous, and continuous, without any distinction of parts, and such a unity cannot be broken up.

Nor is it divisible, since it is all alike (homogeneous); nor is there something more here than there, that might hinder it from holding together, nor some part weaker, but it is all full of what is.

Therefore it is all continuous; for what is is close to what is.

The One Being, if it is really and absolutely one, is indivisible, because it is all alike (without any distinction of one part from another) and uniformly distributed; there is not more of it in one place than in another. Also there are no gaps in it. There is, therefore, no reason why it should break up into different parts and so become many. This denial has several applications.

Anaximander's Boundless was without internal limits or distinctions (one sense of ἀπάρθικον) until the opposites, hot and cold, began to be separated out. If so, Parmenides argues, then no distinctions could ever break out. They could be due only to some uneveness
rational argument; and so they assert that the universe is one and immovable (de gen. et corr. 325a, 2).

Aristotle's last sentence may refer to the goddess' injunction to 'judge by reasoning' (λογία), not by the senses (7, 5), or perhaps to another fragment which is relevant to our context:

Look at things which though far off (from the senses?) are yet surely present to thought. For you cannot cut off being from holding fast to being, whether as scattering itself everywhere in an order, or as coming together (frag. 4 [2]).

If we trust reasoning against the senses, we shall see that Being cannot be divided and 'scattered' to form a world order (οὐσίας); nor can such an order be formed by putting together parts already scattered.

Parmenides means to assert that what is continuous (οὐκετέσ) is not merely undivided but indivisible. Indivisibility always remained as the attribute of the unit of number; and it was naturally asserted of those unit-points having magnitude which appear in the Pythagorean Atomism criticised by Zeno. It still remains in the impenetrable bodies which the later Atomists, Leucippus and Democritus, called 'being' in contrast with the void. Only they maintain that there is eternally an unlimited number of physically indivisible beings, not one only. Aristotle, on the other hand, where he criticises the Eleatic dogma that the All is One, points out that Parmenides was misled by the ambiguity of the term 'one'. Continuous and 'indivisible' are two distinct senses. If the One is continuous, it must be divisible without limit and so 'many', at least potentially; whereas if it is indivisible (like a mere point or arithmetical unit), there will be no quantity or quality, and the universe can be neither unlimited (Melissus), nor limited (Parmenides), for the limited is divisible, though the limit is not.

Parmenides has now denied reality to the Unlimited in all its senses. There is no boundless stuff outside, from which any part of the world's substance could be drawn. There is no void, either outside or inside the extent of Being. There is no unlimited plurality of units; for Being is unique and cannot be increased by addition. Nor is Being infinitely divisible into a plurality, since it is homogeneous and continuous.

1 Possibly this fragment has dropped out after 8, 25 (Zeller-Nestle, 17, 629). Frag. 5 appears here in Proclus, and this may indicate a gap.

2 Cf. Emped. 17, 81, 'Contemplate her (Φιλία) with thy thought (μυϊκή) and sit not bemused by thine eyes.'

3 Herac. 913, to diken òn ψαλτη τίνα πει. οὐκετέσ.

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Frag. 8, 26-42. What is cannot move or change.

Motion and change had hitherto been accepted as self-evident facts, and both had been attributed by philosophers to the real primary being. This had been regarded as alive, 'immortal' as well as imperishable, and consequently as always moving; and the opposites had been separated out of it in the cosmogonical process. As Melissus' argument (p. 40) shows, it was held that nothing can move unless there is empty space for it to move into. Motion accordingly becomes impossible, if there is no void. For Parmenides there can be no void, either outside his One Being or as interstices inside it; for the empty is nothing, and nothing cannot exist. Hence the One Being cannot move from place to place, nor can any motion occur within its complete continuity.

But it is immovable in the limits of its mighty bonds, without beginning or cessation, since becoming and ceasing to be have been driven afar, and true belief has thrust them out.

'Immovable' (ἀδιάβροχον) denies both locomotion and change of any sort. The earlier rejection of all becoming and ceasing to be is invoked as proof that no motion could ever begin or cease, and no change ever occur, since any change implies that something which was not comes to be, or something which is ceases to be.

The same and abiding in the same (place), it is set by itself, and so thus it abides there firm and unmoved; for overmastering Necessity holds it in the bonds of the limit that fences it about, because it is not permitted that what should be imperfect; for it is not in need of anything; if it were (imperfect?), it would be in need of everything.

The One Being is not imperfect (unfinished, incomplete, ἀπελευθητόν) and has no need or lack of anything. Parmenides connects these attributes with immovableness. They had been regarded as divine attributes. Xenophanes said of his one God:

'He always abides in the same (place) not moving at all; nor does it beseech him to shift from place to place' (frag. 26). He also objected to the gods being spoken of as masters or servants of one another, because none of them has any needs.

In discussions 1 Plato, Theatet. 180b, Μικρατον τι και Μεγατον... ὑποκερτος γαρ ἐν τε πάντων ζων και ἐκτενεί τὴν ἀπειτεί συν ἐν ἄλλην ἄλοις γραμμάτων ἐν τίνοις κατανόησις. 2 Emped. 17, 13, can call his elements unchanging (ἰδανικό), though they are always moving in space.

1 [μόν] ἐν δὲ τοῖς πάσιν ἐπικείο. The reading is doubtful.
2 (Flut.) Strom. 4 = Vors. 21 [14], 32, ἀπελευθητόν τι μηκὸν μὴ μή τὸ μήκος δικαίως δηθελέα ὑπάρχει. Eur., Her. 1341, 42

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of the divine,' says Aristotle, 'popular philosophy often propounds the view that whatever is divine, whatever is primary and supreme, is necessarily unchangeable. This confirms what we have said; for there is nothing else stronger than it to move it—since that would mean more divine—and it has no defect and lacks none of its proper excellences (οὐδὲ αἰσθήσεις τινὰ ἀπειτεί καὶ τὸν ὄμμαν ἐπικείμενον), de 279α, 31). The suggestion is that a perfect being could have no reason to change or move, as an animal must move about to supply its needs.1 Parmenides' One Being inherits these divine characteristics, but he never calls it 'god.' Or speaks of it as alive or conscious. As Diels remarks, he must have intentionally avoided associating it with the popular conception of gods. To deny all motion is to deny life; and here Parmenides makes a clear break from earlier systems.

Perfection also implies limitedness. The complete (εὐλογον) cannot be without end (ἐλάλοις) or limit (ἐπαράλοις). The assertion that Being is held by Necessity in the bonds of the limit may be directed against Anaximander's Boundless, which he called 'the divine.' It will lead presently to the assertion of spherical shape. But here the perfection and completeness of Being recalls the premise that 'what can be thought is the same as what can be.' This Being is all that can be conceived by rational thought.

Thinking and the thought that it is one and the same. 35 For you will not find thought apart from that which is, in respect of which thought is uttered; for there is and shall be no other besides what is, since Destiny has fettered it so as to be whole and immovable.

Therefore all those (names) will be a mere word—all (the names) that mortals have agreed upon, believing that they are 40 true: becoming and perishing, both being and not being, change of place, and interchange of bright colour.

Since Being is 'whole' and complete, there can be no other being left outside it, no second object of thought. And it is unchangeable, since there is nothing that it 'is not' and could come to be by changing. The only quality mentioned is colour, which was regarded as the inseparable concomitant of the surface or 'limit' of a solid body.2 Since Being has a limit, it might be expected to have colour.

dεῦται γὰρ ὑπὸ τοὺς ἑαυτούς ἐστὶν Ἰναστασιν ἐνακτήτως ἀνδρότης. Antiphon Soph., frag. 10 ὁ Ἀριστοτέλης ὁ μηλόκων ὑπερθείκε καὶ πάντα ἔκφυλλα. 'Αναπαύειν ἐν ἂν Αριστείοις 'διά τοῦτο αἰσθήσεις δεῖται (τὸς ἐν τούτῳ;) ὅπου προσδέχεται αἰσθήσεις τι ἀλλ' ἀναγκαίος καὶ ἀνεκάθεν. (Her. ἀνεκάθεν appears to be used as by Anaxagoras of his Nous. See note, ad loc., Diels-Kranz, Vors. 1, 87 [50], 8, 10.)

1 At Tim. 33c 20, Plato describes the divine universe as having no need of food from without, and then as having no limbs for locomotion.

2 Above, p. 19.
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But this Parmenides must deny, as well as all the other sensible opposites.

Frag. 8, 42-49. The Sphere of Being.

The above negations are now followed by the positive description of Being as a sphere.

But since there is a furthest limit, it is complete on every side, like the mass of a well-rounded Sphere, everywhere equally poised from the midst. For it cannot be something greater or something weaker in one place or in another. For neither is there a Nothing that could stop it from attaining to uniformity, nor could what is possibly be more here and less there, since it is all inviolable. For it is every way equal to itself and meets with its limits uniformly.

Here Parmenides once more denies the void as a 'nothing' that would interrupt the continuity of Being and make it a plurality, and also any variation of density such as might destroy its equilibrium and cause it to break up into opposites preying on one another. The Sphere is the obvious figure, being the only solid contained by a single unbroken surface. So Plato's Demiurge gave the world the shape that was fitting and akin to its nature; accordingly he turned its shape rounded and spherical, equidistant every way from centre to extremity—a figure the most perfect and uniform of all; for he judged uniformity to be immeasurably better than its opposite. 2 (Tim. 33d).

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At this point the Way of Truth ends. 'Here', the goddess continues, 'I put an end to the trustworthy reasoning and thought concerning the truth.' The rational deduction of all the attributes that can belong to Real Being is complete. It is a geometrical solid, 1.

Frag. 8, 50-61. Transition to the Way of Seeming

50 Here I put an end to the trustworthy reasoning and thought concerning the truth. Henceforward learn what seems to mortals, hearkening to the deceitful order of my words.

Parmenides was told at the outset to judge by reasoning (μαθαίνειν ὑμᾶς ἑνώς, 7, 5) and not to trust his senses. Here, where false belief is about to take the mortal leap and follow the senses, the rational account (ὁ λόγος τῆς νόησεως) of the truth gives place to a 'deceitful order of words' (νόμος τῶν ἀνθρώπων) or names. 'Cosmos' is used with reference to its sense of world-order. 3 The cosmogony which follows in the Way of Seeming is a cosmos of false names, which are not names of the real.

