Parmenides

PLATO

c. 428–348 BC

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Παρμενίδης

Translated from the Greek with AI (Claude) and edited



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Parmenides · Plato (c. 428–348 BC)

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INTRODUCTION

Around 450 BC the great philosopher Parmenides, now about sixty-five, came to Athens with his pupil Zeno. A very young Socrates went to hear them. Decades later Cephalus of Clazomenae tells how he tracked down the one man who could still recite what was said.

First Socrates sets out his theory of forms: things are like or unlike, one or many, because they share in forms such as likeness and unity. Parmenides takes it apart with objections that still occupy philosophers, the most famous being the "third man" regress. Yet he insists that without forms thinking would be impossible. Socrates, he says, has simply tried to define things before he is trained.

Then the old man gives a demonstration of that training, questioning a young man named Aristoteles. He works through what follows if "the one" is and if it is not, and every line of argument ends in contradiction. Readers have taken this second half as a logical exercise, a joke at the expense of Parmenides' own doctrine, or the deepest metaphysics Plato wrote.

Parmenides

Athens, at the Great Panathenaea, around 450 BC, as Cephalus heard it retold years later. The aged Parmenides and his pupil Zeno test the young Socrates' theory of forms, then Parmenides runs through a long exercise on "the one."

CEPHALUS 126a When we came to Athens from our home in Clazomenae, we ran into Adeimantus and Glaucon in the marketplace. Adeimantus took me by the hand. "Welcome, Cephalus!" he said. "If there's anything here you need that we can do for you, just tell us."

"Well, as it happens," I said, "that's exactly why I'm here: to ask something of you."[1]

ADEIMANTUS "Then tell us what you'd like," he said. 126b

CEPHALUS And I said, "Your half-brother on your mother's side—what was his name? I don't remember. He was just a boy, I think, when I last came here from Clazomenae, and that was a long time ago now. His father's name, I believe, was Pyrilampes."[2]

ADEIMANTUS "That's right," he said.

CEPHALUS "And his own name?"

ADEIMANTUS "Antiphon. But why do you ask, exactly?"

CEPHALUS "These men," I said, "are fellow citizens of mine, and very keen on philosophy. They've heard that this Antiphon

1 Clazomenae was a Greek city on the coast of Asia Minor; Adeimantus and Glaucon were Plato's older brothers.

spent a lot of time with a certain Pythodorus, a companion of Zeno's, 126c and that he heard Pythodorus tell many times the conversation that Socrates, Zeno and Parmenides once had, and can repeat it from memory."[3]

ADEIMANTUS "That's true," he said.

CEPHALUS "Well, that's what we'd like to hear in full," I said.

ADEIMANTUS "That won't be hard," he said. "When he was a young man he rehearsed it very thoroughly—though these days, like his grandfather and namesake, he spends most of his time with horses. But if that's what you want, let's go and see him. He's just left here for home, and he lives nearby, in Melite." 127a [4]

CEPHALUS With that we set off, and we found Antiphon at home, handing a bridle over to a smith to be fixed. When he was done with the man, and his brothers had told him why we'd come, he recognized me from my earlier visit and greeted me warmly. We asked him to go through the conversation. At first he was reluctant—it was a big job, he said—but then he did tell it. Antiphon said that, according to Pythodorus, once, for the Great Panathenaea, 127b Zeno and Parmenides came to Athens. Parmenides was already quite old, very gray, but handsome and noble-looking, about sixty-five. Zeno was then nearly forty, tall and attractive to look at, and he was said to have been Parmenides' beloved.[5] They were staying, he said, with 127c Pythodorus, outside the city wall in the Ceramicus. Socrates came there, and a good many others with him, eager to hear Zeno's writings—this was the first time the two had brought them to Athens—and Socrates was very young then. So Zeno himself was reading to them, while Parmenides happened to be out. Very little of the arguments was left to be read when, 127d Pythodorus said, he

2 Pyrilampes was the second husband of Plato's mother, Perictione, so Antiphon was Plato's half-brother.
3 Parmenides of Elea, in southern Italy, was the founder of the Eleatic school of philosophy; Zeno, his younger follower, was famous for his paradoxes.
4 Melite was a residential district of Athens, just west of the marketplace.
5 The Panathenaea was Athens' chief festival, in honor of Athena; every fourth year it was celebrated on a grander scale as the Great Panathenaea.

himself came in from outside, and Parmenides with him, and Aristoteles, the one who became one of the Thirty; and they heard only a little more of the writings. Not that Pythodorus himself hadn't heard them: he had heard Zeno read them before.[6]

ZENO'S BOOK

Socrates questions Zeno about his treatise and answers its puzzles with forms such as likeness and unlikeness.

SOCRATES Socrates listened, and then asked for the first hypothesis of the first argument to be read again. When it had been read, [127e] he said, "What do you mean by this, Zeno? That if the things that are are many, then they must be both like and unlike, but that this is impossible, because unlike things can't be like, and like things can't be unlike? Isn't that what you're saying?"

ZENO "It is," said Zeno.

SOCRATES "Then if it's impossible for unlike things to be like and like things unlike, it's also impossible for there to be many things? Because if there were many, they would have impossible things happen to them. Is that what your arguments are after—nothing other than to fight against everything people say and maintain that there aren't many things? And do you think each of your arguments is a proof of exactly that, so that you believe you're offering as many proofs that there aren't [128a] many things as you've written arguments? Is that what you're saying, or am I not understanding you correctly?"

ZENO "No, you've got it," said Zeno. "You've understood perfectly what the whole book is after."

SOCRATES "I see, Parmenides," said Socrates, "that Zeno here wants to be close to you not only in friendship generally but in his writing too. In a way he's written the same thing you did, but

6 Aristoteles (not the philosopher Aristotle) later became one of the Thirty, the oligarchs who seized power in Athens in 404–403 BC, at the end of the Peloponnesian War.

by turning it around he tries to fool us into thinking he's saying something different. You, in your verses, say that the all is one, [128b] and you offer fine, excellent proofs of it; he, for his part, says it is not many, and he too offers proofs—a great many, and great ones. So when one of you says 'one' and the other 'not many,' and each of you puts it in such a way as to seem to have said nothing the same, though you're saying nearly the same things, it looks as if you two have said what you've said over the heads of the rest of us."

ZENO "Yes, Socrates," said Zeno. "But you haven't caught the truth about the book in every respect. Mind you, [128c] like a Spartan hound you're good at chasing down and tracking the scent of what's said. But first of all, this escapes you: the book isn't so very pretentious as to have been written with the intention you describe, while hiding it from people as if it were achieving something grand. What you mentioned is something incidental. The truth is that these writings are a kind of defense of Parmenides' argument against those who try [128d] to make fun of it, saying that if it is one, the argument ends up with many absurd consequences that contradict it. "So this book argues against those who say there are many, and pays them back in the same coin, and more. It wants to show that their hypothesis, that there are many, would have even more absurd consequences than the hypothesis that it is one, if someone followed it out thoroughly. It was in that spirit of contention that I wrote it, when I was young; and once it was written someone stole it, so I didn't even get the chance to decide whether [128e] it should be brought out into the light or not. So that's what escapes you, Socrates: you think it was written not out of a young man's love of contention but out of an older man's love of honor. Otherwise, as I said, your picture of it wasn't bad."

SOCRATES "I accept that," said Socrates, "and I think it is as you say. But tell me this. Don't you believe that there is a form of likeness, itself by [129a] itself, and another, opposite to it, which is what unlike is? And that you and I and the other things we call 'many' partake of these two? And that things that partake of like-

ness become like, in that respect and to the extent that they partake, while things that partake of unlikeness become unlike, and things that partake of both become both? And if all things partake of both, opposites though they are, and by sharing in both are both like and unlike [129b] themselves, what's surprising about that? "If someone showed that the like things themselves become unlike, or the unlike things like, that, I think, would be a marvel. But if he shows that things which share in both of these have both properties, that doesn't seem at all strange to me, Zeno—any more than if someone shows that all things are one by sharing in the one, and that these same things are many by sharing, in their turn, in multitude. But if he demonstrates that the very thing that is one is many, and in turn that the many are [129c] one—that's when I'll be amazed. "And the same goes for all the rest. If he showed that the kinds and forms themselves have these opposite properties in themselves, that would deserve amazement. But if someone demonstrates that I am one and many, what's surprising about that? When he wants to show I'm many, he'll say that my right side is different from my left, and my front different from my back, and likewise my upper and lower parts—for I do, I suppose, share in multitude. When he wants to show I'm one, he'll say [129d] that of the seven of us here I am one human being, since I share in the one as well. So he shows that both are true. "So if someone tries to show that things like these—stones and sticks and the like—are many and one, we'll say that what he's showing to be many and one is a particular thing, not the one being many or the many one; and he isn't saying anything surprising, only what we would all agree on. But if someone first distinguishes as separate, themselves by themselves, the forms I was just talking about—likeness and unlikeness, for instance, multitude [129e] and the one, rest and motion, and everything of that kind—and then shows that among themselves they can be mixed together and separated, I for one," he said, "would be wonderfully amazed, Zeno. "I do think you've worked at these matters with real vigor. But I'd be far more impressed, as I say, if someone could show this same

puzzle among the forms themselves, [130a] woven together in all sorts of ways—show that, just as you two went through it among the things we see, so too among the things we grasp by reasoning."

FORMS OF WHAT?

Parmenides asks which things have forms: justice and beauty, surely, but human beings, fire, hair, mud?

PARMENIDES While Socrates was saying all this, Pythodorus said, he himself kept expecting Parmenides and Zeno to get annoyed at every point; but they paid close attention to him, and often glanced at each other and smiled, as if they admired Socrates. And that is just what Parmenides said when Socrates had finished. "Socrates," he said, "how much you deserve [130b] to be admired for your eagerness for argument! Now tell me: have you yourself drawn the distinction you describe—certain forms themselves on one side, and on the other the things that share in them? And do you think there is likeness itself, separate from the likeness we have, and one and many, and all the things you heard Zeno talk about just now?"

SOCRATES "I do," said Socrates.

PARMENIDES "And things like these too?" said Parmenides. "A form of the just, for instance, itself by itself, and of the beautiful and the good and all such things?"

SOCRATES "Yes," he said. [130c]

PARMENIDES "What about a form of human being, separate from us and from all those like us—some form itself of human being, or of fire, or of water?"

SOCRATES "I've often been at a loss about them, Parmenides," he said, "whether I should say the same about them as about the others, or something different."

PARMENIDES "And what about these, Socrates, which might actually seem ridiculous—hair, mud, dirt, or anything else utterly worthless and trivial? Are you at a loss whether to say

that of each of these [130d] too there is a separate form, something other than the things we handle, or not?"

