PHILEBUS 15B1–8

Opinions have been sharply divided over the interpretation of Philebus 15B1–8. The focus of the controversy is in the determination of how many questions there are in this passage, and what they are. A superficial reading of the text would make us believe that there are three distinct questions; and so read Stallbaum, Archer-Hind and Friedländer. But commentators seem to have had some difficulty in eking a sense out of these three questions, and have therefore been led to compress them into two only. Among the many proponents of this view are Wilamowitz, Bury, Natorp, Stenzel and Hackforth.[1]

Hackforth's approach to the passage may be taken as a fair representative of the "two-questions" interpretation: "I believe there are only two [questions]: (1) do the monads really exist? (2) how can these eternal and immutable beings *come to be* in a plurality of particulars?" In this statement of the problem the passage at stake is admittedly repetitious, and involves some highly improbable corrections of the text at B4, which, nevertheless, would still give "a clumsy, but not impossible sentence".[2] But this interpretation too runs into serious difficulties:

a. As Friedländer and others have remarked, it disregards the more natural reading of πρῶτον μὲν . . ., εἶτα . . ., μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα . . ., as an enumeration.

b. A heavier objection to the "two-questions" thesis is the general awkwardness of 15B4 εἶναι βεβαιότατα μίαν ταύτην. The whole passage is quite condensed an a redundant clause in this context would be difficult to accept.

c. On this view, the answers to the questions presumably raised at 15B are nowhere to be found in the *Philebus*, and indeed the whole passage would not fit the outline of the dialogue and might as well be cut out. It would be far from clear what the relation would be between our passage and the technical passages at 16C and 23C ff.

d. Philebus in 18D has been trying to find out "for a long time" (πάλαι D7) what all this is for (τὸ τί πρὸς ἔπος αὖ ταῦτ' ἐστίν). Socrates' answer

[1] For a more detailed account of the controversy, and bibliography, see P. Friedländer, *Plato* (London 1969) 3.534–6, n. 27. I generally agree with his reading of the text, as against the various corrections proposed.

[2] R. Hackforth, *Plato's Examination of Pleasure* (N.Y.: The Library of Liberal Arts, n.d.) 20, n. 1.

relates all the previous discussion to the initial problem of the good life, and explains that the foregoing discourse requires to show how pleasure and knowledge are each of them both one and many and not immediately infinite (18E3–9, cf. 15C1). Socrates' ways were indeed "crooked" (κύκλῳ περιαγαγών, 19A3), but, nevertheless, Protarchus recognizes that it is still the same question that is being dealt with (cf. 19C–D). Wouldn't all this mean that Plato intended to answer the questions at 15B as a basis for his solution to the problems of the good life?

e. It is true that the statement of the problem at 12 does not immediately imply such a huge metaphysical apparatus as is developed afterwards. Socrates' argumentation at that early stage of the dialogue is admittedly weak, and all he is trying to get out of Protarchus is the admission that while pleasure may be good, it cannot be the Good. But, as everywhere in Plato, the argumentation is adapted to the level of the *dramatis personae* and it gains in depth and scope as the dialogue proceeds. The problem of pleasure being good but not the Good is ultimately the problem of the one and the many, as Socrates explains to Philebus at 18E.

In short, on the "two questions" interpretation, there is a discrepancy between the statement of the problem at 15B and the solutions proposed to it, either explicit or implicit. Of course, Plato *could* have failed to provide a solution for his problems. But, as it seems to me, this would be too easy a way out. A viable interpretation should, to my mind, conform to the following criteria:

a. it should read the text in an unforced way;
b. it should provide questions for the answers and answers for the questions;
c. it should show the importance of the passage to the problem under discussion;
d. it would be expected, as well, that such an interpretation would fit well into some overall view of Plato's thought.

I propose, therefore, accepting Burnet's text at 15B1–8, to offer a revised version of the "three questions" approach, which will be relevant to the metaphysical discussions of the *Philebus* as well as to an understanding of Plato's later philosophy.