1 As in frag. 4 [2], ανθρώπων . . . παντὸς κόσμου, and Herad. 390 (26 Byw.). Herad., 1, speaks of the everlasting truth (λόγος) which might be learnt from the words (λόγοι) and things which he sets forth; thus he claims that his words are not deceitful. Empedocles (17, 26), similarly, controverting Parmenides' denial of the visible elements, says: 'οὐ γὰρ ἐμπεδόκει σύνεχιστά τὸν κόσμον ἐν τούς ἀνθρώποις, παραδρέσας, εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἀλλ' ἐν τούς ἀνθρώποις, significantly substituting λόγοι for Parmenides' ἀνθρώποι.
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For mortals have made up their minds to name two forms, of which it is not right to name one—that is where they have gone astray—and have distinguished them as opposite in fashion and assigned to them marks apart from one another: here the flaming Fire of heaven, gentle, very light, in every direction the same with itself, but not the same as the other 1; and also that other, its very opposite, blind Night, a form dense and heavy. This disposition of things, all plausible, ² I tell thee; for so no mortal judgment shall ever outstrip thee.

The phrase 'of which it is not right to name one' has, I think, been misinterpreted by those who understand that mortals were wrong to name the second form, Night, and right to name the first, Fire. Aristotle, indeed, says that Parmenides 'ranked hot or fire under Being, cold or earth under Not-being'. This may not be based solely on our passage, which says nothing of hot and cold or of earth; but it must mean that fire or heat is, if not wholly real, somewhat the more real of the two, or that it represents the real in the world of sensible appearance. But it is hard to believe that Parmenides, with his uncompromising alternative, 'It is or it is not,' and his absolute construction of being and not-being, can have held that fire has any claim to reality. He must have seen that our belief in the existence of fire as light or warmth rests on precisely the same ground as our belief in the existence of darkness and cold—the evidences of the senses, which give the light and feel the warmth. If the belief in fire and light as real had for him any rational basis, they would have figured in the Way of Truth; but there is not a word about them. Nor does any early philosopher conceive that one sensible opposite can exist without the other—light without darkness or heat without cold. The whole drift and meaning of the poem demand that the sense should be: mortals, though they have rightly named Being, have been wrong in going further and naming in addition two forms when not one should have been named. We must, accordingly, understand the goddess to mean: 'mortal thinkers have decided to name two forms, of which it is not right to name (so much as) one.' ² Both names are false; neither form is real.

¹ This phrase may throw light on the condemnation of mortals for holding that being is 'the same and not the same' (frag. 6, 8).
² ἐκῶν, διὸ, τὰς ἐπισκέψεις. Xenoph., 55, τὰ τῆς ἐν τούτῳ καὶ τοῦ ἐνθάντου. Hom., Od., 1, 203, and Hes., Theog. 27. ἔχουσα τὴν τῆς ἀληθείας. Plato, Tim., 290c: accounts of an elecón can only be εὐκρήνες λόγοι, ἂν ἐν ἐν
μυθών βρέγοντα παραπεριγράφει ἐκλογήν, ἕπειτα μέριθρες. The last words may be Plato's paraphrase of 1, 61.
³ This seems to be substantially in agreement with H. Gomperz (Psych. Beob. 16), 'statt einer Einheit eine Zweifelheit (von der eben die eine Einheit,' 46
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Light	Darkness
rare (δραμών) dense (τυμονόχος)
light (διαμπρόφο) heavy (δημιοκτήτης), etc.

The scholium quoted by Simplicius (Phys. 31, 3) adds two more pairs: hot and cold, soft and hard.

So this fragment says: Once you have named (and so wrongly recognised as real) Light and Night, drawn up a list of corresponding physical qualities, and added them to the geometrical Sphere deduced in the Way of Truth, from that moment the All (namely the Sphere) will at once be full (no longer merely of homogeneous ‘being’, but) of these pairs of sensible opposites. They are equally balanced, and neither has any part in the other ’; the opposites in each pair, such as the hot and the cold, are separate things, ‘apart from one another’, but capable of being combined in mixtures. We shall then have recognised and added to our conception of the Sphere the plurality of powers with which bodies must be endowed in order to affect our senses and to act on one another.

The ancients debated whether the Sphere described in the Way of Truth was or was not the visible ‘Heaven’ (Οὐρανός). 2 The answer is that the Sphere, or ‘the All’, is not the visible Heaven until it has been filled with light and darkness and all the other opposite powers; the geometrical solid filling all space then becomes the perceptible physical body of the world. The addition has converted the permanent ground of being, which alone is real, into an initial state of things (διότι), a possible starting-point of becoming. Given a physical body filled with opposite powers, analogous to Anaximander’s unlimited body or Empedocles’ Sphere, from which opposites are separated out, cosmogony can start and proceed on the traditional lines:

Thou shalt know the nature of the sky, and all the signs in the sky, and the destructive operation of the sun’s pure shining torch, and whence they arose; and thou shalt learn the wandering works of the round-eyed moon and her nature. Thou shalt know too the embracing Heaven, whence it was born, and how Necessity drove and fettered it to hold the limits of the stars... how

1 Plut. adn. Col. 112d (on Parmenides), ἐν γε καὶ διδομένῳ πενδόν ὅ τι ὀσχεία μαγέων τὸ λυμαστόν καὶ αὐτοτούς ἐκ τούτων τὰ φανερά μονά καὶ δε τοῖς ὄστρακεῖς.
2 Simplic. Phys. 143, 4, οὔδε τῷ οὐρανῷ ἐφαρμοσμένῳ τὰ ποιήματα λεγόμενα, ἔν τοίς διδομένοις τὸ διότι ὅτι κάθεν εὐκίνητον ὄφειν ἐνόχησαν ἄραν.
INTRODUCTION

'Parmenides seems to speak with more insight (than Xenophanes and Melissus, who are "a little too crude"). For holding that, alongside what is, what is not is nothing, he thinks that what is is necessarily one and there is nothing else . . . but being constrained to fall in with obvious appearances, and supposing that, whereas the One exists according to rational argument, there is a plurality according to our senses, he restores two causes or principles, hot and cold, i.e. fire and earth; and of these he ranks the hot under what is, the cold under what is not' (*Met. 98b, 27).

Aristotle (whether rightly or wrongly) clearly means that Parmenides 2 could not ignore the manifest appearances of the sensible world entirely, but felt bound to give some account of it, though reason might assure him that the real must be one. So he restored, 'put back again' (*μετά τὸ ἄλφων), the two opposite principles which the Way of Truth had banished from the Sphere.

This is exactly what we have found the goddess doing where she passes from the Way of Truth to the Way of Seeming. If we take her language literally, she seems to suggest that mortals are responsible for the apparent (though unreal), existence of sensible qualities. When Fire and Night have been 'named', she says, the All is at once full of both. To give a thing a substantive name is to recognise it as a substance. But Parmenides cannot have thought that men actually endowed the Heaven with all its appearances by an arbitrary agreement to give them names. If the appearances were not first given, how could mortals set about naming them? But if the language is not taken literally, he has left the appearances unexplained. Reasoning has convinced him that they are incompatible with the necessary nature of reality. Mortals are deluded by the senses and ought not to believe in the forms which their eyes seem to reveal. Why the senses delude us, how false appearances can be given, he cannot tell. The problem was left for Plato to attempt, and he everywhere implies that no solution was to be found in Parmenides. As himself a mortal, Parmenides is constrained to fall in with obvious appearances. He gives his fable of the birth of a visible world and all its parts, perhaps a better story than others have given: 'for no mortal judgment shall

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1 The Parmenides who 'speaks with insight' and is 'constrained to fall in with appearances' is the man, not (as Burnet suggests, E.G.P., 162) a part of the poem containing views which Aristotle knew that Parmenides condemned. Theophrastus (Dox. 482) simply repeats Aristotle's statement in somewhat different terms and so confirms his view. He says that Parmenides 'followed both ways' (not the Way of Truth only) and 'tried to give an account of the origin of things' (not merely to record the false opinions of others).

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PARMENIDES' WAY OF TRUTH

ever outstrip thee'. The story is 'plausible', but not true; and he knows exactly where the error comes in. It is not an alternative to the Way of Truth, for the Way of Truth is not a cosmogony, but stops short where cosmogony must begin. 1 The Way of Seeming is a continuation, but an illegitimate continuation, vitiated by the mortal leap. To borrow the language of the allegorical proem, Parmenides has turned back through the Gates of Day and Night (light and darkness) to re-enter the world of things that 'seem', which he must also traverse on his journey through all things (*καὶ τὰ πάντα πάθηται, 1, 32).

Had Parmenides been less clear-sighted, less uncompromisingly logical, his system would have been presented in a different form, as a physical doctrine of the pattern that has ever since been familiar. The Sphere of Being would have stood in the place of that rational nature of things which has been so variously conceived by science as numbers, invisible atoms, extension, energy, waves, electrical charges, and so forth. These entities seem to common sense no less far removed than the Parmenidean Sphere from the appearances they profess to support and explain; and men of science are not always able to decide whether they have a physical existence or are convenient figments of the reason, persisting in the demand, first formulated by Parmenides, that the real shall be rational. Parmenides stands alone in his candid admission that his rational reality will not explain irrational appearances, but is irreconcilable with them. Hence his system is presented in two chapters, separated by a gap which he does not pretend to have bridged and even declares to be impassable.

This gap corresponds to the most striking and questionable transition in the Pythagorean evolution of the visible Heaven from the original One: 'from solid figure, sensible body'. Even if it be granted that the geometrical solid can be built up from, or analysed into, surfaces, lines, and points identified with the units of number, how can such a solid be endowed with perceptible qualities or 'powers', like hot and cold? This is precisely the objection urged by Aristotle against the Pythagoreans (p. 14 above). No process of reasoning can ever deduce the existence of such properties. But Parmenides challenges and rejects not only this step, but every step in the Pythagorean process of cosmogony. His Sphere of Being is not the outcome of any process; 'it never was nor will be, but is now all at once'. The reasoning of the Way of Truth does not construct this Being; it merely enumerates and establishes all

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1 Plut., *Arist. 756E*, accordingly quotes frag. 13, πρώτα θείον μην ἐν τῇ κοσμογονίᾳ, as if this were the recognised title of the second Part. Cf. Zeller-Nestle, i, 883.
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to mean that, whereas in earlier statements of the theory attention had been fixed on the relation of Forms to individual things, there is no less need to study the relations of Forms to one another in their own sphere and to face the implications of statements about Forms themselves. These consist entirely of Forms: for instance, 'Motion exists (partakes of Existence)', 'Motion is not (is different from) Rest', and so on.