SOCRATES "Not at all," said Socrates. "These things are just what we see them to be, and to think there's a form of them would, I'm afraid, be too absurd. Still, it has sometimes troubled me that the same might hold for everything. But whenever I take that position, I turn and run, afraid I might fall into some bottomless pit of nonsense and be ruined. So I come back to the things we were just saying have forms, and spend my time working on those." [130e]

PARMENIDES "That's because you're still young, Socrates," said Parmenides, "and philosophy hasn't yet taken hold of you as, in my opinion, it will one day, when you'll despise none of these things. As it is, because of your age, you still look to what people think. But tell me this. You think, as you say, that there are certain forms, and that these other things, by partaking of them, get their names from them—for instance, [131a] that by partaking of likeness they become like, of largeness large, and of beauty and justice just and beautiful?"

SOCRATES "Certainly," said Socrates.

WHOLE OR PART?

If many things share one form, does each get all or part? Socrates suggests a day; Parmenides, a sail.

PARMENIDES "Then each thing that partakes partakes either of the whole form or of a part of it? Or could there be any other kind of partaking apart from these?"

SOCRATES "How could there be?" he said.

PARMENIDES "Then do you think the whole form, being one, is in each of the many things? Or how?"

SOCRATES "Why, what's to stop it from being one, Parmenides?" said Socrates. [131b]

PARMENIDES "So, being one and the same, it will be in many separate things at once as a whole; and so it would be separate from itself."

SOCRATES "No, it wouldn't," he said, "if it were like a day. One and the same day is in many places at once, and yet it isn't in the least separate from itself. In that way each of the forms too could be one and the same in all things at once."

PARMENIDES "How neatly you make one and the same thing be in many places at once, Socrates," he said. "It's as if you spread a sail over many people and said it was one thing, whole, over many. Or isn't that the sort of thing you mean?" 131c

SOCRATES "Perhaps," he said.

PARMENIDES "Then would the whole sail be over each person, or a different part of it over each?"

SOCRATES "A part."

PARMENIDES "So the forms themselves are divisible, Socrates," he said, "and the things that share in them would share in a part. No longer would the whole be in each thing; a part of it would be in each."

SOCRATES "It does look that way."

PARMENIDES "Then will you be willing to say, Socrates, that our one form really is divided, and will still be one?"

SOCRATES "Not at all," he said.

PARMENIDES "No—look," he said. "If you divide largeness itself, and each 131d of the many large things is going to be large by a part of largeness smaller than largeness itself, won't that seem unreasonable?"

SOCRATES "Very much so," he said.

PARMENIDES "What about this? Suppose each thing gets some small part of the equal. Will it have something less than the equal itself by which its possessor will be equal to anything?"

SOCRATES "Impossible."

PARMENIDES "Or suppose one of us will have a part of the small. The small will be larger than this part, since the part is a part of it; and so the small itself will be larger. And whatever the part 131e taken away is added to will be smaller, not larger, than before."

SOCRATES "That certainly couldn't happen," he said.

PARMENIDES "So in what way, Socrates," he said, "will the other things partake of your forms, if they can partake of them neither by parts nor as wholes?"

SOCRATES "By Zeus," he said, "it doesn't seem at all easy to me to settle a question like that."

PARMENIDES "Well, then, what about this? How do you stand on it?"

SOCRATES "On what?" 132a

THE THIRD MAN

Seeing large things and largeness together seems to produce another form of largeness, and so on without end.

PARMENIDES "I think this is why you believe that each form is one. When a number of things seem large to you, there seems, perhaps, to be some one form, the same, as you look over them all; and from that you believe the large is one."

SOCRATES "That's true," he said.

PARMENIDES "What about the large itself and the other large things? If you look over them all in the same way with your soul, won't some one large thing appear again, by which all of these appear large?"

SOCRATES "It seems so."

PARMENIDES "So another form of largeness will appear, which has come into being alongside largeness itself and the things that share in it; and over all of these, again, 132b another, by which all of them will be large. And so each of your forms will no longer be one, but unlimited in number."

FORMS AS THOUGHTS

Socrates suggests each form is a thought in the soul; Parmenides asks what the thought is a thought of.

SOCRATES "But, Parmenides," said Socrates, "maybe each of these forms is a thought, and can't properly come to be anywhere except in souls. That way each would be one, at least, and would no longer have happen to it what was just described."

PARMENIDES "What then?" he said. "Is each of these thoughts one, but a thought of nothing?"

SOCRATES "No, that's impossible," he said.

PARMENIDES "Of something, then?"

SOCRATES "Yes." 132c

PARMENIDES "Of something that is, or of something that is not?"

SOCRATES "Of something that is."

PARMENIDES "Isn't it of some one thing, which that thought thinks of as present over all the cases—some one form?"

SOCRATES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "Then won't this thing that is thought to be one, always the same over all the cases, be a form?"

SOCRATES "That too looks necessary."

PARMENIDES "Well then," said Parmenides, "given that you say the other things share in the forms, won't you necessarily think either that each thing is made of thoughts and all things think, or that, being thoughts, they are unthinking?"

FORMS AS PATTERNS

Socrates proposes that forms are patterns things resemble, and resemblance starts the regress again.

SOCRATES "That doesn't make sense either," he said. "But, Parmenides, 132d it looks to me most likely to be like this: these

forms stand fixed in nature as patterns, and the other things resemble them and are likenesses of them; and this participation of the other things in the forms is nothing other than their being made like them."

PARMENIDES "Then if something resembles the form," he said, "can that form fail to be like what has been made like it, to the extent that it has been made like it? Or is there any way for what is like not to be like what is like it?"

SOCRATES "There isn't."

PARMENIDES "And isn't it absolutely necessary for what is like, and what it is like, to share in one and the [132e] same form?"

SOCRATES "It is necessary."

PARMENIDES "And whatever it is that like things share in to be like, won't that be the form itself?"

SOCRATES "Absolutely."

PARMENIDES "So it isn't possible for anything to be like the form, or for the form to be like anything else. Otherwise, alongside the form another form will always appear, [133a] and if that one is like anything, yet another; and there will never be an end to a new form always coming to be, if the form becomes like what shares in it."

SOCRATES "That's very true."

PARMENIDES "So it isn't by likeness that the other things partake of the forms; we have to look for something else by which they partake."

SOCRATES "It seems so."

THE GREATEST DIFFICULTY

If forms exist by themselves, we could not know them, and the gods could not know or rule us.

PARMENIDES "So do you see, Socrates," he said, "how great the difficulty is if someone marks off forms as being themselves by themselves?"

SOCRATES "I certainly do."

PARMENIDES "Well, you can be sure," he said, "that you haven't yet, so to speak, laid hold of [133b] how great the difficulty is, if you're going to set down one form for each of the things that are, each time marking it off as something."

SOCRATES "How so?" he said.

PARMENIDES "There are many other reasons," he said, "but the greatest is this. Suppose someone were to say that the forms, if they are such as we say they must be, can't even be known. No one could show the person who says this that he's wrong, unless the one disputing with him happened to have wide experience and natural ability, and was willing to follow someone working it out through a great many steps from far back. Otherwise the one who insists [133c] they are unknowable would remain unpersuaded."

SOCRATES "Why is that, Parmenides?" said Socrates.

PARMENIDES "Because, Socrates, I think that you, or anyone else who holds that there is a being of each thing itself by itself, would agree, first of all, that none of them is in us."

SOCRATES "Yes—how could it still be itself by itself?" said Socrates.

PARMENIDES "Well said," he said.

"Then those forms that are what they are in relation to one another have their being in relation to themselves, and not in relation to the things [133d] among us—whether likenesses or whatever one takes them to be—which we share in and so are called by their various names. And these things among us, which share their names with the forms, are in turn what they are in relation to themselves, not in relation to the forms; and all the things named in this way are of themselves, not of the forms."

SOCRATES "What do you mean?" said Socrates.

PARMENIDES "For instance," said Parmenides, "if one of us is someone's master or slave, he is surely not the slave of master

itself, what a master is, [133e] nor is the master the master of slave itself, what a slave is. Being a human being, he is both of these things to a human being. Mastery itself, on the other hand, is what it is in relation to slavery itself, and in the same way slavery itself is slavery to mastery itself. The things in our world don't have their power in relation to those things, nor do those things have theirs in relation to us. Rather, as I say, those things are what they are of themselves and in relation to themselves, and [134a] the things in our world are likewise what they are in relation to themselves. Or don't you understand what I'm saying?"

SOCRATES "Of course I understand," said Socrates.

PARMENIDES "Then knowledge too," he said, "knowledge itself, what knowledge is, would be knowledge of that truth itself, what truth is?"

SOCRATES "Certainly."

PARMENIDES "And again, each of the kinds of knowledge, as it is, would be knowledge of one of the things that are, as it is. Or not?"

SOCRATES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "And the knowledge in our world would be knowledge of the truth in our world, and again each kind of knowledge in our world would turn out to be knowledge of one of the things [134b] that are in our world?"

SOCRATES "Necessarily."

PARMENIDES "But the forms themselves, as you agree, we don't have, and they can't be in our world."

SOCRATES "No, they can't."

PARMENIDES "And the kinds themselves, what each of them is, are known, I take it, by the form of knowledge itself?"

SOCRATES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "Which we don't have."

SOCRATES "No, we don't."

PARMENIDES "So none of the forms is known by us, since we don't share in knowledge itself."

SOCRATES "It seems not."

PARMENIDES "Then the beautiful itself, what it is, is unknowable to us, and 134c the good, and all the things we take to be forms in themselves."

SOCRATES "It looks that way."

PARMENIDES "Now consider something still more alarming than this."

SOCRATES "What's that?"

PARMENIDES "You would say, I suppose, that if there is a kind, knowledge itself, it is far more precise than the knowledge in our world—and the same with beauty and all the others."

SOCRATES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "Then if anything at all shares in knowledge itself, wouldn't you say that a god, more than anyone, has this most precise knowledge?"

SOCRATES "Necessarily." 134d

PARMENIDES "Then will the god, in turn, be able to know the things in our world, having knowledge itself?"

SOCRATES "Why not?"

PARMENIDES "Because," said Parmenides, "we've agreed, Socrates, that those forms don't have the power they have in relation to the things in our world, nor do the things in our world have theirs in relation to them, but each set has it only in relation to itself."

SOCRATES "Yes, we did agree to that."

PARMENIDES "Then if this most precise mastery and this most precise knowledge belong to the god, their mastery would never master us, nor would 134e their knowledge know us or anything else in our world. Just as we don't rule them with the rule we have, and don't know anything of the divine with our know-

ledge, so they in turn, by the same argument, are neither our masters nor do they know human affairs, gods though they are."

SOCRATES "But I'm afraid," he said, "the argument may be far too astonishing, if it's going to rob the god of knowing."

PARMENIDES "And yet, Socrates," said Parmenides, "these difficulties, and [135a] a great many more besides, are bound to attach to the forms, if there are these forms of the things that are and one marks off each form as something itself. The result is that whoever hears this is perplexed and disputes that they exist, and argues that even if they very much do exist, they must necessarily be unknowable to human nature. And in saying this he seems to have a point and, as we said just now, is astonishingly hard to win over. It will take a very gifted man to be able to learn that there is a kind of each thing, a being itself [135b] by itself, and someone more remarkable still to discover all this and be able to teach it to someone else, having sifted it all through thoroughly."