At several places in the dialogue, Plato comes back to the problems raised at 15B. It is to be expected that his answers are to be related somehow to the questions put forward by him. A good way of finding what the questions are could be to start from a first look at the anwers:

i. 15D: "We say somehow that this identity of the one and the many crops up everywhere by virtue of the λόγοι (Hackforth: as the result of the sentences we utter), in every single one of them, always, in the past as in the present. And this will never cease, nor has it begun now, but such a thing

(τὸ τοιοῦτον), as it seems to me, is an eternal and never-aging πάθος (Hackforth: something incidental) of the λόγοι themselves".

ii. 16C–17A: "All that is ever said to be consist of one and many, and have in themselves a concretion (σύμφυσις) of Limit and Unlimitedness. This then being the ordering of the things, we ought, in respect of everything, to posit always a single form and look for it, for we shall find it there contained; then, when we have laid hold of that, we must look for two forms beyond that one, if there are two, and if there are not, for three or some other number; and we must do the same again with each of the other 'ones', until we come to see not merely that the one we started with is one and many and unlimited, but also how many it is. But we are not to apply the unlimitedness to our plurality until we have discerned its total number (Hackforth: the total number of forms of the things in question), which is intermediate between the unlimited and the one".

iii. After the Interlude, Protarchus summarizes:

19B: "Socrates, I take it, is now asking us about the *eide* of pleasure, whether there are such *eide* or not, and how many there are and what they are like. And again the same with regard to *phronesis*".

20A: ". . . please make up your mind for yourself whether you must classify the kinds of pleasure and of knowledge (ἡδονῆς εἴδη σοι καὶ ἐπιστήμης διαιρετέον) or may pass them over . . ."

I think it is only natural to suppose that the long passage at 16C ff. is Plato's answer to the questions raised in 15B. This is clear from 15D1, as well as from independent considerations. It is true that οὗτος may refer to what follows, and thus ταύτης at 15D1 would be the forthcoming battle, and not the battle that was just mentioned in 15B.[3] But the main objection to ταύτης at 15D1 referring to the forthcoming battle is thematic. In 15D ff., Plato does speak of the one and the many, and a transition to some new issue with εἶεν at the opening of this section would be very awkward. Still, Plato raises a question and, *prima facie*, he is supposed to answer it. Unless I had very good grounds for thinking otherwise, I would prefer to say that I do not understand his answer rather than submit, perhaps too rashly, that he left the question unanswered. And only the more so when the latter assumption implies what seems to me a less plausible reading of the text. My assumption of continuity is not based primarily on 15D1–2, but rather on an effort to see some sort of unified structure in the dialogue. Of course, it can be said that there could be none, but this seems to me methodologically dangerous. We have no hint in the *Philebus* that it is no more than a brooding over questions of unity and plurality, without any serious attempt at solving them. On the contrary,

[3] Cf. Pl. *R.* 510B. Goodwin, *A Greek Grammar* (London 1894) 216, states that this is possible, although "especially in the neuter".

Plato seems to be satisfied with the solution proposed in the dialogue, whatever it be.

Contending that a solution *is* being offered is not maintaining without further ado that the solution is valid. On the other hand, failure to prove that there is a solution does not amount, of course, to a proof that there is not any.

The force of the first question seems to be fairly agreed upon: "whether we should assume (ὑπολαμβάνειν) monads of this sort as real". The answer to this question is given at 16D, on the basis of what is accepted at 15DE and 16C: we say somehow that unity and plurality alike are required by the *logos*, and the reality of *logos* is an undisputed fact with Plato. In order that *logos* be possible, there must be a "growing together" of limit and unlimitedness. "This being so, we must, therefore, in respect of everything, posit always a single form and look for it".

But if the idea is looked upon as a simple unity, the problem arises of the possibility of the existence of several distinct simple (absolute) unities: if there were several distinct absolute unities, they would be all identical. I shall come back to this question later on.