Let us now return to the theory of Forms considered as undermining Zeno's conclusions. Socrates' criticism is not really fatal to some at least of Zeno's arguments. Zeno was discussing, not concrete visible things like 'you and me', but those point-units which the Pythagoreans treated as indivisible magnitudes. Moreover, some of his pairs of contraries, e.g. 'finite in number' and 'infinite in number', were contradictory characters. Unless there is some ambiguity in the terms employed, his proposition that 'the same set of things cannot be both finite and infinite in number' cannot be upset by suggesting that the things might have both characters by partaking of two contrary Forms. The criticism would have more force as directed against Parmenides, who had rejected the Pythagorean conception of the world as a harmony of opposites. The Pythagoreans had their Table of Opposites, including Limit and Unlimited, One and Many, At rest and In motion, and they had seen everywhere a combination of these opposites in things. Parmenides denied that opposites could be combined: what is one, limited, at rest, cannot also be many, unlimited, in motion. He chose the opposites in the column of goods, and rejected the other column. He had also denounced the popular or Heraclitean union of opposites: 'it is and it is not, the same and not the same'. It was, in fact, Parmenides, quite as much as Zeno, that had assumed all opposites to be not only contrary but contradictory. Zeno was loyally supporting his master. The Elatic position can be treated as a single whole; and it included a denial of the reality of ordinary concrete things, which was based on the logical assumption that contraries cannot be combined. So in his last words above Socrates speaks of the perplexities which Zeno and Parmenides have shown to be involved in the things we see.

It is probable that Plato had in view, not so much Zeno's actual arguments as those of later eristies inspired by Zeno's dialectic. After the dramatic date of our dialogue difficulties had been raised about ordinary things having contrary characters or even more than one 'name'. The Stranger in the Sophist (251a) mentions young men and some of their elders who have taken to learning late in life, who object to our 'taking any given thing as one and

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yet speaking of it as many and by many names', as when we say that a man is not merely a 'man' but also 'good' and any number of other things. They tell us that 'many things cannot be one or one thing many'. The Stranger dismisses this theory of predication with contempt, and turns from it, as Socrates turns in our passage, to consider the question whether Forms can combine among themselves. Similarly in the Philebus (54c) Socrates speaks of the paradox of one thing being many or many things one. When Protarchus asks if he means the question how one person can also be 'many who are contrary to one another', both tall and short, heavy and light, and so on, Socrates brushes the suggestion aside as childish and no more a problem than one man having many limbs. What he does mean is the problems that arise from asserting unchanging and eternal unities (μονή) like Man, Ox, Good, Beautiful, and then conceiving each of these as distributed among innumerable things that come to be: does it then become many, or does it 'as a whole come to be, apart from itself, one and the same thing both in one and in many things at the same time'? The real difficulty, in fact, lies in the theory of Forms itself, as Parmenides will presently point out in our dialogue.

Aristotle, again (Phys. 185b, 26), speaks of fifth-century thinkers, later than Parmenides and Heraclitus, who were troubled about the danger of admitting that 'the same thing is both one and many', if they should say, 'This man is white' or 'is walking'. Some, like Lycephon, Gorgias' pupil, banished the word 'is' altogether. Others substituted ἐνέσχομαι for ἐστώς, ἦττο. Ross (ad loc.) endorses as probable Apel's argument that Antisthenes, the Megarians, and the Eretrians all attempted to dispense with the copulative 'is'. There may be a trace of such dubitations in Philoponus (Phys. 42, 9 ff.), who represents Zeno himself as arguing against a plurality of individuals, such as horses and men. His proof is as follows: Socrates, who says you is a unit (ἐνδιά) contributing to make up the plurality, is not only Socrates, but also pule, philosophic, pot-bellied, and snubnosed: and so the same man is both one and many. But the same man cannot be one and many; therefore Socrates cannot be one. The same reasoning applies to other alleged units; and without a number of units there can be no plurality. 'And if what is must be either one or a plurality, and it has been proved that it is not a plurality because there are not a number of units, it must therefore be one.' Since the real Zeno could not have used Socrates as an illustration,

3 That it is a theory, not a 'denial', of predication is pointed out in Plato's Theory of Knowledge, p. 234.
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it is conjectured that Philo is was quoting from some dialogue in which Zeno figured.  

From the passages in the Sophist and the Philebus above cited, it appears that Plato regarded such ‘childish’ puzzles as disposed of by the theory of Forms as stated in the text before us. If they were being discussed by sophists in the late fifth century, Socrates himself may well have expressed an opinion on the subject. When he set out to define what Aristotle calls a ‘universal’, such as the Beautiful, he must often have had occasion to draw the distinction, frequently pointed out in the early dialogues, between the single character to be defined and the many things which have that character, as well as others: ‘I am not asking for a list of beautiful things; I want to know what “beautiful” means. What is this single character which is present in all the things and which makes you call them beautiful?’ That single character would, of course, exclude its contrary ‘ugly’: no one could say that ‘the beautiful is ugly’. But the things which contained that character might also possess the character of ugliness; they might (as Protagoras would say) be beautiful to me, ugly to you. Socrates could draw that distinction, and perhaps must have drawn it, without going on to assert that the Beautiful itself has a separate existence, independent of the many things in which the character appears. He was not a metaphysician, but interested only in finding out what such terms meant. Aristotle states quite definitely that the further step was taken by Plato, who gave these characters an independent existence and called them Forms. The consequence of separating the Forms from individual things which nevertheless share the same character was that Plato was involved in those problems of participation which Parmenides will presently point out.

The separation (γνωμή) of the Forms is explicitly effected in the Phaedo. If I may express dogmatically an opinion about a much disputed matter, I would say that in no earlier dialogue is there a single expression definitely implying that the common character (ειδός) exists apart from the many things possessing it. But in the Phaedo this doctrine is skilfully led up to by a series of steps. It is entailed by the belief in Anamnesis. This is shown to involve the separate existence of a conscious and knowing soul, apart from the body and its senses, before birth—a conclusion which all parties to the discussion take as satisfactorily demonstrated, provided that the Forms exist. If a disembodied soul can know all reality and truth, the objects of its knowledge must exist apart from sensible things, for such knowledge cannot come to it through the senses at all. Thus Anamnesis, the separate existence of the soul before birth, and the separation of Forms from sensible things, all stand or fall together. The whole of the first part of the Phaedo is designed to lead the reader to this conclusion.

The Forms are first mentioned (65d) in the opening protreptic discourse, which begins by defining death as the deliverance of the soul from the body: ‘to be dead means that the body has come to be separate from the soul apart by itself (γοος αυτό καθ' αυτό) and the soul separate from the body apart by itself (γοος αυτός καθ' αυτόν).’ The senses are a hindrance to thought; the philosopher’s soul, even in this life, will renounce them so far as possible and retire into itself to think. At this point the Forms are introduced. All that is said of them here is that objects such as Socrates sought to define with his friends, Justice itself, or Goodness itself, cannot be perceived by any of the senses, but are known by themselves in their purity (αυτό καθ' αυτό ειλεκτεινει) to thought by itself in its purity (αυτή καθ' αυτήν ειλεκτεινει τη διανοιας). Any of Socrates’ companions must have admitted that you cannot see Justice itself with your eyes, but can only think of it. The Forms appear next in the demonstration of Anamnesis. Here the distinctions are more clearly drawn between: (1) Equality itself, the definition of which we can know and which is ‘something different over and above’ all the sensible things which are spoken of as (roughly) equal; (2) Equals (αυτό τα ισος), i.e. quantities defined as simply equal and nothing else: these ‘equals’ can never appear to be unequal, nor can Equality ever appear to be Inequality (74d); (3) Instances of Equality which are in sensible things (τα εν τοις ενδεικτεινει τα καθ' αυτόν ενεκεινει τους Ισος, 74d). These are always imperfect; they are described as ‘in our perceptions’ (ἐν τας αιτιθησεις, τα ἐν τας αιτιθησεις Ισος, 75b); and they can appear equal to one person, not equal to another (74b). It is argued that, from the moment when we begin to use our senses, we judge of the imperfection of these perceptible instances by reference to our knowledge of perfect Equality, which we must therefore have acquired before birth. Thus it becomes plain that the separate existence of the soul before birth involves the separate existence of the objects of its knowledge.

This conclusion is reinforced by the final argument of the first part: that the soul, in contrast with the body, is invisible and has the divine function of ruling; probably therefore it is akin to the invisible and divine order of things and, like them, simple, indis-

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1 See Lee, Zeno of Elusa, pp. 19, 27.

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soluble, and unchanging. ‘The reality of whose existence we give an account in our questions and answers’—terms such as those which Socrates discussed with his friends—belong to the higher unseen order: each of them is simple (μονοσική), by itself, always the same and never suffering any sort of change whatsoever. The many beautiful or equal things we perceive, on the other hand, are constantly changing in every respect and belong to the lower order, with the body whose senses perceive them (28d ff.).

Thus Plato leads on the reader to see that the separate existence of a conscious immortal soul carries with it the separate existence of the Forms. Both doctrines are united in the theory of Anamnesis, which had first appeared in the Meno. A comparison of the Phaedo with the earlier dialogues bears out Aristotle’s statement that it was Plato, not Socrates, who separated the Forms from things; and the Apology is witness that Socrates, who knew that he knew nothing about ‘the things in Hades’, did not affirm the pre-existence of the soul. The inference is that Plato arrived at both doctrines simultaneously, most likely as a result of a better acquaintance with Pythagoreanism, acquired on his first visit to South Italy.

Since the objections Parmenides will presently make are admittedly directed against the theory as stated in the Phaedo, it will be well here to summarise the passage where it is offered as an alternative to those physical explanations of ‘becoming and perishing’ which Socrates had rejected. Socrates lays down two premisses.

(i) The first is the existence of the Forms: ‘that there is such a thing as Beauty just by itself, Goodness, Tallness, and so on with all the rest’ (100a).

(ii) The second concerns the relation of such Forms to individual things bearing their names. This premiss is stated in two ways.

(a) ‘If anything else is beautiful, besides Beauty itself, it is beautiful for no other reason than because it partakes of that Beauty’ (100c).