SOCRATES "I agree with you, Parmenides," said Socrates. "What you say is very much to my mind."

WHY FORMS ARE STILL NEEDED

Without forms there is nothing for thought to fix on, and discussion itself is destroyed.

PARMENIDES "But on the other hand, Socrates," said Parmenides, "if someone, with his eye on all the difficulties we've just raised and others like them, won't allow that there are forms of the things that are, and won't mark off a form of each single thing, he won't have anywhere to turn his thought, since he doesn't allow [135c] that each of the things that are has a form that is always the same. And in this way he'll destroy the power of discussion altogether. I think you've been especially aware of this."

SOCRATES "That's true," he said.

PARMENIDES "Then what will you do about philosophy? Where will you turn while these things remain unknown?"

SOCRATES "I don't think I can see my way clearly at all—not at present, anyway."

TRAINING FOR PHILOSOPHY

Socrates needs exercise first: follow out what results from each hypothesis and from its denial.

PARMENIDES "That's because you're trying too early, Socrates," he said, "before you've been trained, to define something beautiful, and just, and good, and each one [135d] of the forms. I noticed it the other day too, listening to you talking here with Aristoteles. The impulse that drives you toward arguments is fine and divine, believe me. But stretch yourself and train more, while you're still young, through what seems useless and what most people call idle chatter. Otherwise the truth will escape you."

SOCRATES "Then what is the method of this training, Parmenides?" he said.

PARMENIDES "The one you heard from Zeno," he said. "Except that I did admire this [135e] in what you said to him: you wouldn't allow the wandering inquiry to be carried on among the things we see, or about them, but only about those things that one would grasp above all by reason and would consider to be forms."

SOCRATES "Yes, because it seems to me," he said, "that in that way it's no trouble at all to show that the things that are are both like and unlike, or have anything else whatever happen to them."

PARMENIDES "And rightly so," he said. "But in addition to that you must also do this: not only hypothesize that each thing is and examine the consequences [136a] of the hypothesis, but also hypothesize that this same thing is not, if you want to be more fully trained."

SOCRATES "How do you mean?" he said.

PARMENIDES "For example," he said, "if you like, take the hypothesis Zeno proposed: if there are many, what must follow both for the many themselves, in relation to themselves and in relation to the one, and for the one, in relation to itself and in relation to the many. And again, if there are not many, you must examine in turn what will follow both for the one and for the many, both in relation [136b] to themselves and in relation to each other. And yet again, if you hypothesize that likeness is, or that it is not, you must examine what will follow on each hypothesis both for the things hypothesized themselves and for the others, both in relation to themselves and in relation to each other." "And the same goes for unlike, and for motion and rest, and for coming to be and perishing, and for being itself and not-being. In a word, whatever you hypothesize as being or as not being, or as having any other property whatever, you must examine the consequences [136c] in relation to itself and in relation to each one of the others, whichever you choose, and in relation to more of them and to all of them together in the same way. And again you must examine the others, in relation to themselves and in relation to whatever else you choose each time, whether you hypothesize what you were hypothesizing as being or as not being—if you're going to train yourself completely and discern the truth in the full sense."

SOCRATES "That's an impossible task you're describing, Parmenides," he said, "and I don't quite understand. Why don't you go through it yourself, hypothesizing something, so that I can understand better?" [136d]

PARMENIDES "That's a big job you're assigning, Socrates," he said, "for a man my age."

SOCRATES "Well then, Zeno," said Socrates, "why don't you go through it for us?"

ZENO And Zeno, he said, laughed and said, "Let's ask Parmenides himself, Socrates. I'm afraid what he's talking about is no small matter. Or don't you see how big a job you're assigning? If there were more of us, it wouldn't be right to ask him. It isn't fit-

ting to talk about such things in front of a lot of people, especially for a man his age. [136e] Most people don't know that without this thorough tour through everything, this wandering, it's impossible to hit upon the truth and gain understanding. So, Parmenides, I join Socrates in asking, so that I too can hear you after all this time."

PARMENIDES AGREES TO PERFORM

Pressed by everyone, the old man compares himself to an aging racehorse and takes young Aristoteles as his respondent.

PARMENIDES When Zeno had said this, Antiphon said that Pythodorus said he himself begged Parmenides, and so did Aristoteles and the others, to demonstrate what he meant and not refuse. So Parmenides said, "I have to do as you ask. And yet I feel I'm in the same state as the horse in Ibycus' poem. [137a] Ibycus compared himself to that horse—a champion, getting on in years, about to race in harness and trembling at what lay ahead because he knew it from experience—and said that he too, old as he was, was being forced against his will to go in for love. I too, when I remember, feel very much afraid of how a man my age is to swim across such a vast and formidable sea of arguments. Still, I must oblige you, since, as Zeno says, we're among ourselves. So where shall we [137b] begin, and what shall we hypothesize first?[7] "Or would you like me—since we seem to have agreed to play this laborious game—to begin with myself and my own hypothesis, hypothesizing about the one itself, whether it is one or not one, and asking what must follow?"

ZENO "Certainly," said Zeno.

PARMENIDES "Then who will answer me?" he said. "The youngest? He'd be least likely to make difficulties, and most likely to answer what he thinks. And at the same time his answering would give me a breather." [137c]

7 Ibycus was a lyric poet of the sixth century BC; in a surviving fragment he compares himself, an old man caught by love once more, to an aging prize horse yoked again to the chariot.

ARISTOTELES "I'm ready for this, Parmenides," said Aristoteles. "It's me you mean when you say the youngest. Ask away—I'll answer."

HYPOTHESIS 1: IF THE ONE IS ONE

A strictly single one has no parts, shape, place, motion, likeness or time, and so cannot even be.

PARMENIDES "Very well," he said. "If it is one, the one wouldn't be many, would it?"[8]

ARISTOTELES "How could it?"

PARMENIDES "Then there can't be a part of it, nor can it be a whole."

ARISTOTELES "Why is that?"

PARMENIDES "A part, I take it, is part of a whole."

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "And what about the whole? Wouldn't a whole be that from which no part is missing?"

ARISTOTELES "Certainly."

PARMENIDES "So either way the one would be made up of parts, both if it's a whole and if it has parts."

ARISTOTELES "Necessarily."

PARMENIDES "So either way 137d the one would thus be many and not one."

ARISTOTELES "True."

PARMENIDES "But it has to be not many but one."

ARISTOTELES "It has to."

PARMENIDES "So it won't be a whole, nor will it have parts, if the one is to be one."

ARISTOTELES "No."

8 "The one" is unity itself, the subject of Parmenides' own hypothesis; the Greek for "if it is one" can also mean "if one is."

PARMENIDES "Then if it has no part, it couldn't have a beginning or an end or a middle; for such things would already be parts of it."

ARISTOTELES "Right."

PARMENIDES "And again, an end and a beginning are the limit of each thing."

ARISTOTELES "Of course."

PARMENIDES "So the one is unlimited, if it has neither beginning nor end."

ARISTOTELES "Unlimited."

PARMENIDES "So it's also without shape; for it shares in neither [137e] round nor straight."

ARISTOTELES "How so?"

PARMENIDES "Round, I take it, is that whose extremities are everywhere equally distant from the middle."

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "And straight is that whose middle is in front of both extremities."

ARISTOTELES "So it is."

PARMENIDES "Then the one would have parts and would be many, whether it shared in a straight shape or a round one."

ARISTOTELES "Certainly."

PARMENIDES "So it's neither straight nor [138a] round, since it doesn't have parts either."

ARISTOTELES "Right."

PARMENIDES "And again, being like this, it wouldn't be anywhere; for it would be neither in another nor in itself."

ARISTOTELES "How is that?"

PARMENIDES "If it were in another, it would presumably be contained all around by that in which it was, and would touch it at many places and with many points. But for what is one and

partless and doesn't share in circle, it's impossible to be touched all around at many places."

ARISTOTELES "Impossible."

PARMENIDES "But then if it were in itself, what contained it would be none other than itself, if it really were 138b in itself; for it's impossible for something to be in something that doesn't contain it."

ARISTOTELES "Yes, that's impossible."

PARMENIDES "Then what contains would be one thing, and what is contained another; for the same thing won't, as a whole, both undergo and do the same thing at once. And so the one would no longer be one but two."

ARISTOTELES "No, it wouldn't."

PARMENIDES "So the one isn't anywhere, since it's neither in itself nor in another."

ARISTOTELES "It isn't."

PARMENIDES "Now see whether, being in this condition, it can be at rest or in motion."

ARISTOTELES "Why couldn't it?"

PARMENIDES "Because if it were in motion, it would either be carried along or 138c be altered; for those are the only motions."

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "But if the one were altered from itself, it surely couldn't still be one."

ARISTOTELES "It couldn't."

PARMENIDES "So it doesn't move by alteration, at any rate."

ARISTOTELES "Apparently not."

PARMENIDES "Then is it by being carried along?"

ARISTOTELES "Perhaps."

PARMENIDES "And if the one were carried along, it would either spin around in a circle in the same place or exchange one place for another."

ARISTOTELES "Necessarily."

PARMENIDES "Now if it spins in a circle, it must be poised on a middle and have other parts of itself carried around the middle. But for something to which neither a middle nor parts belong, 138d what way could there ever be for it to be carried in a circle on a middle?"

ARISTOTELES "None."

PARMENIDES "Then does it change place, coming to be now here, now there, and move in that way?"

ARISTOTELES "If it moves at all, yes."

PARMENIDES "But didn't it turn out that it's impossible for it to be in anything?"

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "Then is it even more impossible for it to come to be in something?"

ARISTOTELES "I don't see how."

PARMENIDES "If something comes to be in something, mustn't it be not yet in that thing, since it is still coming to be in it, and yet no longer entirely outside it, if it is already coming to be in it?"

ARISTOTELES "Necessarily."

PARMENIDES "So if anything 138e is to undergo this, only something with parts could undergo it; for some of it would already be in that thing and some outside, at the same time. But what has no parts surely can't in any way be, as a whole, at the same time neither inside something nor outside it."

ARISTOTELES "True."

PARMENIDES "And for what has no parts and isn't a whole either, isn't it far more impossible still to come to be in some-

thing, since it can come to be in it neither part by part nor as a whole?"

ARISTOTELES "Apparently."

PARMENIDES "So it doesn't change place by going somewhere and coming to be in [139a] something, nor by spinning in the same place, nor by being altered."

ARISTOTELES "It seems not."

PARMENIDES "So the one is unmoved with respect to every kind of motion."

ARISTOTELES "Unmoved."

PARMENIDES "But we also say that it's impossible for it to be in anything."

ARISTOTELES "Yes, we do."