From a logical point of view, this would mean that all propositions about unity must be tautological, as Parmenides had shown. And this is exactly what Plato says in the first hypothesis of his *Parmenides*. Indeed, this is the problem that brought our dialogue to an aporetic halt at 12C ff. Cf. especially 18E, where Socrates explains to Philebus "what is the relevance of it all": intelligence and pleasure, "each of them is one" (Hackforth adds "thing"), and their previous argument tried to show "how each of them is one and many". There is no difficulty in agreeing with Protarchus that all pleasures are similar to each other, being all pleasures; the problem is in proving the possibility of saying that A is B, C, D . . . (where B, C, D . . . are ἐναντία), without denying that A is A. Thus Father Parmenides' problem is transferred to each conceptual unity. The dialogue *Parmenides* had already shown what problems arise from such a transposition. The parallels between *Phlb.* 15B–C and *Prm.* 131A are well known; the all but certain reference of *Phlb.* 14C–15C to *Prm.* 128E–130A should also be noted.

I do not think the linguistic and thematic parallels between the *Parmenides* and the *Philebus* are accidental, especially the last quoted. In both these passages we have a dismissal of the one-many problem in the sensible world and a statement that the real problem is the problem of the one and the many in the purely conceptual world (cf. *Prm.* 129C8). Now, the *Parmenides* distinguishes between three types of one-many problems: a. the problem dealt with by Zeno, concerning the sensible world; b. the problems concerning ideas and particulars, which are dealt with in the first part of the *Parmenides;* and c. the problems concerning ideas alone, which are extensively discussed in the second and larger part of the dialogue. The latter problems are evidently

considered the most important of all, as "Parmenides" expressly says that this dialectic "game" is a precondition to solving the second calss of one-many problems.

What I am suggesting is that the *Philebus* picks up not only the problems of the *Parmenides* as a whole, but aslo this particular passage at 128E–130A (and the parallel is close enough to be taken seriously into consideration). It comes back to the one-many problem in its Zenonian form, dismisses it as trivial, and then states the real problems, namely problems c. and b. above. The exposition of these problems is certainly very economic, to say the least, but if it is — as I am suggesting — a near quotation from *Prm.* 128E–130A, it should be quite clear. The *Philebus* sets out to give its answer to what the earlier dialogue had considered to be the more fundamental part of the problem: the relation between the one and the many within the conceptual realm. In fact, it would have been pointless to state the problem again if no progress was about to be made beyond what was already discussed in the *Parmenides*.[4]

The first question leads, thus, immediately to the second: how can there be many imperishable (as distinct from sensible) "ones"?

εἶτα πῶς αὖ ταύτας, μίαν ἑκάστην οὖσαν ἀεὶ τὴν αὐτὴν καὶ μήτε γένεσιν μήτε ὄλεθρον προσδεχομένην, ὅμως εἶναι βεβαιότατα μίαν ταύτην;

This passage presents several textual difficulties which are crucial for its interpretation:

a. What is the verb of this sentence?
b. What does ταύτας refer to?
c. Why does Plato use the apposition μίαν ἑκάστην in the singular, after ταύτας, a possible but by no means uniteresting anacolouthon?
d. What does ὅμως mean?
e. How is μίαν ἑκάστην to be understood?

I propose to interpret the passage as follows:

a. The verb can be supplied indifferently from the preceding (B2) or the following (B6) clause. I would rather have it from the preceding clause, but this is not necessary.[5]

b. The only unprejudiced reading I can think of is to take, with Friedländer, μονάδας at B1 as the antecedent of ταύτας.

c. The passage from the plural to the singular is not without importance, although it seems to have been overlooked by most commentators. How can these several monads be supposed to exist, if *each of them* (ἑκάστην) is one

4 The *Parmenides*, I should like to maintain in a forthcoming paper, solves part of the problem at the level of the ideas. The *Philebus* carries it to the level of the "elements of the ideas".