The phrase ‘for no other reason than because’ (οὐδὲ ἤ ἐν ἄλλῳ ἄλλῳ δύναται) is ambiguous. ‘Reason’ might mean ‘explanation’ (a common use of αἴτιον). The premiss will then assert that the statement ‘This rose is beautiful’ is equivalent to ‘This rose partakes of Beauty’. I can substitute that form of words and so explain the sense by paraphrase. But Plato seems to be speaking, not of the analysis of a statement, but of the corresponding fact. The theory will then assert that this fact consists of (1) a particular visible thing, this rose; (2) the Form, Beautiful or Beauty; and (3) what we should call a relation between the two expressed by

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is’, for which we can substitute ‘partakes of’. But once more we have, so far, only an explanation: the fact that this rose is beautiful is the same thing as the fact that this rose partakes of Beauty. We learn nothing about any cause which would bring that fact into existence. On either view we have only an analysis of a statement or of a fact, not a reason for the statement being true or a cause of the fact’s existence.

(b) The second formulation seems, at first sight, to tell us more:

‘What makes (τινὰ) the thing beautiful is (not having a gay colour or anything of that sort, but) nothing else than the presence of that other Beauty, or the sharing in it, or however it may be that it comes to be there’. For I stop short of making any assertion about that: I only assert that it is by Beauty that all beautiful things are beautiful’ (τῷ καλῷ πάντα τὸ καλὸ καλῶ, 100d).

But again the word ‘makes’ is ambiguous. Does it mean that the thing’s beauty simply consists in the presence either of the Form itself or of the character like that of the Form, as we say that the presence of a gay colour ‘makes’ the thing gay? Or does it mean that the Form, existing independently, causes the thing to be (or to become) beautiful by somehow imparting its own character to the thing? This is precisely the dilemma on which Socrates refuses to pronounce. The language might be expressly designed to leave it unsolved. ‘Partaking’ and ‘sharing’ mean no more than that many things can share, or have in common, the same relation to a single Form; that is so, whatever the relation may be. ‘Presence’ is the current, non-technical, term for the possession of any moral or physical quality. Thus Socrates says to Charmides, You ought to know what temperance is ‘if you have temperance in you and are a temperate person’ (ἐὰν σέ τῇς πίπτεται σωφρόνησιν καὶ εἶ σύνοφος, 158b). Again at Lysis 217d, when hair turns white in old age ‘it becomes like the quality that is present—white by the presence of whiteness’ (πάντως τῷ παλιῷ, λευκῷ παρουσίᾳ λευκῶς). No doubt, the real Socrates would use this expression; he could use it with no metaphysical implications. But here

1 Reading ὀν ἄλλῳ τῷ ποιεῖται, αὐτῷ καλῶ, ἃς καὶ ἢς παρουσίαν εἶναι. The παρουσίαν of all MSS. cannot be right. The Hipp. Maj., which seems to be based on our passage, indicates that it is the Form that παρουσίασε: 295b ἐπίκλην παρουσίασεν ἔκπνῃ τὸ ἔδρα, 297d τὸ καλὸν αὐτῷ, δὲ παρῇ ὑπὲρ παρουσίας, ὑπὸ τέκνῳ καλὸν εἶναι. The genitive παρουσίασεν may have been altered to agree with παρουσία and καλὸν. The alternative is to read παρουσιασμένη (Wyttenbach). For our purpose the reading does not matter.
he will not commit himself to it or to any other phrase that might imply either that the Form was present in the thing or that it was not. He takes refuge in the instrumental dative: 'by Beauty all beautiful things are beautiful'. If (as I suppose) Plato was aware that his own doctrine of separately existing Forms had never been maintained by Socrates, we might expect some embarrassment just here, where he has to speak, through Socrates' mouth, of the relation between Form and thing. Socrates had talked, like anyone else, of characters present in things. Plato has just pronounced his own doctrine that Forms exist separately. This has already led to the distinction between the unique unchanging Form which is the object of thought (Equality itself) and the many changing instances which we perceive as immanent in things (τα ἐν τοῖς ξύλοις έτοι). The distinction is clearly maintained in the argument which follows. Hence at this point he refuses to use any term implying the presence of the unique Form itself in many things. He may have been already feeling some uneasiness about the relations between the separate Form and the immanent character and setting such problems aside as not relevant to his present purpose.

So no further illustrations are then given. It is 'by tallness' that tall persons are tall and taller ones taller; to exceeds 8 not 'by 2' but 'by maniness' (πλήθος) or 'because of maniness' (διά τό πλήθος). In the whole argument no distinction is drawn between qualities and relations. Tallness is treated as if it were a quality like whiteness, inherent in the tall person, but with the peculiarity that he has it 'towards' or 'in comparison with' (προς) the shortness of another person.1

Plato next draws clearly the distinction between the unique and unchanging Form, Tallness (αὐτό τό μέγεθος), and a particular tallness which is in the person.2 This may be called an immanent character (δῆμα, μορφή) or an instance of Tallness. It is, of course, only one of innumerable instances, and it is not exempt from all change. We are further told that the same person, Simias, can possess two contrary characters at the same time—a tallness, as compared with the shortness in Socrates, and a shortness as compared with the tallness in Phaedo. This is the point which Socrates

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1 This is rightly pointed out by Aristotle where he criticizes this analysis, de gen. et corr. ii. 9. Matter and form are not enough to bring things into being without a source of motion. Some have thought the Forms adequate to account for coming-to-be. Thus Socrates in the Phaedo first blames everyone else for having no explanation of becoming, and then, after laying down the distinction between Forms and things that partake of them, tells us that 'while a thing is said to be (so and so) in virtue of the Form, it is said to come-to-be by virtue of taking a share (μερέσιον = Plato's μεράγεσιον) and to pass away by losing it (εμφύληδη). So he regards Forms as causes (aetos) of coming-to-be.' Aristotle then objects that, if Forms are to be moving causes, why is their generating activity intermittent? (No change can occur in them, which could make them operative at one time, and not at another.) Cf. the same criticism at Mdt. 930b, 3. It is true that Plato here indicates no efficient cause. Aristotle's suggestion that the Form might 'generate' is probably based on Tim. 50c, where the Form is compared to the father, the recipient to the mother. But in the Timaeus the moving cause is, not the Form, but the Demiurge.
all the time (102e). What happens in change, then, is that one immanent character perishes and its contrary comes to be in the subject of change. The new character is described as ‘approaching’ or ‘invading’ and ousting the contrary already in possession. These metaphors disguise the lack of any efficient cause. We have only an analysis of the factors involved in any change of quality, not a ‘reason’ why any actual change should ever occur, or a ‘cause’ which could bring it about. The only case where anything like a cause appears is that of fire and snow. Fire is always hot, snow always cold. When the heat in fire approaches snow, the snow will not admit hotness, but will perish together with its own coldness (103b). Since no change can occur to Forms and they cannot perish, this can refer only to a particular fire approaching a particular piece of snow. Socrates seems to be unaware that the only efficient cause of change he actually describes is a physical cause of precisely the kind which, in the account of his youthful experiences, he had rejected as unsatisfying.

Such is the theory which Socrates offers as disposing of Zeno’s assumption that the same things cannot have two contrary characters. If the ‘things’ in question are concrete sensible things, Socrates asserts, simply as an obvious fact, that the same person can be both tall and short as compared with different people. Also he can be one person and yet have many parts. This means that one concrete thing can possess at the same time two contrary characters, by virtue of partaking of two contrary Forms. No contradiction is necessarily involved.

Parmenides now proceeds to criticise the theory. He does not challenge the point which Socrates has made against Zeno; Plato evidently regards that as established. Nor does he as yet take up Socrates’ suggestion that the mutual relations of Forms among themselves need further study: the second part of the dialogue will have a bearing on this question. Parmenides’ criticisms here fall under three heads: (1) the extent of the world of separate Forms; (2) the problem of participation; (3) the danger that Forms, if separate, may be found to be unknowable by us.

Why does Plato choose Parmenides, among all the Presocratics, to criticise his own theory? He always speaks of Parmenides with more respect than he pays to any other philosopher. He looked upon himself as the successor of the man who had first drawn, however imperfectly, the distinction between an intelligible world of truth and reality and a sensible world of seeming and becoming. In Rep. V he had adopted, without acknowledgment, Parmenides’ scheme distinguishing (1) the perfectly real and knowable, (2) the totally unreal and unknowable, and (3) between these two, a world of appearance, partaking both of being and of not being. But he could not follow Parmenides in rejecting, as wholly illusory, the third of these three Ways. The world of appearance must have some sort of being, and must therefore be somehow related to the world of true reality, which Plato has peopled with Forms. Parmenides is the obvious critic of this departure from the pure Eleatic doctrine. The objections here are such as he might have raised. (1) If there are to be many Forms instead of the one real Being, how many are there? On what principle does Plato decide that there is, or is not, a Form for any set of things with a common name? (2) If the world of Seeming has some ground in reality, what is the relation which holds the two worlds together? (3) If no intelligible account can be given of this relation, will not the real world be entirely cut off from the sensible, by a gulf which our knowledge cannot pass?

What Things Have Forms?

130a–e. Parmenides criticises the theory of Forms. (1) What classes of things have Forms?

130a. While Socrates was speaking, Pythodorus said he was expecting every moment that Parmenides and Zeno would be annoyed; but they listened very attentively and kept on exchanging glances and smiles in admiration of Socrates. When he ended, Parmenides expressed this feeling: Socrates, he said, your eagerness for discussion is admirable.

b. And now tell me: have you yourself drawn this distinction you speak of and separated apart on the one side Forms themselves and on the other the things that share in them? Do you believe that there is such a thing as Likeness itself apart from the likeness that we possess, and so on with Unity and Plurality and all the terms in Zeno’s argument that you have just been listening to?

Certainly I do, said Socrates.

Here, as in the Phaedo, the distinction is quite clearly marked between (1) the separate Form; (2) the immanent character, ‘the likeness that we have’; and (3) the concrete things which partake of, or share, the Form and contain the character.

The first class of terms, about which Socrates has no doubts, are such as those which had figured in Zeno’s arguments: Likeness and Unlikeness, Unity and Plurality, Motion and Rest, etc. We are not to infer that this class contains only these contraries, however many they were. All the mathematical Forms, at least, would belong here. The similar list of ‘common’ terms at Theaetetus, 81.
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130a. or not to assert that each of these has a separate Form distinct from things like those we handle. 2

Not at all, said Socrates; in these cases, the things are just the things we see; it would surely be too absurd to suppose that they have a Form. All the same, I have sometimes been troubled by a doubt whether what is true in one case may not be true in all. Then, when I have reached that point, I am driven to retreat, for fear of tumbling into a bottomless pit of nonsense. Anyhow, I get back to the things which we were just now speaking of as having Forms, and occupy my time with thinking about them.