PARMENIDES "So it's never in the same either."

ARISTOTELES "Why is that?"

PARMENIDES "Because then it would already be in that thing—the same—in which it is."

ARISTOTELES "Certainly."

PARMENIDES "But it turned out that it can be neither in itself nor in another."

ARISTOTELES "No, it can't."

PARMENIDES "So the one is never in the same."

ARISTOTELES "It seems not."

PARMENIDES [139b] "But what is never in the same neither keeps still nor stands at rest."

ARISTOTELES "No, it can't."

PARMENIDES "So the one, it seems, is neither at rest nor in motion."

ARISTOTELES "It certainly doesn't appear to be."

PARMENIDES "Nor will it be the same as another or as itself; nor again would it be different from itself or from another."

ARISTOTELES "How so?"

PARMENIDES "If it were different from itself, I take it, it would be different from one and would not be one."

ARISTOTELES "True."

PARMENIDES "And again, if it were the same as another, it would be that other and wouldn't be 139c itself; so in this case too it wouldn't be just what it is, one, but different from one."

ARISTOTELES "No, it wouldn't."

PARMENIDES "So it won't be the same as another, or different from itself."

ARISTOTELES "No."

PARMENIDES "But it won't be different from another, as long as it is one. For to be different from something belongs not to one but only to the different, to be different from another, and to nothing else."

ARISTOTELES "Right."

PARMENIDES "So it won't be different by being one. Or do you think it will?"

ARISTOTELES "No indeed."

PARMENIDES "But if it isn't different by this, it won't be by itself; and if not by itself, then it itself won't be different; and it itself, being in no way different, will be different 139d from nothing."

ARISTOTELES "Right."

PARMENIDES "Nor again will it be the same as itself."

ARISTOTELES "Why not?"

PARMENIDES "The very nature of the one is surely not also the nature of the same."

ARISTOTELES "Why is that?"

PARMENIDES "Because when something comes to be the same as something, it doesn't come to be one."

ARISTOTELES "What, then?"

PARMENIDES "When it comes to be the same as the many, it must come to be many and not one."

ARISTOTELES "True."

PARMENIDES "But if the one and the same differed in no way, then whenever something came to be the same, it would always come to be one, and whenever it came to be one, the same." 139e

ARISTOTELES "Certainly."

PARMENIDES "So if the one is to be the same as itself, it won't be one with itself; and so, being one, it won't be one. But this is impossible. So it's impossible for the one either to be different from another or to be the same as itself."

ARISTOTELES "Impossible."

PARMENIDES "So the one would be neither different from nor the same as either itself or another."

ARISTOTELES "No, it wouldn't."

PARMENIDES "Nor again will it be like anything or unlike, either itself or another."

ARISTOTELES "Why is that?"

PARMENIDES "Because what has the property of the same, I take it, is like."

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "But the same turned out to be separate in nature from the one." 140a

ARISTOTELES "Yes, it did."

PARMENIDES "But if the one had any property apart from being one, it would have the property of being more than one, and that's impossible."

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "So in no way can the one have the property of being the same, either as another or as itself."

ARISTOTELES "Apparently not."

PARMENIDES "So it can't be like either another or itself."

ARISTOTELES "It seems not."

PARMENIDES "Nor again does the one have the property of being different; for in that way too it would have the property of being more than one."

ARISTOTELES "Yes, more."

PARMENIDES "Now what has the property of different, either from itself or from another, would be unlike either itself 140b or another, if what has the property of the same is like."

ARISTOTELES "Right."

PARMENIDES "But the one, it seems, since it in no way has the property of different, is in no way unlike either itself or another."

ARISTOTELES "No, it isn't."

PARMENIDES "So the one would be neither like nor unlike, either another or itself."

ARISTOTELES "Apparently not."

PARMENIDES "And again, being like this, it will be neither equal nor unequal, either to itself or to another."

ARISTOTELES "How so?"

PARMENIDES "If it's equal, it will be of the same measures as whatever it's equal to."

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "And if it's greater 140c or less, then compared with things it's commensurable with, it will have more measures than the lesser ones and fewer than the greater."

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "And compared with things it isn't commensurable with, it will be of smaller measures than some and of greater measures than others."

ARISTOTELES "Of course."

PARMENIDES "Isn't it impossible for what doesn't share in the same to be either of the same measures or of the same anything else whatever?"

ARISTOTELES "Impossible."

PARMENIDES "So it wouldn't be equal either to itself or to another, since it isn't of the same measures."

ARISTOTELES "It certainly doesn't appear to be."

PARMENIDES "But if it were of more measures or fewer, it would have as many parts as it has measures; and 140d so again it will no longer be one but as many as its measures."

ARISTOTELES "Right."

PARMENIDES "But if it were of a single measure, it would come to be equal to that measure. And it turned out to be impossible for it to be equal to anything."

ARISTOTELES "Yes, it did."

PARMENIDES "So since it shares in neither one measure nor many nor few, and doesn't share in the same at all, it will never, it seems, be equal either to itself or to another. Nor again will it be greater or smaller than either itself or something else."

ARISTOTELES "That's absolutely so." 140e

PARMENIDES "What about this? Does it seem possible to anyone that the one is older or younger, or the same age?"

ARISTOTELES "Why on earth not?"

PARMENIDES "Because, I take it, if it has the same age as itself or as another, it will share in equality of time and in likeness—and we said the one has no share in these, neither likeness nor equality."

ARISTOTELES "Yes, we did say that."

PARMENIDES "And further, we said this too: that it doesn't share in unlikeness or inequality."

ARISTOTELES "Certainly."

PARMENIDES "Then how [141a] will it be possible for something like that to be older or younger than anything, or the same age as anything?"

ARISTOTELES "There's no way."

PARMENIDES "So the one would not be younger or older, or the same age, either as itself or as another."

ARISTOTELES "Apparently not."

PARMENIDES "Then could the one not even be in time at all, if it is like this? Or isn't it necessary, if something is in time, that it is always becoming older than itself?"

ARISTOTELES "It is necessary."

PARMENIDES "And isn't the older always older than a younger?"

ARISTOTELES "Of course." [141b]

PARMENIDES "So what is becoming older than itself is at the same time becoming younger than itself too, if it's going to have something it is becoming older than."

ARISTOTELES "What do you mean?"

PARMENIDES "This. Nothing that differs from another has to become different from it when that other is already different. Rather, from what already is different it already is different; from what has become different it has become different; from what will be different it will be different. But from what is becoming different it has neither become different, nor will be, nor yet is: it is becoming different, and [141c] is not different in any other way."

ARISTOTELES "Yes, that's necessary."

PARMENIDES "But the older is a difference from the younger, and from nothing else."

ARISTOTELES "Yes, it is."

PARMENIDES "So what is becoming older than itself must also at the same time be becoming younger than itself."

ARISTOTELES "It seems so."

PARMENIDES "But it must also become neither for more time than itself nor for less; it must become, and be, and have become, and be going to be, for a time equal to itself."

ARISTOTELES "Yes, that's necessary too."

PARMENIDES "So it is necessary, it seems, that each of the things that are in time 141d and share in this sort of thing has the same age as itself, and is becoming at once both older and younger than itself."

ARISTOTELES "It looks that way."

PARMENIDES "But the one, we saw, had no share in any attributes of this kind."

ARISTOTELES "No, it didn't."

PARMENIDES "So it has no share in time either, and it is not in any time."

ARISTOTELES "No, it isn't—at least as the argument concludes."

PARMENIDES "What then? Don't 'was' and 'has come to be' and 'was coming to be' seem to signify participation in time gone by?"

ARISTOTELES "Very much so."

PARMENIDES 141e "And 'will be' and 'will come to be' and 'will be brought to be'—don't they signify the time hereafter, the time to come?"

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "And 'is' and 'is coming to be'—don't they signify the time now present?"

ARISTOTELES "Certainly."

PARMENIDES "So if the one has no share in any time in any way, then it never came to be, nor was coming to be, nor ever was; nor has it now come to be, nor is it coming to be, nor is it; nor will it hereafter come to be, nor be brought to be, nor be."

ARISTOTELES "Very true."

PARMENIDES "Now, is there any way something could share in being other than in one of these ways?"

ARISTOTELES "There isn't."

PARMENIDES "So the one in no way shares in being."

ARISTOTELES "It seems not."

PARMENIDES "So the one in no way is."

ARISTOTELES "Apparently not."

PARMENIDES "So it isn't even in such a way as to be one, since then it would already be, and share in being. Rather, it seems, the one neither is one nor is, if we're to trust 142a an argument of this kind."

ARISTOTELES "It looks that way."

PARMENIDES "But if something is not, could anything belong to this thing that is not, or be of it?"

ARISTOTELES "How could it?"

PARMENIDES "So no name belongs to it, nor any account, nor any knowledge, nor perception, nor opinion."

ARISTOTELES "Apparently not."

PARMENIDES "So it isn't named or spoken of, or the object of opinion or knowledge, nor does any of the things that are perceive it."

ARISTOTELES "It seems not."

PARMENIDES "Now, is it possible that this is how things stand with the one?"

ARISTOTELES "I don't think so." 142b

HYPOTHESIS 2: IF THE ONE IS

A one that is has parts and number, is limited and unlimited, and both moves and rests.

PARMENIDES "Then would you like us to go back to the hypothesis and start again from the beginning, in case something different appears to us as we go back over it?"

ARISTOTELES "Yes, I'd very much like that."

PARMENIDES "Well, if the one is, as we say, we must agree on what follows about it, whatever that turns out to be. Isn't that so?"

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "Look at it from the beginning, then. If the one is, can it be, and yet not share in being?"

ARISTOTELES "It can't."

PARMENIDES "Then there would also be a being of the one, and it would not be the same as the one. Otherwise it wouldn't be the being of that thing, nor would [142c] that thing, the one, share in it; saying 'one is' would be just like saying 'one one.' But as it is, our hypothesis isn't what must follow if one is one, but if one is. Isn't that so?"

ARISTOTELES "Certainly."

PARMENIDES "Then 'is' signifies something other than 'one'?"

ARISTOTELES "Necessarily."

PARMENIDES "So when someone says, in short, 'one is,' would this be what's meant: nothing other than that the one shares in being?"

ARISTOTELES "Certainly."

PARMENIDES "Then let's say once more what will follow if the one is. Consider whether this hypothesis must not signify that the one is such as [142d] to have parts."

ARISTOTELES "How?"

PARMENIDES "Like this. If 'is' is said of the one which is, and 'one' of the being which is one, and being and the one are not the same, but belong to that same thing we hypothesized, the one that is, then mustn't the whole be the one that is, and one and being come to be its parts?"

ARISTOTELES "Necessarily."

PARMENIDES "Now, shall we call each of these parts just a part, or must a part be called a part of the whole?"

ARISTOTELES "Of the whole."

PARMENIDES "So whatever is one is a whole, and has a part."