5 Cf. R.D. Archer-Hind, "Note on Plato *Philebus* 15A,B", *Journal of Philology* 27 (1901) 229–231.

and the same? How can many units coexist, not one along another, nor one after another, (i.e., neither spatially nor temporally), and yet each of them being different from the others and identical to itself (τὴν αὐτήν)? In the sensible world, as we have seen earlier in the dialogue, there is no serious problem. The problem is in having each of such severally self-identical units μήτε γένεσιν μήτε ὄλεθρον προσδεχομένην. The very same phrase whose relevance cannot be seen by Hackforth is the central point of the question. Indeed, on the two-questions interpretation, this phrase and the following are "awkward" (Hackforth's understatement). On the three-questions view, they are necessary as they stand.

d. The problem could still be solved in the purely conceptual realm by denying that these monads are real units, say, by having them as conventional units like, for example, units of measurement. This kind of approach is exploited by Plato elsewhere. But this is not what Plato is after. He is asking about the possibility of a multiplicity of units, each of which would be one and always self-identical, non-corporeal, and *nevertheless* (ὅμως) would be a *real* unit (βεβαιότατα μίαν εἶναι), and not a mere conventional unit, like a yard or a mile.[6]

e. This is not yet a full statement of the problem. Many conceptual real units could still be all identical or indiscernible. Thus, if there were many (absolute) Ones, they would be only one One. Now, the problem Plato is raising here is the problem of having many distinct "ones". The problem is having a multiplicity of real non-corporeal units, each of which is most assuredly "this one" (μίαν ταύτην), i.e., distinct from every other unit.

Badham, in his 1855 revised edition, comments on ὅμως: "*i.e.*, *notwithstanding* what is about to be said in the following sentence. For ὅμως is sometimes *nevertheless*, and sometimes the apodosis to it, either following or preceding it. Ast should not have given this as an example of ὅμως *after* the participle, for then Socrates would be made to say 'that a monad is always fixedly a monad, although it remains ever the same, and admits neither of generation nor of desctruction', which is no contradiction but a necessary consequence".[7]

If my interpretation suggested above is correct, then Ast is right, not Badham, and there is a real difficulty in having each monad being a *one* and a *this* among many monads, each of which is also a *one* and a *this*.

Indeed, the difficulty arises from the very fact that each monad "remains ever the same, and admits neither of generation nor of destruction". Examples of unities in the sensible world, that change and come to be and pass away — which to Plato is equivalent to being "corporeal" — are trivial (δεδημευμένα,

[6] Cf. Aristotle's conception of the one as μέτρον, *Metaph.* 1053b4, 1052b18, 1072a33, 1087b34. See also Friedländer, *loc. cit.*, and futher literature there.

[7] In his second edition of 1878, Badham sees "the absolute necessity of finding three points of enquiry", and settles for the insertion of μή after ὅμως.

14D; cf. examples there). But if we take another kind of "one", as, e.g. "man" (15A), as opposed to "Protarchus" (14C–D), we shall have matter for serious consideration. For "corporeal", "sensible" units have parts side by side or one after another; they can be considered differently in different respects. Thus, two corporeal units can differ by virtue of the difference between their parts. But a "real" unit, that admits "neither of generation nor of destruction" and is unchanging, can have parts neither spatially nor temporally arranged; which would perhaps mean that it can have no parts at all. If this should be the case, then any two real units would be the same. In other words, a plurality of monads is impossible, unless monads can have parts. Until this be shown, there can be no "respect" in which the monad A can be said to be B; relations are possible only within a plurality (as, for example, Protarchus being short or tall in realtion to different persons, or at different times).

In short, for Plato the serious problem is in having a plurality of units, each of which is clearly distinguishable from every other, not in the way changing things differ from one another, but "being always one and the same and subject neither to generation nor destruction", and each of these moands being *nevertheless* (ὅμως) most assuredly *one* and *this*.

Part of the answer was already given: plurality, not less than unity, is required by the fact that *logos* is possible. All that is ever said to be (τῶν ἀεὶ λεγομένων εἶναι) consists of one and many.