E. That, replied Parmenides, is because you are still young, Socrates, and philosophy has not yet taken hold of you so firmly as I believe it will some day. You will not despise any of these objects then; but at present your youth makes you still pay attention to what the world will think.

Socrates' only expressed objection to Forms of this class is that it seems absurd to suppose Forms of such insignificant things. Parmenides rightly dismisses this objection as unphilosophical, but does not say that they must have Forms. The impression is left that the field of Forms had been too narrowly restricted; attention had been fixed on the moral and mathematical Forms, and the question what other Forms must be recognised had not been faced. If Socrates here stands for the Platonic Socrates of the early and middle dialogues, it is true that, all through these, the prevailing interest had been moral, religious, and political, not metaphysical. The moral Forms were by far the most prominent. The mathematical Forms had appeared in the theory of Anamnesis, but the chief point of that theory was to establish the pre-existence of the soul. It is only when the doctrine of Forms is applied to the explanation of 'the whole of Nature' that this question of their extent becomes a problem. 2 The Parmenides stands at the beginning of the later series in which Plato sets his own doctrine beside the main Presocratic systems and indicates where he agrees or disagrees with them. The series leads up to the cosmology of the Timaeus. Since nothing further is said about this matter in our dialogue, it is unnecessary to examine once more the difficulties of reconciling Aristotle's evidence with the Platonic

1 Diels' correction, δια τῶν εἰς τὸν ἔλεγον ἰσορροπεῖ. (Cf. C, τῶν τῶν ἑνεξε ἑνεξε τοῦ), seems the best yet proposed.

2 In Plato's Theory of Knowledge, p. 9, I have suggested that the difficulty arises from the double origin of the theory, in Socrates' search for the definition of terms and in the Pythagorean doctrine of the nature of things.
131d. which is smaller than Largeness itself. Will not that seem unreasonable?

It will indeed.

And again, if it is Equality that a thing receives some small part of, will that part, which is less than Equality itself, make its possessor equal to something else?

No, that is impossible.

Well, take Smallness: is one of us to have a portion of Smallness, and is Smallness to be larger than that portion, which is a part of it? On this supposition again Smallness itself will be larger, and anything to which the portion taken is added will be smaller, and not larger, than it was before.

That cannot be so.

Well then, Socrates, how are the other things going to partake of your Forms, if they can partake of them neither in part nor as wholes?

Really, said Socrates, it seems no easy matter to determine in any way.

There is evidence that the immanence of Forms was discussed at the Academy. Aristotle remarks that Forms can contribute nothing to the being of things unless they are in them; they might in that case be regarded as causes in the same way as white is the cause of whiteness to the white thing by being mixed in it; but this theory, first stated by Anaxagoras and later by Eudoxus and some others, is easily refuted (Met. A, 99a, 13). Alexander enumerates the objections from Aristotle's παράβασις B (Frag. 189a): (1) Forms would have to be bodies and also contrary to one another; (2) either the whole Form or a part of it would have to be in each thing: if the whole, then what is numerically one would be in many things; if a part, a man will contain only a part of the Form Man; (3) Forms would be divisible; (4) there would be many Forms, not one only, mixed in each thing; (5) Forms would not be models; (6) they would perish with the things in which they are mixed; and (7) they would not be exempt from motion. This criticism indicates that Eudoxus was conceiving participation in the same material way as Parmenides here. The terminology of the theory, which was borrowed from current speech, lent itself to such interpretation. In the medical writers and the early philosophers 'the hot' (τὸ ὅτος), for example, is spoken of as if it were a material substance, a 'part' of which could be 'present in' a thing which would thus 'possess a share' of it. Eudoxus, apparently, proposed to understand participation in a Platonic Form, as such, as ὅτοι ὅτοι ὅτοι or ὅτοι ὅτοι ὅτοι in just this way. The objection raised by Parmenides is identical with one of Aristotle's; and our passage might be understood as Plato's own rejection of such a crude interpretation. Parmenides' examples, Large, Equal, and Small, bring out the absurdity of supposing that 'Largeness itself' (τὸ ὅτοι) or 'the Large itself' (τὸ ὅτοι) is a large thing, which could be divided into parts. Owing to the current use of language, it would be difficult for the ordinary Greek to realise that Largeness or 'the Large' was not itself large; it would have seemed to him a contradiction to say: 'the Large itself is not large'. There is, in fact, an ambiguity in the expression ὅτοι ὅτοι ὅτοι. It can mean, not the Form, but 'that which is simply large and nothing else', like Socrates 'ὅτα ὅτα ὅτα (192b) which meant 'things which are simply alike and nothing else'. As Socrates said, it would be contradiction to say that such things were unlike or not alike. Plato himself was aware of this ambiguity; and it will be part of the purpose of the second part to call attention to it. The young Socrates, however, is not represented as capable of detecting it; though he will presently suggest a way of escape. Meanwhile Parmenides advances another objection, resting on the same false assumption that Largeness itself is a large thing.

131e. (b) The Third Man

131f. Again, there is another question.

What is that?

132. How do you feel about this? I imagine your ground for believing in a single Form in each case is this: when it seems to you that a number of things are large, there seems...

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1 For illustrations, see H. C. Balfour, Plato's 'technical terms', C. Q. xxii (1927), pp. 154 ff.

2 At 1460 b. the Phaedo theory, so far as Largeness, Smallness, and Equality are concerned, will be shown to lead to the impossible result that no quantity can be greater or smaller than another.
THE PARMENIDES 132c–133a

Parmenides now adds a second objection.

132c. And besides, said Parmenides, according to the way in which you assert that the other things have a share in the Forms, must you not hold either that each of those things consists of thoughts, so that all things think, or else that they are thoughts which nevertheless do not think?

That too is unreasonable, replied Socrates.

This objection is ad hominem, directed against Socrates’ account of the way in which things have a share in Forms—the way that Parmenides has been criticising, according to which either the whole Form or a part of it would have to be in the thing. If Forms are acts of thinking, each thing will be composed of acts of thinking; and either everything will think (not minds only), or there will be acts of thinking which do not think—a contradiction in terms. It may be noted that Plato’s Parmenides repudiates the doctrine which some critics ascribe to the real Parmenides, that ‘to think is the same thing as to be’; τὸ γὰρ ἄνθρωπον ἔστω καὶ ἔστων τε καὶ εἴλαν (see above, p. 34).

Socrates abandons his suggestion. Some modern writers have not abandoned it, but have talked of the Forms as the ‘thoughts of God’, as if they existed only in his mind. This ‘God’ is to be the Demiurge of the Timaeus. But there is no warrant anywhere in Plato for saying that the Forms, which the Demiurge takes as his model, depend on his mind for their existence or are his acts of thinking; still less for saying that the copies of the Forms in the sensible world are thoughts composing things. If any serious meaning can be found in such statements, it is not a meaning that we have the smallest right to attribute to Plato.

132c–133a. Can the objections be met by making the Forms patterns of which there are likenesses in things?

Socrates now returns to his view that there are separate Forms, fixed in the nature of things or in reality (δοῦναι φόρμαν), a term which, as Proclus remarks, Plato often uses of the intelligible world. He now suggests that the relation of the Form to the immanent character may be that of pattern to copy. If ‘participation’ means only the resemblance which a copy has to its original, we shall escape the difficulties entailed by the crude notion that the Form is a thing, all or parts of which might be in individuals. There may be any number of mirror images of the same object. Neither the object nor any part of it will be in the image or in the mirror; but each image can reflect its whole character. May not the whole character of the Form be reproduced, on this analogy, in any number of individuals?

133a. (Socrates continues.) But, Parmenides, the best I can make of the matter is this: that these Forms are as it were patterns fixed in the nature of things; the other things are made in their image and are likenesses; and this participation they come to have in the Forms is nothing but their being made in their image.

Well, if a thing is made in the image of the Form, can that Form fail to be like the image of it, in so far as the image was made in its likeness? If a thing is like, must it not be like something that is like it?

It must.

And must not the thing which is like share with the thing that is like it in one and the same thing (character)?

Yes.

And will not that in which the like things share, so as to be alike, be just the Form itself that you spoke of?

Certainly.

If so, nothing can be like the Form, nor can the Form be like anything. Otherwise a second Form will always make its appearance over and above the first Form; and if that second Form is like anything, yet a third; and there will be no end to this emergence of fresh Forms, if the Form is to be like the thing that partakes of it.

Quite true.

It follows that the other things do not partake of Forms by being like them; we must look for some other means by which they partake.

So it seems.

Parmenides’ argument here is fallacious, as Plato must have been aware, for he did not give up speaking of Forms as patterns in the nature of the things. In the Timaeus the Demiurge takes Forms for his model, and later (528) the copies of them are regarded as images (ἐικόνες) cast by the Forms themselves upon the Receptacle in which they appear. Proclus pointed out that the relation of

1 I have used the word ‘image’ (= ἐικόνα) in rendering ἐικόνα, ἐικάστη, and ‘like’ (ἐμμονή) where ἐμμονὴ, ἐμμονοῦσθαι occur, because two things may be alike without the one being an image or copy of the other. But Plato does not clearly mark this difference by his choice of terms, for ἐικόνα, ἐμμονοῦσθαι usually mean ‘copy’ (image).

2 Ἐικόνη is omitted by Burnet and Drie, following Jackson.
individuals are copies. Plato must have seen this, because he continues to speak of Form and individuals in these terms.

Here the objections to 'participation' end. The conclusion seems to be that (1) participation is not to be understood in the gross material sense that a Form is a substance, parts of which are distributed among any number of things; (2) that the Form nevertheless has an independent existence and is not 'a thought in a mind'; and (3) that it can stand to the individual instances in a relation analogous to that of original to copy, which includes, but is not identical with, the relation of Likeness. The reader is left to discover the answers to Parmenides' objections; the young Socrates is represented as unable to meet them. He lacks that training in the detection of ambiguities which Parmenides will presently illustrate. It is naive to conclude that Plato himself regarded the objections as seriously damaging his theory, although the nature of participation is undoubtedly obscure and hard for our imaginations to conceive.

133a-134b. (3) Will not the separate Forms be unknowable by us?