ARISTOTELES "Certainly."

PARMENIDES "What then? Of these two parts [142e] of the one that is, one and being, does either ever fall away from the other—the one from the part being, or being from the part one?"

ARISTOTELES "It couldn't."

PARMENIDES "So again each of the parts possesses both one and being, and the smallest part in turn comes to consist of two parts; and by the same reasoning it goes on like this forever: whatever part turns up always possesses these two parts, since the one always possesses being, and being the one. So it must [143a] always be becoming two, and never be one."

ARISTOTELES "Absolutely."

PARMENIDES "Then in this way wouldn't the one that is be unlimited in multitude?"

ARISTOTELES "It seems so."

PARMENIDES "Come then, take it this way too."

ARISTOTELES "How?"

PARMENIDES "We say the one shares in being, and that's why it is?"

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "And it's for this reason that the one that is turned out to be many."

ARISTOTELES "That's right."

PARMENIDES "Well then: the one itself, which we say shares in being—if we take it in thought alone, by itself, apart from this thing we say it shares in, will it appear only one, or will this same thing appear many as well?"

ARISTOTELES "One, I'd think."

PARMENIDES 143b "Let's see. Isn't it necessary that its being is one thing and it itself another, if the one is not being but, as one, has come to share in being?"

ARISTOTELES "Necessarily."

PARMENIDES "Then if being is one thing and the one another, it isn't by being one that the one is different from being, nor by being being that being is other than the one. They are different from each other by the different and the other."

ARISTOTELES "Certainly."

PARMENIDES "So the different is not the same as either the one or being."

ARISTOTELES "How could it be?" 143c

PARMENIDES "What then? If we pick out from them, say, being and the different, or being and the one, or the one and the different, in each choice don't we pick out a pair that can rightly be called 'both'?"

ARISTOTELES "How do you mean?"

PARMENIDES "Like this. We can say 'being'?"

ARISTOTELES "We can."

PARMENIDES "And again say 'one'?"

ARISTOTELES "That too."

PARMENIDES "Then hasn't each of the two been spoken of?"

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "And when I say 'being and one,' don't I speak of both?"

ARISTOTELES "Certainly."

PARMENIDES "And also if I say 'being and different' or 'different and one'—so that in every case I'm speaking of both, each time?"

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES 143d "And whatever things are rightly called 'both'—can they be both and not two?"

ARISTOTELES "They can't."

PARMENIDES "And whatever things are two—is there any way for each of the two not to be one?"

ARISTOTELES "None."

PARMENIDES "So since each of these turns out to be in a pair, each would also be one."

ARISTOTELES "Apparently."

PARMENIDES "And if each of them is one, then when any one at all is added to any pair whatever, doesn't the total become three?"

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "And isn't three odd, and two even?"

ARISTOTELES "Of course."

PARMENIDES "What about this? If there are two, mustn't there 143e also be twice, and if there are three, three times—given that two is twice one, and three is three times one?"

ARISTOTELES "Necessarily."

PARMENIDES "And if there are two and twice, mustn't there be twice two? And if there are three and three times, mustn't there in turn be three times three?"

ARISTOTELES "Of course."

PARMENIDES "What about this? If there are three and there is twice, and there are two and there is three times, mustn't there be twice three and three times two?"

ARISTOTELES "There certainly must."

PARMENIDES "So there would be evens an even number of times, and 144a odds an odd number of times, and evens an odd number of times, and odds an even number of times."

ARISTOTELES "That's so."

PARMENIDES "If this is how things are, then, do you think there's any number left over that need not be?"

ARISTOTELES "None at all."

PARMENIDES "So if one is, there must be number too."

ARISTOTELES "Necessarily."

PARMENIDES "But if there is number, there would be many things, an unlimited multitude of things that are. Or doesn't number turn out to be unlimited in multitude, and to share in being?"

ARISTOTELES "It certainly does."

PARMENIDES "Then if all number shares in being, each part of number would also share in it?"

ARISTOTELES "Yes." 144b

PARMENIDES "So being has been distributed over all things, which are many, and is missing from none of the things that are, neither the smallest nor the largest? Or is it absurd even to ask that? For how could being be missing from any of the things that are?"

ARISTOTELES "There's no way."

PARMENIDES "So it has been chopped up into things as small and as large as can be, and that are in every way; it is the most divided of all things, and there are 144c endless parts of being."

ARISTOTELES "That's so."

PARMENIDES "So its parts are the most numerous."

ARISTOTELES "They certainly are."

PARMENIDES "Well then: is there any of them that is a part of being and yet not a single part?"

ARISTOTELES "How could that happen?"

PARMENIDES "No; if it is at all, I suppose, it must always, as long as it is, be some one thing; it can't be no thing."

ARISTOTELES "Necessarily."

PARMENIDES "So the one is present to every single part of being, not missing from any part, smaller or larger or any other."

ARISTOTELES "That's right."

PARMENIDES "Now, being one, 144d is it in many places at once as a whole? Look at this closely."

ARISTOTELES "I am looking, and I see that it's impossible."

PARMENIDES "So it's divided, if it isn't a whole; for surely there's no other way it could be present to all the parts of being at once than divided."

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "And what is divided must, quite necessarily, be as many as its parts."

ARISTOTELES "Necessarily."

PARMENIDES "So we weren't speaking the truth just now when we said that being had been distributed into the most numerous parts. It hasn't been distributed into more parts than the one, but into 144e equally many, it seems, as the one. For being doesn't fall short of the one, nor the one of being; the two are always equal throughout everything."

ARISTOTELES "It appears absolutely so."

PARMENIDES "So the one itself, chopped up by being, is many and unlimited in multitude."

ARISTOTELES "Apparently."

PARMENIDES "So not only is the one that is many; the one itself too, distributed by being, must be many."

ARISTOTELES "Absolutely."

PARMENIDES "And further, since the parts are parts of a whole, the one would be limited with respect to the whole. Or aren't the [145a] parts contained by the whole?"

ARISTOTELES "Necessarily."

PARMENIDES "But what contains would be a limit."

ARISTOTELES "Of course."

PARMENIDES "So the one that is is, I take it, both one and many, both whole and parts, and both limited and unlimited in multitude."

ARISTOTELES "Apparently."

PARMENIDES "Then since it's limited, doesn't it also have extremities?"

ARISTOTELES "Necessarily."

PARMENIDES "What about this? If it's a whole, wouldn't it also have a beginning, a middle, and an end? Or can anything be a whole without these three? And if any one of them is missing from something, will it still consent to be a whole?"

ARISTOTELES "It won't."

PARMENIDES "So the one, it seems, would also have a beginning, [145b] an end, and a middle."

ARISTOTELES "It would."

PARMENIDES "But the middle is equally distant from the extremities; otherwise it wouldn't be a middle."

ARISTOTELES "No, it wouldn't."

PARMENIDES "So, being like this, the one would also share in some shape, it seems—either straight or round or some mixture of the two."

ARISTOTELES "Yes, it would."

PARMENIDES "Then, being in this condition, won't it be both in itself and in another?"

ARISTOTELES "How?"

PARMENIDES "Each of the parts, I take it, is in the whole, and none is outside the whole."

ARISTOTELES "That's so."

PARMENIDES "And all the parts are contained by the 145c whole?"

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "And the one is all its own parts, and neither more nor less than all."

ARISTOTELES "No, neither."

PARMENIDES "And isn't the one also the whole?"

ARISTOTELES "Of course."

PARMENIDES "So if all the parts are in a whole, and the one is both all of them and the whole itself, and all of them are contained by the whole, then the one would be contained by the one; and in this way the one itself would thereby be in itself."

ARISTOTELES "Apparently."

PARMENIDES "But then again, the whole is not in the parts, neither in all of them nor 145d in any one. For if it's in all, it must also be in one, since if it weren't in some one, it surely could no longer be in all. And if this one is one of them all, and the whole isn't in it, how will it still be in them all?"

ARISTOTELES "There's no way."

PARMENIDES "Nor is it in some of the parts. For if the whole were in some, the greater would be in the lesser, which is impossible."

ARISTOTELES "Yes, impossible."

PARMENIDES "And if the whole is not in several, or in one, or in all the parts, mustn't it be in something different, or else no longer be 145e anywhere at all?"

ARISTOTELES "Necessarily."

PARMENIDES "Now, if it were nowhere, it would be nothing; but since it is a whole, and isn't in itself, mustn't it be in another?"

ARISTOTELES "Certainly."

PARMENIDES "So insofar as the one is a whole, it is in another; but insofar as it is all the parts, it is in itself. And so the one must be both in itself and in something different."

ARISTOTELES "Necessarily."

PARMENIDES "With this nature, then, mustn't the one be both in motion and at rest?"

ARISTOTELES "How?"

PARMENIDES "It's at rest, I suppose, if it is itself in itself. [146a] For being in one thing and not passing out of it, it would be in the same thing—in itself."

ARISTOTELES "Yes, it is."

PARMENIDES "And what is always in the same thing must surely always be at rest."

ARISTOTELES "Certainly."

PARMENIDES "What about this? With what is always in something different, isn't it the opposite: mustn't it never be in the same thing, and never being in the same thing, not be at rest either, and not being at rest, be in motion?"

ARISTOTELES "Just so."

PARMENIDES "So the one, being always both in itself and in something different, must always be both in motion and at rest."

ARISTOTELES "Apparently."

SAME AND DIFFERENT, LIKE AND UNLIKE

The one that is proves the same as and different from itself and others, and like and unlike.

PARMENIDES "And further, it must be the same as itself and different [146b] from itself, and likewise be both the same as and dif-

ferent from the others, given that it has the earlier attributes as well."

ARISTOTELES "How?"

PARMENIDES "Everything, I suppose, stands to everything in this way: either it is the same or different; or, if it is neither the same nor different, it would be a part of what it stands in this relation to, or else a whole in relation to it as a part."

ARISTOTELES "Apparently."

PARMENIDES "Now, is the one a part of itself?"

ARISTOTELES "Not at all."

PARMENIDES "So it wouldn't be a whole of itself, as if in relation to a part, either—for then it would be a part in relation to itself."

ARISTOTELES "No, it [146c] couldn't."

PARMENIDES "But is the one different from one?"

ARISTOTELES "Certainly not."

PARMENIDES "So it wouldn't be different from itself either."

ARISTOTELES "No, it wouldn't."

PARMENIDES "So if it is neither different from, nor whole, nor part in relation to itself, mustn't it then be the same as itself?"

ARISTOTELES "Necessarily."

PARMENIDES "What about this? If something is elsewhere than itself while it is also in the same place as itself, mustn't it be different from itself, if it is also going to be elsewhere?"

ARISTOTELES "I think so."

PARMENIDES "And that is how the one turned out to be: both in itself and at the same time in something different."

ARISTOTELES "Yes, it did."

PARMENIDES "So in this way, it seems, [146d] the one would be different from itself."

ARISTOTELES "It seems so."