But this crude Pythagorean solution is not enough. It still does not answer the question how can moands be different and, at the same time, *rational.* If the difference between the monads were only such as the difference between "red" and "green", then this difference would have been, for Plato, purely irrational and dialectic would have been impossible. Here Plato is close indeed to the notion of "unanalysable property", though the very important reservation must be made that ideas are not properties. As an evidence that Plato had the concept of "unanalysability", I think the first hypothesis of the *Parmenides* should be enough. There too the implication "unanalysable → irrational" is found (142A). A reasonable exposition of Plato's concept of rationality is beyond the scope of the present discussion. Elsewhere I have argued, that, for Plato, rationality meant a plurality that is structured according to a rule (as distinct from pure unity and pure indeterminacy, which are both ἄλογα). In other words, if "rational" means "discursive" (λογικόν), then pure unity is not rational.[8] By the same token, to say that the difference between the concepts of green and red is not rational is nothing more than to say that this difference is not discursive.

[8] Cf. S. Scolnicov, "The Epistemological Significance of Plato's Theory of Ideal Numbers" *MH* 28 (1971) 79–83.

The complete answer is given by the concept of *number*, which is a unity of a plurality as such. Two numbers differ from one another not by any "content", but by the different unifying structures they impose on pure plurality. In this sense, number is "intermediate between the unlimited and the one" — it is the rational interval between the irrational extremes.[9]

This interpretation would require a certain consistency in the terminological differentiation between the two types of plurality: pure indeterminacy and numerical plurality. Plato is usually believed to be quite loose in his terminology, but it seems to me that here, for once, he is uncharacteristically consistent.

The problem of the one and the many is stated in four stages:

a. It is introduced by Socrates at 12C4, with the non-technical word ποικίλον applied to pleasure. The discussion that follows is carried in the following terms: ἀνόμοιοι ἀλλήλαις, ὅμοιαι ἀλλήλαις (12C8, D5, 13E10)
ἀνόμοιος, ὅμοιος (12A6, B2, B4, C7, 14A2, A8)
ὁμοιότατος (12E1)
ἐναντίαι, ἐναντιώτατος (12D8, E6, 12A1, C4, E10).
In 13D4 Socrates formulates the problem as τὸ ἀνομοιότατόν ἐστιν τῷ ἀνομοιοτάτῳ πάντων ὁμοιότατον. The verb used throughout is διαφέρω.

b. Now, at 14C7, Socrates introduces the more technical terminology of the one and the many, as referring to something φύσει πως πεφυκότα θαυμαστόν. And at C8 he says for the first time: ἓν γὰρ δὴ τὰ πολλὰ εἶναι καὶ τὸ ἓν πολλὰ θαυμαστὸν λεχθέν. Protarchus readily understands what is being sopken of: ἐμέ (τις) φῇ Πρώταρχον ἕνα γεγονότα φύσει πολλοὺς εἶναι πάλιν. But Socrates is not worried about the one and the many that come to be and pass away. He is concerned with the one that is not subject to generation and destruction. And here, for the first time, he uses the word ἄπειρα alongside πολλά. Protarchus has asked about τὰ δεδημευμένα τῶν θαυμαστῶν περὶ τὸ ἓν καὶ πολλά. Socrates — perhaps anticipating what is still to come — points out *en passant* that the ἕν is not only dismembered into πολλά, but indeed into ἄπειρα too. (I am not implying that πολλά refers necessarily to *infimae species* only and ἄπειρα to particulars).