The final objection is that the separation of the Forms from their instances in things threatens to isolate them in a world of their own, inaccessible to our knowledge. Conversely the gods, if they belong to that other world, may be cut off from knowledge of the things in our world, and will not be, as the Phaedo (63c) declared, our masters.

133a. You see then, Socrates, said Parmenides, what great difficulties there are in ascertaining their existence as Forms just by themselves?

I do indeed.

I assure you, then, you have as yet hardly a notion of

b. how great they will be, if you are going to set up a single Form for every distinction you make among things.

How so?

The worst difficulty will be this, though there are plenty more. Suppose someone should say that the Forms, if they are such as we are saying they must be, cannot even be known. One could not convince him that he was mistaken in that objection, unless he chanced to be a man of wide experience and natural ability, and were willing to follow one through a long and remote train of argument. Otherwise there would be no way of convincing a man who maintained that the Forms were unknowable.

1 Cf. Taylor, Plato (1926), p. 358. The same consideration underlies Asclepius' defence of Plato against this use of the Third Man, Schol. in Met. (Bek. Edit., vol. iv) 5674, 41.

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the Forms is to destroy the possibility, not only of philosophy, but of all significant discourse.

134e. And yet, Socrates, Parmenides went on, these difficulties and many more besides are inevitably involved in the Forms, if these characters of things really exist and one is going to distinguish each Form as a thing just by itself. The result is that the hearer is perplexed and inclined either to question their existence, or to contend that, if they do exist, they must certainly be unknowable by our human nature. Moreover, there seems to be some weight in these objections, and, as we were saying, it is extraordinarily difficult to convert the objector. Only a man of exceptional gifts will be able to see that a Form, or essence just by itself, does exist in each case; and it will require someone still more remarkable to discover it and to instruct another who has thoroughly examined all these difficulties.

I admit that, Parmenides; I quite agree with what you are saying.

But on the other hand, Parmenides continued, if, in view of all these difficulties and others like them, a man refuses to admit that Forms of things exist or to distinguish a definite Form in every case, he will have nothing on which to fix his thought, so long as he will not allow that each thing has a character which is always the same; and in so doing he will completely destroy the significance of all discourse. But of that consequence I think you are only too well aware.

True.

Parmenides here accepts the fundamental thesis of Plato's theory: Forms are necessary as objects on which to fix our thoughts and as constant meanings of the words used in all discourse. Otherwise, in any communication we shall not be thinking and speaking of the same things; and if the things change while we speak of them, our statements will not remain true. The Forms, therefore, must not be wholly immersed in the flow of sensible things. Somehow they must have an unchanging and independent existence, however hard it may be to conceive their relation to changing individuals.

Stallbaum first suggested that the objections brought by Parmenides against the theory of Forms had been formulated by

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1 For this use of μάλλον, cf. Phaedo, 63D, φωτό θεμαλωσθή μάλλον διαλέγοντος, 'people get too hot with talking'.

2 A sober review of what is known or can be safely inferred about the Megarians is given in Prof. G. C. Field's Plato and his Contemporaries, pp. 169 ff.

3 A Study in Plato, p. 107.
logical methods. Professor Taylor states the case as follows: 'If we assume that the objections brought by Parmenides against the doctrine expounded by Socrates did not originate with Plato himself, but are in substance a reproduction of criticisms on the teaching of dialogues like the Phaedo coming from an Eleatic quarter, we can understand why Plato, after stating them, should counter by saying in effect to his critics: 'Turn the kind of logic you are accustomed to exercise upon me and my Socrates against your own fundamental tenet, and see how you like the result. The contradictions in which you think you have entangled me are nothing to those in which I can involve you by playing your own game with your own doctrine. I can easily do with you as Zeno did with the critics of his master Parmenides—give you back as good as you bring and better, in a way which will be highly diverting to a lover of dialectic.' Of the ostensible conclusion reached at the end of the dialogue Professor Taylor writes: 'It seems clear to me that by this enigmatic conclusion Plato is telling us as plainly as he can that the whole series of 'antinomies' is a parody of a logic which is not his own.'

Against this hypothesis it may be urged that the logic used against Socrates in the first part is not Zenonian in form, except in so far as the first argument against participation contains a dilemma: 'Either the whole or a part of the Form must be in the thing.' Nor is there anything characteristically Zenonian or Megarian in such fallacies as we have detected. Further, the method employed in the second part differs radically (as we shall see) from Zeno's. Finally, if it appears that the second part is anything but a tissue of fallacious conclusions, the tu quoque view (as we may call it) falls to the ground. Leaving these questions in suspense, we must first consider what light is thrown on the relations of the two parts by the transitional passage which here follows.

1350b-1356a. **Transition to the second part. Parmenides' programme for an exercise in dialectic**

On the admitted assumption that Forms are a necessity for all thought and discourse, Parmenides now offers advice to Socrates as to how he should proceed. His mistake has been to attempt the definition of Forms, such as Beauty or Justice, without a preliminary exercise of a sort which Parmenides will presently illustrate.

135c. What are you going to do about philosophy, then? Where will you turn while the answers to these questions remain unknown?

I can see no way out at the present moment.

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1 *The Form of Plato translated.* Introd., p. 10.  

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**TRANSITION TO SECOND PART**

135c. That is because you are undertaking to define 'Beautiful', 'Just', 'Good', and other particular Forms, too soon, before you have had a preliminary training. I noticed that the other day when I heard you talking here with Aristotle. Believe me, there is something noble and inspired in your passion for argument; but you must make an effort and submit yourself, while you are still young, to a severer training in what the world calls idle talk and condemns as useless. Otherwise, the truth will escape you.

Why is a preliminary exercise necessary? The suggestion is that, before setting out to define some particular Form, there is need to study the general assumptions involved in the assertion that such a Form exists and can be defined. Take, for instance, 'the Beautiful just by itself'. What does that phrase mean? We have already noted (p. 87) one ambiguity: it may mean either the Form, Beauty, or something defined as having the character of that Form and no other, 'that which is simply beautiful and nothing else'. The Form, Equality, is distinguishable from 'equals' (*aòvra tà toûa*), quantities defined as simply equal. What we seek to define is the Form. This is certainly one thing, a unity. But it can be defined only in terms of other Forms, which appear to be parts of the meaning defined. If so, that meaning is, in some way, a whole of parts; not a bare unity, but a one which is also many. The whole task of definition is to discover and enumerate those parts. The 'Division' of a generic Form into its proper parts is a method of reaching definitions that has already been announced in the Phaedrus and will be lavishly illustrated in the *Sophist* and the Statesman. Hence, before defining any particular Form, we need to consider what definition involves: how a single Form is related to its many parts, and to other Forms which are not parts of it, but wholly excluded by it.

The historic Socrates had spent his time defining just such Forms as are mentioned here: Beauty, Justice, Goodness. He had not, as I believe, raised the preliminary questions: Have these Forms a separate existence, and in what ways can one Form be related to others? The same is true of Plato's own early dialogues, in which he had followed the Socratic procedure and tried to define Courage, Temperance, and so on. Then, in the

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1 Isocrates in particular condemned Socratic discussion as *leiōs kolôs* (*xii. κ. ψφ. xix. 18*), and applied the same terms to the studies of the Academy, as useless for practical life (*xix. δηθ. 262*). Plato defiantly adopts the word to describe his own procedure. Parmenides is not recommending a training in eristic sophistry.
that it 'is' of such and such a character, because that would normally be understood as implying that the subject exists (162c). But here the One is not even an entity.

Neither of the two inferences: (1) that the One does not exist, (2) that the One is not an entity and therefore cannot be the subject of a true statement that it is one, appears to follow from the previous conclusion that the One is not in time. A Platonic Form is an entity that is not, and does not come to be, in time, and yet has many characters and can be known. Also it will actually be demonstrated in Hyp. V that an entity which does not exist at some time nevertheless is an entity, can have many characters, and can come into existence. At the present stage, however, these distinctions are not yet drawn and they are not strictly observed here. Plato is content to draw a true conclusion from premises that hardly sustain it. But the premises themselves are true; and to represent a true conclusion as following from true premises, which do not by themselves entail it, is not sophistry in the usual sense. It is rather taking a short-cut, to avoid entering on explanations which will be more in place elsewhere. Plato could not explain everything at once; the ambiguities of 'being' are reserved for the later Hypotheses. We shall meet with a few other cases of this sort. It must be remembered that the whole of this second part is avowedly a preliminary exercise in the study of ambiguities. This gymnastic is designed for the students of the Academy. They are expected to compare the arguments of each Hypothesis with those of the others and to find out for themselves the distinctions that must be drawn—in fact, to go through the very process attempted in the present commentary. In the next Hypothesis they will be confronted with a whole series of conclusions which appear contradictory until the ambiguities are detected. In an exercise of this sort Plato did not scruple to introduce, here and there, a Non sequitur. It is possible that the phrase, 'if we can trust such an argument as this' (141e, 12), is a hint that formally, although the premises and the conclusion are true, the reasoning is not entirely trustworthy.

Parmenides ends by asking, 'Can this possibly be the case with the One?' and Aristotles answers, 'I do not think so.' The purpose is to provide a transition to the next Hypothesis, which will suppose a One that has being and will lead to positive conclusions.

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1 On the other hand, at Tim. 37b, where eternity is contrasted with time, it is said that past and future ('was' and 'will be') are forms of time, appropriate to the becoming which proceeds in time, but 'is' should be used of eternal being which is forever in the same state immovably, and ought not to be used of what is becoming.
THE NEOPATONIC INTERPRETATION

On the surface the conclusion of Hyp. I is that if Unity itself, Socrates’ ἀδρὸ τὸ ἢ, is to be understood as bare unity and nothing else at all, then we cannot even say that there is such a thing. Why should this conclusion not be accepted as what Plato means, with the inference he actually draws, that this cannot be a satisfactory account of Unity itself, but we must at least add ‘being’ to unity, as we proceed to do in the next Hypothesis? We shall then have an ἀδρὸ τὸ ἢ which does exist, and which might with much better reason be identified with the Good. The equation of the Good with the bare Unity of Hyp. I is in flat contradiction with the text. That Unity has no second character; therefore we cannot say it is good or the Good. It has no sort of being; therefore, if this is the Good, the Good does not exist, is not real, is not even an entity. No one will maintain that Plato could have meant that. The Neoplatonists may fairly be asked to explain why he said that you cannot truly assert that the One is anything whatsoever, when he meant that you can truly assert that it is beyond being, and is good, and a god, and ‘the Idea of the Idea’.