PARMENIDES "Well then: if something is different from something, won't it be different from what is different?"

ARISTOTELES "Necessarily."

PARMENIDES "And aren't all the things that are not one different from the one, and the one from the things that are not one?"

ARISTOTELES "Of course."

PARMENIDES "So the one would be different from the others."

ARISTOTELES "Different."

PARMENIDES "Now look: aren't the same itself and the different opposites of each other?"

ARISTOTELES "Of course."

PARMENIDES "Then will the same ever consent to be in the different, or the different in the same?"

ARISTOTELES "It won't."

PARMENIDES "So if the different will never be in the same, there is nothing among the things that are in which the different is for any time; [146e] for if it were in anything for any time at all, for that time the different would be in the same. Isn't that so?"

ARISTOTELES "That's so."

PARMENIDES "But since it is never in the same, the different would never be in any of the things that are."

ARISTOTELES "True."

PARMENIDES "So the different would be neither in the things that are not one nor in the one."

ARISTOTELES "No, it wouldn't."

PARMENIDES "So the one wouldn't be different from the not-ones by the different, and the not-ones wouldn't be different from the one by it either."

ARISTOTELES "No."

PARMENIDES "Nor would they be different from each other by themselves, if they don't share in [147a] the different."

ARISTOTELES "How could they?"

PARMENIDES "But if they're different neither by themselves nor by the different, wouldn't they escape altogether from being different from each other?"

ARISTOTELES "They would."

PARMENIDES "And yet the not-ones don't share in the one either. Otherwise they wouldn't be not-one, but would in some way be one."

ARISTOTELES "True."

PARMENIDES "So the not-ones wouldn't be a number either. For in that case, too, they wouldn't be wholly not-one, since they'd have number."

ARISTOTELES "Certainly not."

PARMENIDES "What about this? Are the not-ones parts of the one? Or would the not-ones share in the one in that way too?"

ARISTOTELES "They would."

PARMENIDES "So if the one is in every way one, [147b] and the not-ones are in every way not one, the one wouldn't be a part of the not-ones, nor a whole of them as of parts; nor, again, would the not-ones be parts of the one, nor wholes with the one as their part."

ARISTOTELES "No."

PARMENIDES "But we said that things that are neither parts nor wholes nor different from each other will be the same as each other."

ARISTOTELES "We did."

PARMENIDES "Shall we say, then, that the one, since it stands this way toward the not-ones, is the same as them?"

ARISTOTELES "Let's say so."

PARMENIDES "So the one, it seems, is different from the others and from itself, and the same as them and as itself."

ARISTOTELES “It looks that way—from the argument, at least.” 147c

PARMENIDES “Then is it also both like and unlike itself and the others?”

ARISTOTELES “Perhaps.”

PARMENIDES “Well, since it turned out to be different from the others, the others too would presumably be different from it.”

ARISTOTELES “What else?”

PARMENIDES “Isn’t it different from the others just as the others are from it, neither more nor less?”

ARISTOTELES “How could it be otherwise?”

PARMENIDES “So if neither more nor less, then alike.”

ARISTOTELES “Yes.”

PARMENIDES “Then insofar as it has the property of being different from the others, and the others likewise from it, in that respect the one and the others would have the same property—the one as the others, and the others as the one.”

ARISTOTELES 147d “What do you mean?”

PARMENIDES “This: don’t you apply each name to something?”

ARISTOTELES “I do.”

PARMENIDES “Well then, could you say the same name more than once, or only once?”

ARISTOTELES “I could.”

PARMENIDES “Then if you say it once, do you address the thing whose name it is, but if you say it many times, not that thing? Or whether you utter the same name once or many times, is it quite necessary that you always mean the same thing too?”

ARISTOTELES “What else?”

PARMENIDES “Now ‘different,’ too, is a name for something, isn’t it?”

ARISTOTELES “Certainly.”

PARMENIDES 147e "So whenever you utter it, whether once or many times, you don't apply it to anything else, or name anything other than that whose name it was."

ARISTOTELES "Necessarily."

PARMENIDES "So when we say that the others are different from the one, and the one is different from the others, though we've said 'different' twice, we don't apply it any more to some other nature: we always apply it to that nature whose name it was."

ARISTOTELES "Absolutely."

PARMENIDES "Then insofar as the one is different from the 148a others and the others from the one, in virtue of having the property of the different itself, the one would have not another property but the same one as the others. And what has the same property is presumably like—isn't it?"

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "So insofar as the one has the property of being different from the others, by that very fact everything would be like everything; for everything is different from everything."

ARISTOTELES "So it seems."

PARMENIDES "But surely the like is the opposite of the unlike."

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "And the different the opposite of the same."

ARISTOTELES "That too."

PARMENIDES "But this too came to light: that the one is the same as the 148b others."

ARISTOTELES "It did."

PARMENIDES "And being the same as the others is the opposite property to being different from the others."

ARISTOTELES "Certainly."

PARMENIDES "And insofar as it was different, it turned out to be like."

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "So insofar as it is the same, it will be unlike, in virtue of the property opposite to the one that made it like. And it was the different, wasn't it, that made it like?"

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "Then the same will make it unlike—or else it won't be the opposite of the different."

ARISTOTELES 148c "So it seems."

PARMENIDES "So the one will be both like and unlike the others: insofar as it is different, like, and insofar as it is the same, unlike."

ARISTOTELES "Yes—it seems the argument can take that line too."

PARMENIDES "Yes, and this one as well."

ARISTOTELES "Which?"

PARMENIDES "Insofar as it has the same property, it doesn't have a property of another kind; and not having a property of another kind, it isn't unlike; and not being unlike, it is like. But insofar as it has another property, it is of another kind; and being of another kind, it is unlike."

ARISTOTELES "You're right."

PARMENIDES "So because the one is the same as the others, and because it is different, on both grounds together and on each separately, it would be both like 148d and unlike the others."

ARISTOTELES "Certainly."

PARMENIDES "And in the same way in relation to itself: since it turned out to be both different from itself and the same as itself, won't it turn out, on both grounds together and on each separately, to be both like and unlike itself?"

ARISTOTELES "Necessarily."

TOUCHING, EQUAL AND UNEQUAL

It both touches and does not touch itself and the others, and is equal, larger and smaller.

PARMENIDES "Now then—what about the one's touching itself and the others, and its not touching them? Consider how that stands."

ARISTOTELES "I'm considering it."

PARMENIDES "The one itself, as we saw, turned out to be in itself as a whole."

ARISTOTELES "Right."

PARMENIDES "And isn't the one also in the others?"

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "So insofar as it is in the others, 148e it would touch the others; but insofar as it is itself in itself, it would be kept from touching the others, and would touch itself, being in itself."

ARISTOTELES "Apparently."

PARMENIDES "In this way, then, the one would touch both itself and the others."

ARISTOTELES "It would."

PARMENIDES "But what about this way? Mustn't everything that is going to touch something lie next to what it is going to touch, occupying the position that comes right after the position in which the thing it touches lies?"

ARISTOTELES "Necessarily."

PARMENIDES "So the one too, if it is going to touch itself, must lie right next to itself, occupying the place adjacent to the one it is in."

ARISTOTELES "Yes, it must."

PARMENIDES "Now the one could do that if it were two, 149a and so be in two places at once; but as long as it is one, it won't be willing to, will it?"

ARISTOTELES "Certainly not."

PARMENIDES "So the same necessity bars the one from being two and from touching itself."

ARISTOTELES "The same."

PARMENIDES "But it won't touch the others either."

ARISTOTELES "Why not?"

PARMENIDES "Because, we say, what is going to touch something must, while being separate, be next to what it is going to touch, with no third thing between them."

ARISTOTELES "True."

PARMENIDES "So there must be two things at the least, if there is going to be contact."

ARISTOTELES "There must."

PARMENIDES "And if a third term is added in a row to the two, they [149b] will be three, but the contacts two."

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "And so, each time one term is added, one contact is added as well, and it follows that the contacts are one fewer than the number of terms. For the amount by which the first two exceeded the contacts, making the number greater than the contacts—by that same amount every later number exceeds all the contacts; for [149c] from then on one is added to the number and one contact to the contacts at the same time."

ARISTOTELES "Right."

PARMENIDES "So however many the things that are may be in number, the contacts are always one fewer than they are."

ARISTOTELES "True."

PARMENIDES "But if there is only one, and there is no two, there would be no contact."

ARISTOTELES "How could there be?"

PARMENIDES "Now the others than the one, we say, neither are one nor share in it, if they really are others."

ARISTOTELES "No."

PARMENIDES "So there is no number in the others, since one is not in them."

ARISTOTELES "How could there be?"

PARMENIDES "So the others are neither one nor two, nor 149d do they have the name of any other number at all."

ARISTOTELES "No."

PARMENIDES "So the one alone is one, and there could be no two."

ARISTOTELES "Apparently not."

PARMENIDES "So there is no contact, since there aren't two things."

ARISTOTELES "There isn't."

PARMENIDES "So the one doesn't touch the others, nor the others the one, since there is no contact."

ARISTOTELES "Certainly not."

PARMENIDES "So on all these grounds the one both touches and does not touch the others and itself."

ARISTOTELES "So it seems."

PARMENIDES "Then is it also both equal and unequal to itself and to the others?"

ARISTOTELES "How so?"

PARMENIDES "If the one were greater or smaller than the others, 149e or again the others greater or smaller than the one, wouldn't it be that by the one's being one and the others' being other than the one, they would be neither greater nor smaller than each other—not, at least, by virtue of their very being? But if, in addition to being what they are, each had equality, they would be equal to each other. And if the others had largeness and the one smallness, or the one largeness and the others

smallness, then whichever form had largeness attached to it would be greater, and whichever had smallness, smaller?"

ARISTOTELES "Necessarily."

PARMENIDES "Now these two are forms, aren't they—largeness and smallness? For surely if they were not, they couldn't be opposites of each other and come to be in the 150a things that are."

ARISTOTELES "How could they?"

PARMENIDES "So if smallness comes to be in the one, it would be either in the whole of it or in a part of it."

ARISTOTELES "Necessarily."

PARMENIDES "What if it came to be in the whole? Wouldn't it either be stretched through the whole of the one on equal terms with it, or else contain it?"

ARISTOTELES "Obviously."

PARMENIDES "Then wouldn't smallness, if it were on equal terms with the one, be equal to it, and if it contained it, be larger?"

ARISTOTELES "How could it not?"

PARMENIDES "Is it possible, then, for smallness to be equal to anything or larger than anything, and to do the work of largeness and equality rather 150b than its own?"

ARISTOTELES "Impossible."

PARMENIDES "So smallness wouldn't be in the one as a whole, but, if anywhere, in a part."

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "But not in the whole of the part either; otherwise it will do just what it did in relation to the whole: it will be equal to or larger than whatever part it happens to be in."

ARISTOTELES "Necessarily."