c. In the very passage which states the problem in its technical form, Socrates carefully distinguishes for the first time, between ἄπειρα and πολλά. At 15B5 the question is raised how the monads can be dispersed ἐν τοῖς γιγνομένοις καὶ ἀπείροις and one of the possibilities is that it is to be posited (θετέον) as πολλὰ γεγονυῖαν. Here ἀπείροις refers clearly to ἐν τοῖς γιγνομένοις and πολλὰ γεγονυῖαν to μίαν ἑκάστην in B2–3. ἑνί τε καὶ πολλοῖς, 15B8 and τὰ τοιαῦτα ἓν καὶ πολλά, C1 are to my mind, set formulae referring to the well-known problem that is being reformulated just now. 15D4 ἓν καὶ πολλὰ ὑπὸ λόγων γιγνόμενα περιτρέχειν can only refer to ideas, as particulars cannot crop up into λόγοι; but it could also

[9] On Plato's concept of number, see my paper quoted in the previous note.

be a set formula, more loosely used, though even then not referring specifically to particulars.

d. 16C9 ἓξ ἑνὸς μὲν καὶ πολλῶν ὄντων τῶν ἀεὶ λεγομένων εἶναι, πέρας δὲ καὶ ἀπειρίαν ἐν αὐτοῖς σύμφντον ἐχόντων is the statement of the Pythagorean dualistic doctrine (as opposed to Milesian-Parmenidean monism). I assume that Socrates is here quoting the Pythagorean formulation, and he uses, therefore, the pairs ἕν—πολλά, περας—ἀπειρία. But immediately in the sequel he refines this statement of the problem, coming back to the same precise terminology: D6 μὴ... ἓν καὶ πολλὰ καὶ ἄπειρα... μόνον..., ἀλλὰ καὶ ὁπόσα.

From this point on, so it seems to me, ἄπειρα, is consistently contrasted with the ideas, πολλὰ, πόσα and like, but for the restatement of the problem, at 18E9–19A1. Cf. 16D7, E1 ἄπειρον contrasted with the ideas; so 17A2; 17B4 φωνὴ μία καὶ ἄπειρος πλήθει opposed to B7 πόσα καὶ ὁποῖα; 17D7 περὶ παντὸς ἑνὸς καὶ πολλῶν σκοπεῖν opposed to E3 τὸ δ'ἄπειρόν τε ἑκάστων; 18A8 οὐκ ἐιτ' ἀπείρου φύσιν δεῖ βλέπειν εὐθὺς ἀλλὰ ἐπί τινα ἀριθμόν; B8 τὰ φωνηέντα ἐν τῷ ἀπείρῳ κατενόησεν οὐχ ἓν ὄντα ἀλλὰ πλείω.

Thus it would seem that from 16D onwards the *vox propria* for the particulars is ἄπειρα, while πολλά is used either in general opposition to ἕν (a formulation Plato finds unsatisfactory, cf. 16D ff.), or, more commonly, as that which is between the ἕν and the ἄπειρα, namely *eide*, though not necessarily *atoma eide*. I could not find, in the final formulation of the problem, any place where πολλά refferred univocally to particulars.

In summary, monads have parts as numbers have them, in a non-spatial and non-temporal way. Whatever else monads may be, they are — by the very fact of being non-corporeal, many and different from one another — synthetic unities, or unified pluralities. They are shown to be rational by dialectic, which shows them as the synthetic unities they are, drawing the differences between them, and pointing to the realtions between them. Nevertheless, these are indeed monads, even if not orthodox Parmenidean monads. That the problem of the possibility of predication is to be solved along these lines is shown by Protarchus' summary at 19A–20A.

It could be objected to this interpretation that in the *Sophist*, which is assumed to be later than the *Parmenides* and earlier than the *Philebus*, Plato takes for granted the existence of a plurality of monads. Why, then, should he come back to this question after having based the whole of dialectic on such a premiss?

I hope to have shown above that the similarity between the first part of the *Parmenides* and our section is no mere coincidence, but the presentation and analysis of the problem are the same in the two works.