The Neoplatonists make the further assumption that the Good of the Republic is the supreme god of Plato’s theology, superior to the divine Nóos, which they locate in Hyp. II. Nothing approaching satisfactory evidence for this equation can be found in Plato’s works and it is hard—perhaps impossible—to reconcile with the Timaeus and the Laws. It may be added that Aristotle, if anyone, must have understood the Parmenides correctly; and to his far from mystical temperament it would have seemed the worst sort of nonsense to say of the supreme God what Plato does say of the One, that he cannot have any sort of being and nothing true can be said about him. Such a theology would surely have been denounced in the Metaphysics and elsewhere. This is a case in which the argument from silence has considerable force.

THE PARMENIDES 144b–145a

144b. throughout all the members of a plurality of beings, and is lacking to none of these beings from the smallest to the greatest; indeed it is nonsense to suggest that anything that is should lack being. Thus being is parcelled out among beings of every possible order from smallest to greatest; it is subdivided to the furthest possible point and has an illimitable number of parts. So its parts form the greatest of multitudes.

Again, among all these parts there cannot be any which is part of being and yet not a (one) part: if it is, then, so long as it is, it must always be some one part; it cannot be no (not one) part. Consequently, unity must belong to every part of being, and be lacking to none, smaller or greater. And unity, being one, cannot be in many places at once as a whole. And if not as a whole, it must be as divided into parts; only so can it be present to all the parts of being at the same time. Further, that which is divided into parts must be as many as its parts. So we were wrong to say just now that being was distributed into the 'greatest' multitude of parts. Its parts are not more numerous than those into which unity is distributed, but equal in number; for nothing that is lacks unity, and nothing that is one lacks being; the two maintain their equality all through. It appears, then, that unity itself is parcelled out by being, and is not only many but indefinitely numerous.

Thus not only is a 'One which is' a plurality, but unity itself is distributed by being and is necessarily many.

With this conclusion it is interesting to compare Aristotle's proof that there are as many species of being as there are of unity. That which is (to on) and that which is one (to en) are the same thing and a single nature by virtue of the fact that each implies the other in the same way as 'principle' and 'cause' imply one another, though in definition they are different. Thus 'one man' (eis to man), 'he who is a man' (to man), and 'a man' (man) are the same thing: nothing is added if we substitute either of the two former expressions for 'a man'; even if a man comes into existence or ceases to exist, he does not gain or lose either his 'being' (in this sense) or his unity. Accordingly, 'that which is (to on)' and 'that which is one (to on) denote the same thing (Met. 1003b, 22).

It only remains to point out briefly that any One Entity must also be limited, in so far as it is one whole, containing its parts.

HYP. II. INDEFINITE PLURALITY OF BEINGS

144b. Further, since its parts are parts of a whole, the One, in respect of its wholeness, will be limited. For the parts are contained by the whole; and a container must be a limit.

Therefore, a 'One which is' is both one and many, whole and parts, limited as well as indefinitely numerous.

The above argument is a brilliant refutation of the Eleatic thesis, that a One is, and yet a plurality of beings (to to on) is irrational. We have proved that an indefinite plurality of entities, so far from being inconsistent with the assertion of a One Being or of the unity of all being, can actually be deduced directly from that assertion, by allowing our thought to follow out its implications. And Zeno's dogma that what is one cannot also be many is directly contradicted: anything that is one must be at least two, as having two parts or elements, its oneness and its being; and indeed three, if we count the difference between these as a third character necessarily present. The same argument holds against Socrates' suggestion (129b) that the Form, Unity itself (to on to on), cannot be many. If that Form (or any other Form) exists, it has its peculiar nature (unity or whatever it may be) and also its existence. Thus it 'partakes of' or 'combines with' a different Form, Existence. At least three Forms are thus involved in the recognition of any Form as existing; and these three characters are inseparably combined in any one Form. Given one existing Form, it must always be true that (1) the Form is what it is, has a nature of its own, (2) the Form exists, and (3) its nature is different from its existence. Thus 'Unity itself' is a whole or complex with at least three parts or elements, and so is many.

The statement that 'Unity, being one, cannot be in many places (to to on) at once as a whole' is meant to recall Parmenides' first argument against participation (131a). If we take Unity here to mean the Form, Unity itself, this Form, as an undivided whole, cannot be 'in' any one thing in a way that would imply that it was used up by that thing. Unity must be somehow divided and distributed among many things; for we have proved that the mere assertion of a One Being at once implies that there are many beings, each of which is one or partakes of Unity. To deny this would entail all the negative consequences of the first Hypothesis and annihilate all discourse. We must not, therefore, shrink from the second horn of Parmenides' dilemma, or be afraid (as Socrates was, 134b) to say that a Form can be portioned out among things and still be one. In some sense this is demonstrably true, though not in the sense Parmenides suggested, that the Form is cut up into pieces, each of which would be smaller than the whole.
The above demonstrations are of great importance for the sequel. They have established two conceptions, (1) unlimited multitude and (2) indefinite plurality, as against Parmenides’ dogma that a One Being must be (1) indivisible and (2) unique.

(1) By way of division we have justified the notion of a One Entity considered as a whole divisible without limit into parts, each of which will itself be one part when the division has been made. On the other hand, no one part that we reach will ever be an indivisible unit; ‘any part proves to consist of two parts, and so on for ever by the same reasoning’ (142b). When the One Entity has been clothed with further attributes, so as to become an extended magnitude and finally a physical body in space, it will retain this property of infinite divisibility in the ordinary sense, applicable to continuous quantity.

Now, in our study of the Pythagorean evolution, we saw that Alexander Polyhistor’s summary opens with the derivation of the Indefinite Dyad from the One. The One was the first principle of all things. ‘From the One came the Indefinite Dyad, as matter for the One, which is cause; and from the One and the Indefinite Dyad came numbers.’ Whether or not this was a feature of the original Pythagoreanism, it is certainly a feature of the later Platonism, and it is indicated in the passage before us. We have here the picture of a One Being regarded as an all-inclusive whole and, as such, one and limited, and also as possessing continuous ‘being’. So far it resembles Parmenides’ One Being. The difference, however, is that our whole is divisible, and the whole itself and every part, though one, are also always two and so further divisible. The whole and every part thus consist of two ever-present factors or elements: Limit or unity and Unlimited multitude. This multitude only becomes a plurality of discrete units when actually divided. In itself it is what Plato calls the Indefinite Dyad, because, as he says here, it ‘always proves to be two and never is one’. It will be convenient to use the word ‘multitude’ for this factor, and reserve ‘plurality’ for any number of discrete parts or units resulting from actual division. In some of the later arguments in this Hypothesis and in some of the other Hypotheses we shall encounter this conception of the Unlimited as the infinitely divisible factor or material element. As multitude, it will be called

1 Cf. Ar. Met. 1081a. 14: (according to Plato) ‘number consists of the One and the Indefinite Dyad; and these are called the principles or elements of number.’ It appears that the ‘being’ which is distributed or parcelled out by the limiting factor of unity actually is the Indefinite Dyad or great-and-small. We may identify this unlimited factor or ‘other’ with the ‘being’ which, in combination with unity, constitutes a ‘One Being’. (145a–b).

HYP. II. EXTENSION AND SHAPE

‘the Others’, in contrast with ‘the One’ considered as the element of unity or limit. The two factors combined constitute one limited thing (παράσχομεν). (2) From the second point of view the derivation of numbers, pluralities of discrete units, has disproved Parmenides’ dogma that the One Being is necessarily unique. By way of addition and multiplication we have justified the notion of a One Entity considered as one unit (the unit of number) with any number of other units alongside it and capable of being added to it to make up any plurality of units, however numerous. Since each of these other units is just as much a one being as the first unit, we have rejected the Eleatic dogma that there cannot be a plurality of things that are, existing alongside one another. From this point of view ‘the Others’ will mean these ‘other ones’, which can be invested with all the further attributes now to be added.

These two meanings of ‘the Others’, as (1) the unlimited factor requiring to be limited by the One (unity), and (2) other ones alongside anything we choose to call ‘the One’, will be distinguished and described in the complementary Hyp. III, which deals with the consequences for the Others of our present supposition. We shall presently have occasion to invoke both conceptions in explaining arguments which pass from one sense to the other. Meanwhile we may note that they correspond to those two conceptions of quantity, as continuous or discrete, of which Zeno availed himself in his dilemmas.

145A–B. A One Entity (being limited) can have extension and shape

Having deduced a plurality of entities from the mere conception of ‘One Entity’, we can now consider whether it is possible to clothe such entities with those further attributes which we had to deny to the bare unity of Hyp. I. These attributes are taken in the same logical order, beginning with extension and shape. We pass, as before, from number to geometrical figure. This was the next stage in the Pythagorean evolution: the unit of number was also the point, from which proceeded lines, surfaces, and solid figures. From either of the two points of view our One Entity is a whole. We regarded it first as a continuous whole, infinitely divisible into parts. As discrete plurality, although the number series is endless, any one number, however great, is a limited plurality or total, and so likewise a whole. If we now add to this notion of a limited whole the attribute of extension, our ‘One Entity’ will become more concrete as ‘one magnitude’. And it will be true of any one magnitude, however great, that it has extremities: any one line must have a beginning and an end; any one plane or solid figure
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151E. older than itself and the Others, and also neither is, nor becomes, younger or older than itself or the Others.

Since the One is one, of course it has being; and to be means precisely having existence in conjunction with time present, as was or will be means having existence in conjunction with past or future time. So if the One is, it is in time.

The above is really a definition of existence in time, together with the assertion that the 'One' with the qualifications already given to it, i.e., any thing which is extended in space and can move, has existence in time. The word 'is' or 'being', which has hitherto been used in a wider sense applicable to any entity, is now confined to existence in, or at, or during, some time, which must be either past or present or future. This is a good example of a definition cast in the misleading form of an inference.

The following paragraphs explain in what ways something that exists in time can be said (a) to be becoming older and younger than itself; (b) to be older or younger than itself, (c) neither to be becoming, nor to be, older or younger than itself, but to have the same age.¹

152A. (a) Time, moreover, is advancing. Hence since the One moves forward temporally, it is always becoming older than itself. And we remember that what is becoming older becomes older than something that is becoming younger.²

So, since the One is becoming older than itself, that self must be becoming younger.

Therefore, in this sense, it is becoming both younger and older than itself.