PARMENIDES "So smallness will never be in any of the things that are, coming to be neither in a part nor in a whole; and nothing will be small except smallness itself."

ARISTOTELES "It seems not."

PARMENIDES "So largeness won't be in it either. For then something else would be larger, even 150c apart from largeness itself—namely, that in which the largeness was—and that without there being anything small for it, which it must exceed if it is large. But that's impossible, since smallness is in nothing anywhere."

ARISTOTELES "True."

PARMENIDES "But largeness itself isn't larger than anything except smallness itself, nor is smallness smaller than anything except largeness itself."

ARISTOTELES "No."

PARMENIDES "So the others are neither larger nor smaller than the one, since they have neither largeness nor smallness; nor 150d do these two themselves have their power of exceeding and being exceeded in relation to the one, but only in relation to each other; nor, again, would the one be larger or smaller than these two or than the others, since it has neither largeness nor smallness."

ARISTOTELES "Apparently not, at any rate."

PARMENIDES "Then if the one is neither larger nor smaller than the others, must it neither exceed them nor be exceeded by them?"

ARISTOTELES "Necessarily."

PARMENIDES "And surely what neither exceeds nor is exceeded must, quite necessarily, be on equal terms, and being on equal terms, be equal."

ARISTOTELES "Of 150e course."

PARMENIDES "And further, the one itself would stand this way toward itself too: having neither largeness nor smallness in

itself, it would neither be exceeded by itself nor exceed itself, but being on equal terms with itself, it would be equal to itself."

ARISTOTELES "Absolutely."

PARMENIDES "So the one would be equal both to itself and to the others."

ARISTOTELES "Apparently."

PARMENIDES "And yet, being itself in itself, it would also be around itself on the outside; and as containing, it would be larger [151a] than itself, and as contained, smaller. And so the one would be both larger and smaller than itself."

ARISTOTELES "So it would."

PARMENIDES "Isn't this necessary too: that there is nothing outside the one and the others?"

ARISTOTELES "Of course."

PARMENIDES "But surely what is must always be somewhere."

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "And what is in something will be in something larger, being smaller, won't it? For otherwise one thing couldn't be in another."

ARISTOTELES "No."

PARMENIDES "And since there is nothing else apart from the others and the one, and they must be in something, mustn't they then be in each other—the others in the one and the one in the others— [151b] or else be nowhere?"

ARISTOTELES "Apparently."

PARMENIDES "So because the one is in the others, the others would be larger than the one, since they contain it, and the one smaller than the others, since it is contained. And because the others are in the one, by the same argument the one would be larger than the others, and the others smaller than the one."

ARISTOTELES "So it seems."

PARMENIDES "So the one is equal to, larger than, and smaller than both itself and the others."

ARISTOTELES "Apparently."

PARMENIDES "And further, if it is larger and smaller and equal, it would have measures equal to, more than, and fewer than 151c itself and the others; and since measures, parts too."

ARISTOTELES "How could it not?"

PARMENIDES "So having equal and more and fewer measures, it would also be fewer and more in number than itself and the others, and equal to itself and the others in the same way."

ARISTOTELES "How so?"

PARMENIDES "Whatever things it is larger than, it would presumably have more measures than them too, and as many measures, so many parts. And the same with those it is smaller than; and with those it is equal to, in the same way."

ARISTOTELES "Just so."

PARMENIDES "So, being larger and smaller than itself and equal to itself, wouldn't it have measures equal to, 151d more than, and fewer than itself; and since measures, parts too?"

ARISTOTELES "How could it not?"

PARMENIDES "So having parts equal to itself, it would be equal to itself in multitude; having more, more; and having fewer, fewer in number than itself."

ARISTOTELES "Apparently."

PARMENIDES "And won't the one stand the same way toward the others? Insofar as it turns out larger than they are, it must be more in number than they are too; insofar as smaller, fewer; and insofar as equal in size, equal also in multitude to the others?"

ARISTOTELES "Necessarily."

PARMENIDES "So again, it 151e seems, the one will be equal to, more than, and fewer than both itself and the others in number."

ARISTOTELES "It will."

THE ONE IN TIME

Sharing in time, the one is and becomes older and younger than itself and the others, and also neither.

PARMENIDES "Then does the one also share in time? And, sharing in time, is it and is it becoming both younger and older than itself and the others, and also neither younger nor older than itself or the others?"

ARISTOTELES "How so?"

PARMENIDES "To be, presumably, belongs to it, if one is."

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "And is 'to be' anything other than participation in being together with present time, just as [152a] 'was' is association with being together with past time, and again 'will be' together with future time?"

ARISTOTELES "Yes, it is."

PARMENIDES "So it shares in time, if it shares in being as well."

ARISTOTELES "Certainly."

PARMENIDES "And time is moving on, isn't it?"

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "So it is always becoming older than itself, if it goes forward in time."

ARISTOTELES "Necessarily."

PARMENIDES "Now do we remember that what is older becomes older than something that is becoming younger?"

ARISTOTELES "We do."

PARMENIDES "Then since the one is becoming older than itself, wouldn't it be becoming older than a self that is [152b] becoming younger?"

ARISTOTELES "Necessarily."

PARMENIDES "So in this way it becomes both younger and older than itself."

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "But isn't it older when, in its becoming, it is at the present time, the now, which lies between 'was' and 'will be'? For surely, going from then to later, it won't skip over the now."

ARISTOTELES "No."

PARMENIDES "Then doesn't it stop becoming older at that point, when [152c] it meets the now, and it isn't becoming, but by then already is older? For if it were going forward, it could never be caught by the now. What goes forward is such as to grasp both the now and the later, letting go of the now and laying hold of the later, coming to be between the two—the later and the now."

ARISTOTELES "True."

PARMENIDES "But if everything that is becoming must not pass by the now, then whenever it is at it, [152d] it always stops becoming, and then is whatever it happened to be becoming."

ARISTOTELES "Apparently."

PARMENIDES "So the one too, when in becoming older it meets the now, has stopped becoming, and then is older."

ARISTOTELES "Absolutely."

PARMENIDES "Isn't it older than that very thing it was becoming older than? And it was becoming older than itself?"

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "And what is older is older than something younger?"

ARISTOTELES "It is."

PARMENIDES "So the one is also younger than itself at that point, when in becoming older it meets the now."

ARISTOTELES "Necessarily."

PARMENIDES “But the [152e] now is always present to the one throughout its being; for it always is now, whenever it is.”

ARISTOTELES “Of course.”

PARMENIDES “So the one always both is and is becoming older and younger than itself.”

ARISTOTELES “So it seems.”

PARMENIDES “And is it, or does it become, for more time than itself, or for an equal time?”

ARISTOTELES “An equal time.”

PARMENIDES “But what becomes or is for an equal time has the same age.”

ARISTOTELES “How could it not?”

PARMENIDES “And what has the same age is neither older nor younger.”

ARISTOTELES “No.”

PARMENIDES “So the one, since it both becomes and is for a time equal to itself, neither is nor becomes younger or older than itself.”

ARISTOTELES “I think not.”

PARMENIDES “What about this? Than the others?”

ARISTOTELES “I can’t say.” [153a]

PARMENIDES “But you can say this much: that the others than the one, if they are different things and not a different thing, are more than one. For if they were a different thing, they would be one; but being different things, they are more than one and would have multitude.”

ARISTOTELES “Yes, they would.”

PARMENIDES “And being a multitude, they would share in a number greater than one.”

ARISTOTELES “How could they not?”

PARMENIDES "Well then: shall we say that, among numbers, the greater come to be and have come to be earlier, or the smaller?"

ARISTOTELES "The smaller."

PARMENIDES "So the smallest is first; and this [153b] is the one. Isn't it?"

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "So of all things that have number, the one has come to be first; and all the others have number too, if they are others and not an other."

ARISTOTELES "They do."

PARMENIDES "And what has come to be first, I suppose, has come to be earlier, and the others later; and what has come to be later is younger than what came to be earlier. And so the others would be younger than the one, and the one older than the others."

ARISTOTELES "So it would."

PARMENIDES "What about this? Could the one have come to be contrary to its own [153c] nature, or is that impossible?"

ARISTOTELES "Impossible."

PARMENIDES "But the one was shown to have parts. And if parts, then a beginning, an end, and a middle."

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "Now doesn't the beginning come to be first of all, both of the one itself and of each of the others? And after the beginning, all the rest too, right up to the end?"

ARISTOTELES "Of course."

PARMENIDES "And we'll say, too, that all these others are parts of the whole and one, and that it has itself come to be one and whole at the same time as the end."

ARISTOTELES "Yes, we'll say that."

PARMENIDES "And the end, I take it, comes to be last, and it is the one's nature to come to be [153d] at the same time as the end. So if the one itself must not come to be contrary to its nature, then, having come to be at the same time as the end, it would by nature come to be last of the others."

ARISTOTELES "Apparently."

PARMENIDES "So the one is younger than the others, and the others are older than the one."

ARISTOTELES "Again, that's how it looks to me."

PARMENIDES "What about this, then? A beginning, or any other part whatever of the one or of anything else whatever, provided it's a part and not parts—mustn't it be one, since it is a part?"

ARISTOTELES "It must."

PARMENIDES "Then the one would come to be at the same time as the first part that comes to be, and [153e] at the same time as the second. And it falls behind none of the others as they come to be, whichever is added to whichever, until it has passed through to the last and become one whole, having been left behind in its coming to be by neither middle nor first nor last nor anything else."

ARISTOTELES "True."

PARMENIDES "So the one has the same age as all the others. And so, if the one itself has not grown contrary to its nature, it would have come to be neither before nor after the others, but at the same time as them. [154a] And by this argument the one would be neither older nor younger than the others, nor the others than the one. But by the earlier argument it is both older and younger, and the others likewise than it."

ARISTOTELES "Certainly."

PARMENIDES "So that is how it is and how it has come to be. But what, in turn, about its *becoming* older and younger than the others, and the others than the one—and becoming neither

younger nor older? Is it with becoming as it is with being, or otherwise?"

ARISTOTELES "I can't [154b] say."

PARMENIDES "But I can say this much at least. Even if one thing is older than another, it could no longer become older still by more than the difference in age it had right at the start, as soon as it came to be; nor, again, could what is younger become younger still. For equals added to unequals—whether in time or in anything else whatever—always make them differ by an amount equal to whatever they differed by at first."

ARISTOTELES "How could it not?"

PARMENIDES "So a thing that is could never become older or younger than a thing that is one, [154c] if they always differ in age by an equal amount. Rather, it is and has come to be older, and the other younger, but neither becomes so."

ARISTOTELES "True."

PARMENIDES "And so the one, which is, never becomes either older or younger than the others, which are."

ARISTOTELES "No, it doesn't."

PARMENIDES "But see whether they become older and younger in this way."

ARISTOTELES "In what way?"

PARMENIDES "In the way in which the one was shown to be older than the others, and the others than the one."

ARISTOTELES "What of it?"