I do not think there is any oddness in having Plato talk in the *Sophist* as though there is no problem in having a mass of distinct unities, if, shortly before, when he wrote the *Parmenides*, he had shown an awareness of the issue

which underlined the matter of a plurality of differentiable unities. This would have been odd indeed, had Plato meant to give us a deductive ("synthetic") account of knowledge and the world. But Plato's method was not deductive ("synthetic"), from the principles to the conclusions, but what was later called "analytic", i.e. from the conclusions to the principles.[10]

In the *Sophist*, as in *Prm.* 135B–C and elsewhere, Plato is not trying to construct the world and knowledge synthetically out of the ideas or out of the ideas and the souls; he takes knowledge (*logos* in the *Sophist*, the difference between knowledge and mere opinion in the *Meno*) for granted and asks for the conditions that make knowledge possible. His answer in the *Sophist* was that *logos* is impossible without, among other things, a κοινωνία τῶν γενῶν.

If this is true, namely, if Plato is not "proving" (synthetically) the difference between opinion and knowledge, or between true and false discourse, but *analysing*, it i.e. working from the assumption that *logos* (i.e. discourse) is possible to the conditions which would make it possible — if so, then there is nothing strange in Plato's silence on the one-many problem in the *Sophist*. He is working backwards, from the conclusion to the premisses, and, therefore, the first elements are the last to be dealt with. Thus Plato is not worried about the problem of the one and the many in the *Sophist* exactly because this is a more fundamental problem. The string of conditions is:

logos ← κοινωνία τῶν γενῶν ← multiplicity of monads ← one and many. Were Plato working from the bottom up, this omission in the *Sophist* would have been unpardonable; but as he is making his way downwards (he himself would have said, of course, "upwards"), he could not possibly mention the one-many problem before he had finished the analysis of the problem of the κοινωνία τῶν γενῶν.

That the last question in our passage refers to the relation between the monads and the particulars is, I think, generally agreed. This would be also problem b. of the *Parmenides*. Plato's answer is somewhat obscurer. It might be suggested that he had no answer to this part of the problem. But as he does not say or imply this anywhere, this interpretation could be acceptable only as a last resort.

On the other hand, Plato might be implying that the answer to the second question in our passage applies automatically to the third. There seems to be no explicit statement to this effect in the *Philebus*. Nevertheless, hints in this direction can be found e.g., in the parallel passage of the *Parmenides*, and elsewhere, and this was apparently the case in Plato's later philosophy.

I am inclined to believe that Plato thought that this problem could be solved,

[10] I have further elaborated on Plato's method in my 1971 thesis *Plato's Method of Analysis in the Middle Dialogues*. For a short presentation of the method and its application ni one dialogue, see now *Eshkolot*, vol. 7 (forthcoming).

to a certain extent, along the lines of the former problem, viz. by means of the concept of μέθεξις. It seems to me that insofar as the problem of the relation between the monads (ideas) and the sensible particulars can be discussed by dialectic, it resolves into the problem of the relation between concepts (monads, ideas). In effect, dialectic, or more generally *logos*, cannot deal with paticulars; these are left to the province of myth (cf. *Timaeus*' εἰκὼς λόγος).

We have here indeed to do with two sorts of relations. For particular existence cannot be accounted for in Plato by means of the ideas alone (in spite of the *prima facie* case for this view in *R.* 6); if this were the case, there would be no need for a *demiurgos* in the *Timaeus*, even if he were only an aspect of the Idea of the Good. Nevertheless, I think it can be shown that Plato tried to bring these two relations under a common *genos* (again the anairetical procedure).

This position differs from the Neoplatonic in that there is a nice but nevertheless clear distinction between the relation of idea to idea and the relation of idea to particular; the latter relation has a further residue of irrationality. (And there is, of course, the irreducible opposition of the one and the plurality too). Though I am clearly indebted to Brochard's hint that the two problems were reduced to a single one, I do not think the reduction was complete. On the other hand, as against Zeller and, probably, Merlan, it does not seem to me that Plato failed to distinguish between the principle of multiplicity in the ideal world and in the world of the senses.[11]

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[11] This paper owes much to discussions with R.A. Shiner and Dr. G.E.R. Lloyd, as well as to the anonymous reader of the *Scripta*.