This is the current conception of Time as the 'everflowing stream', itself advancing and carrying temporal things with it.³ One thing borne forward on this stream will leave its former selves further and further behind. As a man grows older, the baby he once was may be said to become relatively younger. This way of speaking may be unfamiliar, but it is not fallacious.

In the next paragraph we have a different picture. All time is conceived as a stationary frame stretching indefinitely in both

¹ In this section Burnet's division of paragraphs is once more misleading.

HYP. II. IN TIME

152B. (b) Also it is older when, in this process of becoming, it is at the present time which lies between 'was' and 'will be'; for of course, as it travels from past to future, it will never overstep the present. So, when it coincides with the present, it stops becoming older; at that time it is not becoming, but already is, older. For if it were getting ahead, it could never be caught up by the present, since to get ahead would mean to be in touch with both the present and the future, leaving the present behind and reaching out to the future, and so passing between the two. Whereas, if it is true of anything which is becoming that it can never pass beyond the present, it constantly stops becoming when it is at the present, and it then is whatever it may be that it was becoming. This applies to the One: when, in becoming older, it coincides with the present, it stops becoming and is then older. Moreover, it is older than the thing it was becoming older than, namely itself. And older means older than a younger. Hence the One is also younger than itself at the time when, in becoming older, it coincides with the present. But the present is with the One always throughout all its existence; for at whatever time it is existing, it is existing 'now'.

Therefore, at all times the One both is, and is becoming, older and younger than itself.

Finally (c) there is obviously a sense in which a thing must always be of the same age as itself.

152E. (c) Also in thus being or becoming it cannot take a longer time than itself; it must take the same time. But 187
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question is: when does this transition occur? Plato takes the case of transition from being in motion to being at rest—a case no doubt suggested by Zeno’s paradoxes about the impossibility of motion. In particular, the Pythagorean view that magnitude, motion, and time, all consist of a series of atomic units, and the objections offered by Zeno, had raised the question, what is meant by a ‘moment’? Plato argues that the transition occupies no stretch of time at all, however short. There is no time during which a thing has ceased to be in motion and not yet begun to be at rest, but is changing from the one condition to the other. The same principle applies to all the forms of becoming.

156c. But when, being in motion, it comes to a stand, or, being at rest, it changes to being in motion, it cannot itself occupy any time at all. For this reason: suppose it is first at rest and later in motion, or first in motion and later at rest; that cannot happen to it without its changing. But there is no time during which a thing can be at once neither in motion nor at rest. On the other hand it does not change without making a transition. When does it make the transition, then? Not while it is at rest or while it is in motion, or while it is occupying time. Consequently, the time at which it will be when it makes the transition must be that queer thing, the instant. The word ‘instant’ appears to mean something such that from if a thing passes to one or other of the two conditions. There is no transition from a state of rest so long as the thing is still at rest, nor from motion so long as it is still in motion; but this queer thing, the instant, is situated between the motion and the rest; it occupies no time at all; and the transition of the moving thing to the state of rest, or of the stationary thing

157. to being in motion, takes place to and from the instant. Accordingly, the One, since it both is at rest and in motion, must pass from the one condition to the other—only so can it do both things—and when it passes, it makes the transition instantaneously; it occupies no time in making it and at that moment it cannot be either in motion or at rest.

The same holds good of its other transitions: when it passes from being in existence to ceasing to exist or from being non-existent to coming into existence, it is then between certain motions and states; it is then neither existent nor non-existent, and it is neither coming into existence nor ceasing to exist. By the same reasoning when it passes from one to many or from many to one, it is not either one or many, and it is not being separated or being combined. Similarly when it passes from like to unlike or from unlike to like, it is neither like nor unlike, and it is neither becoming like nor becoming unlike. And when it passes from small to great or equal or in the opposite direction, it is not small or great or equal, nor is it being increased or being diminished or being equalised.

All these changes, then, may happen to the One, if it exists.

Plato’s treatment of the instant as a point ‘up to which’ or ‘from which’ transition occurs reminds us of his remark that the point is ‘a fiction of geometers’. He called a point the beginning of a line, while again he often spoke of indivisible lines. Aristotle, though he objects to defining a point as ‘the beginning of a line’, and asserts that even indivisible lines must have extremities, really took the same view as Plato’s here. A point, he says, is like the now in time: now is indivisible and is not a part of time, it is only the beginning or end, or a division, of time, and similarly a point may be an
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and a particular method; no systematic presentation of a series of categories as evolved from one another by the stress of an internal necessity. Nor again, if we apply the term 'antinomy' to Parmenides' reasonings, is this to be confused with Kant's procedure in the Transcendental Dialectic. The Kantian antinomy consists of a parallel proof and disproof of the same proposition: the Platonic of the derivation of contradictory results from what is to all appearance one and the same premise. Hence the final goal of the one is to demonstrate the equal validity or invalidity, as the case may be, of both thesis and antithesis; that of the other, as it is at least natural to suppose, is to establish one interpretation of the common premise as against the other.¹

Least of all can the Hegelian scheme be compatible with any interpretation of the first two Hypotheses on Neoplatonic lines. If the first is an account of an unknown God beyond being and the second an account of Intelligence and the Ideas at a lower level of emanation, there can be no question of any synthesis or reconciliation involving the conception of becoming in time. Finally, I have not been able to understand how Plato's businesslike account of the instant (τὸ ἐκπράρχον) at which the various species of change occur can be connected with the 'sudden' vision of the Beautiful (Wahl, p. 171) and the doctrine of Anamnesis (Speiser, p. 47). The only link appears to be the use of the word ἐκπράρχον in its normal sense of 'suddenly' at Symp. 210e, and Ep. vii, 341D.

If we now review the whole course of the dialectical exercise up to this point, the results are as follows. Hyp. I showed that from the notion of a bare unity which negates any kind of plurality, nothing can be deduced or evolved. Parmenides, who insisted on the absolute unity and indivisibility of his One, was logical in so far as he inferred the non-existence of anything else: there could be no 'Others', no plurality of real things, no world of sensible appearances. But he was not justified in ascribing to his One itself any further attributes. It could not even exist or be the object of any kind of knowledge. He did, however, regard it as existent and knowable, and he called it not only 'One' but 'One Being'. Hyp. II started afresh from this notion of a One which has being, and showed that such a One, just because it is not absolutely one, unique and indivisible, can have some of the further attributes which Parmenides deduced, but equally well other attributes which he denied. It can have many parts or aspects or elements, and there can be 'Others', in a number of different senses. If we add (as Parmenides did) the attributes of

¹ Mind, N.S., No. 19, pp. 325-6.
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spatial extension and shape, there is no reason why it should not have motion and all the kinds of change in time. In fact there is nothing to arrest our thought from proceeding all the way from the conception of a 'One Entity' to the existence in space and time of a multitude of physical bodies, capable of motion and of every kind of change, and perceptible by the senses.

As against Zeno, Plato has triumphantly disproved his fundamental assumption that the same thing cannot have two contrary attributes. The One of Hyp. I can have no attributes at all. The One Being of Hyp. II can have a whole string of contrary attributes, provided we observe those distinctions which Zeno ignored in the meanings of ambiguous terms.

By casting the whole into the form of a deduction, I understand Plato to indicate that there is no logical barrier such as Parmenides' goddess set up between the deductions of the first part of his poem and the mythical cosmogony of the second part. The existence of a manifold and changing world in time is not an irrational or self-contradictory illusion of mortals. Reasoning will carry us all the way from Parmenides' own hypotheses of a One which has being to the notion of the sensible body with contrary qualities. The Pythagorean evolution, starting from the Monad and ending with the sensible body, is restored and justified. But this train of reasoning simply postulates the addition of one attribute after another, in a logical order. It must not be confused with an account of how a sensible world could actually come into existence, by 'emanation' from a supreme One. There is no hint of any moving cause. The production of a sensible world can be explained only in the imagery of a creation myth such as we find in the Timaeus.

In studying the relations of the One to the Others, we have already learnt a good deal about these Others and been led to distinguish various senses of the term. But in accordance with the original plan, the next step will be to consider these Others on their own merits, and what are the consequences for them of the same supposition as in Hyp. II of a One which has being and is capable of all the other attributes we have ascribed to it.

HYPOTHESIS III

The supposition here is the same as in Hyp. II. This means that all the consequences of that Hypothesis are taken as established. It was there shown that, since plurality follows directly from the notion of a One that has being, there is nothing illogical in supposing an indefinite number of things which, by the addition of successive qualifications, can become a multitude of bodies situated in space and capable of motion and rest. From that point (146b) onwards we heard of the relations which one such thing could have to the Others. These Others could be regarded as simply the other members of a set of such things, differing numerically from any one member which we choose to call the 'One' (146n). This is the conception of the Others from which we start here. There is no need to deduce once more the possibility of their existence. The Others will correspond to the One at every stage in the 'evolution'. There will be a One and Others, whether we are speaking simply of a mere One Entity, or of the unit of number, or of numbers as wholes, or of Forms, or of geometrical magnitudes, or of sensible bodies existing in space and time. The recognition that there must be Others at all these levels escapes the difficulties that beset interpreters who assume either that the Others here (and in Hyp. II) are 'the other Forms' only, or that they are not the Others of Hyp. II but 'the sensible world'.

This Hypothesis is, accordingly, short. The first section establishes the relevant definition of the Others, as against different possible senses of 'things other than the One', or 'other than one'. It points out that the Others, as here defined, form one whole set, each member of which also is one. The second section points out that these 'other ones' are complex, each containing, besides the unity which it has, an unlimited element which has that unity but can be conceived in abstraction from it. Finally, it is briefly remarked that, when the two factors are combined in limited things, these 'other ones' can possess all the contrary attributes which Hyp. II has ascribed to the One. The conclusion is that there is no ground for asserting, with Parmenides, that a One Being must be unique. There may be, and indeed are, any number of other one-beings (πολλὰ ὄντα).

457b-458a. If the One is defined as One Entity which is both one and many or a whole of parts (as in Hyp. II), the Others, as a plurality of other ones, form one whole, of which each part is one.

The expression 'things other than one' or 'other than the One' (ἐκλα τῶν ἄλλων) is highly ambiguous. As we have already seen, 'one' or 'the One' has several meanings, and there are also several ways of being 'other' (146g ff.). Plato is concerned here to define a sense of 'things other than the One' which will allow of such things existing, having each its unity, and being the subjects of true statements ascribing to them the whole series of contrary attributes in their relations among themselves. It is pointed out...