PARMENIDES "When the one is older than the others, it has presumably come to be for a longer time than the [154d] others."

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "Now look at it again. If we add an equal time to a longer and a shorter time, will the longer differ from the shorter by an equal fraction, or by a smaller one?"

ARISTOTELES "A smaller one."

PARMENIDES "So by whatever fraction the one differed in age from the others at first, it won't go on differing by that afterward too. Rather, getting an equal time with the others, it will always differ from them in age by less than before. Or not?"

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "Now wouldn't what differs from something by less [154e] in age than before become younger than it was earlier, in relation to the things it was formerly older than?"

ARISTOTELES "Younger."

PARMENIDES "And if it becomes younger, don't those others, in turn, become older in relation to the one than before?"

ARISTOTELES "Yes, certainly."

PARMENIDES "So what came to be younger becomes older in relation to what came to be earlier and is older. Yet it never *is* older; it is always becoming older than that. For the former advances toward the younger, the latter toward the older. [155a] And the older, in turn, becomes younger than the younger in the same way. For as the two go in opposite directions, they become each other's opposite: the younger becoming older than the older, and the older younger than the younger. But they could never have become so. For if they had become so, they would no longer be becoming; they would be. As it is, they do become older and younger than each other: the one becomes younger than the others, because it was shown to be older and to have come to be [155b] earlier, and the others become older than the one, because they came to be later." "And by the same argument the others stand in this way toward the one, too, since they were shown to be older than it and to have come to be earlier."

ARISTOTELES "Yes, so it appears."

PARMENIDES "Isn't it so, then? Insofar as nothing becomes older or younger than anything else, by virtue of their always differing from each other by an equal number, the one would not become older or younger than the others, nor the others than the one. But insofar as things that came to be earlier must

always differ [155c] from those that came to be later, and the later from the earlier, by a different fraction, in that respect the others must become both older and younger than the one, and the one than the others."

ARISTOTELES "Certainly."

PARMENIDES "By all these arguments, then, the one both is and is becoming older and younger than itself and than the others; and it neither is nor is becoming older or younger than either itself or the others."

ARISTOTELES "Completely so."

PARMENIDES "But since the one shares in time and in [155d] becoming older and younger, mustn't it also share in the 'once,' the 'hereafter,' and the 'now,' if it does share in time?"

ARISTOTELES "Necessarily."

PARMENIDES "So the one was and is and will be, and was becoming and is becoming and will become."

ARISTOTELES "Of course."

PARMENIDES "And there could be something for it and of it, and there was and is and will be."

ARISTOTELES "Yes, certainly."

PARMENIDES "And there would be knowledge of it, and opinion and perception, seeing that we ourselves are doing all these things concerning it right now."

ARISTOTELES "You're right."

PARMENIDES "And it has a name and an account, and [155e] it is named and spoken of. And whatever things of this kind hold for the others hold for the one as well."

ARISTOTELES "That's completely how it is."

HYPOTHESIS 3: THE INSTANT

A one that both is and is not must change between them in "the instant," which takes no time.

PARMENIDES "Let's take it up still a third time. If the one is such as we have described—being both one and many, and neither one nor many, and sharing in time—mustn't it, insofar as it is one, at some time share in being, and, insofar as it is not, at some time not share in being?"

ARISTOTELES "Necessarily."

PARMENIDES "Now when it shares in being, will it be possible for it at that time not to share in it, or, when it does not share in it, to share in it?"

ARISTOTELES "It's not possible."

PARMENIDES "So it shares in being at one time and does not share in it at another; for only in this way could it both share and not share in the same thing." 156a

ARISTOTELES "Right."

PARMENIDES "Isn't there also this time, then, when it comes to partake of being and when it parts from it? Or how will it be possible for it to have the same thing at one time and not have it at another, unless at some point it both takes it and lets it go?"

ARISTOTELES "In no way."

PARMENIDES "Now coming to partake of being—don't you call that coming to be?"

ARISTOTELES "I do."

PARMENIDES "And parting from being—isn't that perishing?"

ARISTOTELES "Very much so."

PARMENIDES "So the one, it seems, by taking and letting go of being, comes to be 156b and perishes."

ARISTOTELES "Necessarily."

PARMENIDES "And since it is one and many, and comes to be and perishes, isn't it the case that when it comes to be one, its being many perishes, and when it comes to be many, its being one perishes?"

ARISTOTELES "Yes, certainly."

PARMENIDES "And as it comes to be one and many, mustn't it be separated and combined?"

ARISTOTELES "It certainly must."

PARMENIDES "Moreover, when it comes to be unlike and like, mustn't it be made like and made unlike?"

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "And when it comes to be greater and less and equal, mustn't it increase and decrease and be made equal?"

ARISTOTELES "Just so." 156c

PARMENIDES "And when, being in motion, it comes to rest, and when, being at rest, it changes to moving, it surely cannot itself be in any single time."

ARISTOTELES "How so?"

PARMENIDES "Being at rest earlier and moving later, and moving earlier and being at rest later—it won't be possible for it to undergo these without changing."

ARISTOTELES "How could it?"

PARMENIDES "But there is no time in which anything can at once be neither moving nor at rest."

ARISTOTELES "No, there isn't."

PARMENIDES "And yet surely it doesn't change without changing."

ARISTOTELES "That's not likely."

PARMENIDES "So when does it change? For it doesn't change while it is at rest, or while it is moving, or while it is in 156d time."

ARISTOTELES "No, it doesn't."

PARMENIDES "Is there, then, this strange thing in which it would be at the moment when it changes?"

ARISTOTELES "What sort of thing?"

PARMENIDES "The instant. For 'the instant' seems to signify something like this: that from it a thing changes into each of the two states. For a thing doesn't change from rest while it is still at rest, nor from motion while it is still in motion. Rather, this strange nature, the instant, lies between motion and rest, 156e being in no time at all; and it is into it and out of it that what is moving changes to being at rest, and what is at rest changes to moving."[9]

ARISTOTELES "It looks that way."

PARMENIDES "And so the one, if it is both at rest and in motion, would change to each—for only in this way could it do both. And in changing, it changes in the instant; and when it changes, it would be in no time, and at that moment it would be neither moving nor at rest."

ARISTOTELES "No, it wouldn't."

PARMENIDES "Is it the same, then, with the other changes too? When it changes from being to perishing, 157a or from not being to coming to be, does it then come to be between certain motions and rests, so that at that moment it neither is nor is not, and neither comes to be nor perishes?"

ARISTOTELES "So it seems, at any rate."

PARMENIDES "By the same argument, then, when it is going from one to many and from many to one, it is neither one nor many, and is neither being separated nor being combined. And when it is going from like to unlike and from unlike to like, it is neither like nor unlike, neither being made like nor being made unlike. And 157b when it is going from small to large and to equal, and into the opposites, it would be neither small nor large nor

9 "The instant" renders *to exaiphnes*, literally "the suddenly," an ordinary adverb here turned into a noun for the point at which a change happens.

equal, and neither increasing nor decreasing nor being made equal."

ARISTOTELES "It seems not."

PARMENIDES "So the one would have all these properties, if it is."

ARISTOTELES "How could it not?"

HYPOTHESIS 4: THE OTHERS, IF THE ONE IS

Sharing in the one, the things other than the one are limited and unlimited, like and unlike, and more.

PARMENIDES "But shouldn't we examine what properties it would be fitting for the others to have, if the one is?"

ARISTOTELES "We should."

PARMENIDES "Let's say, then: if the one is, what properties must the others than the one have?"

ARISTOTELES "Let's."

PARMENIDES "Now, since they are other than the one, the others are not the one; for 157c otherwise they wouldn't be other than the one."

ARISTOTELES "Right."

PARMENIDES "And yet the others aren't entirely deprived of the one, either; they share in it in a way."

ARISTOTELES "In what way?"

PARMENIDES "Presumably in that the others than the one are other by having parts. For if they had no parts, they would be entirely one."

ARISTOTELES "Right."

PARMENIDES "And parts, we say, are parts of that which is a whole."

ARISTOTELES "Yes, we do say that."

PARMENIDES "But the whole must be one thing made of many, of which the parts will be parts. For each of the parts must be a part not of many but of a whole."

ARISTOTELES "How so?"

PARMENIDES "If something were a part of many, [157d] among which it itself was, it will surely be a part of itself, which is impossible, and of each one of the others, if it is indeed a part of all of them. For if it is not a part of some one of them, it will be a part of the others except that one, and so it will not be a part of each one; and if it is not a part of each, it will be a part of none of the many. But if it belongs to none of them, it's impossible for it to be anything—a part or anything else whatever—of all these things, when it is nothing of any one of them."

ARISTOTELES "It certainly appears so."

PARMENIDES "So the part is a part not of the many, nor of all of them, but of some single form and [157e] some one thing that we call a whole, one complete thing that has come to be from all of them. Of this the part would be a part."

ARISTOTELES "Absolutely."

PARMENIDES "So if the others have parts, they would also share in the whole and one."

ARISTOTELES "Yes, certainly."

PARMENIDES "So the others than the one must be one complete whole that has parts."

ARISTOTELES "Necessarily."

PARMENIDES "And the same argument goes for each part, too; for it too must share [158a] in the one. For if each of them is a part, being 'each' surely signifies one thing, marked off from the others and being by itself, if it is to be 'each.'"

ARISTOTELES "Right."

PARMENIDES "But clearly it would share in the one by being something other than one; otherwise it wouldn't share in it, but

would itself be one. As it is, though, it's presumably impossible for anything except the one itself to be one."

ARISTOTELES "Impossible."

PARMENIDES "And both the whole and the part must share in the one. For the whole will be one thing, of which the parts are parts; and each, in turn, will be one part of the whole—whatever is [158b] a part of a whole."

ARISTOTELES "Just so."

PARMENIDES "Now won't the things that share in the one share in it as things different from it?"

ARISTOTELES "How could they not?"

PARMENIDES "And things different from the one would presumably be many. For if the others than the one were neither one nor more than one, they would be nothing."

ARISTOTELES "No, they'd be nothing."

PARMENIDES "And since the things that share in the single part and in the single whole are more than one, mustn't those very things that come to partake of the one be, as such, unlimited in multitude?"

ARISTOTELES "How?"

PARMENIDES "Let's look at it this way. Isn't it the case that, at the time when they come to partake of it, they come to partake of it while not being one and not sharing in the one?"

ARISTOTELES "Clearly."

PARMENIDES [158c] "So they are multitudes, in which the one is not present?"

ARISTOTELES "Multitudes, certainly."

PARMENIDES "Well then, if we were willing to subtract in thought from such things the very smallest amount we could, mustn't what was subtracted, too, if it does not share in the one, be a multitude and not one?"

ARISTOTELES "Necessarily."

PARMENIDES "So if we always consider in this way the nature other than the form, itself by itself, won't however much of it we see at any time be unlimited in multitude?"

ARISTOTELES "Absolutely."

PARMENIDES "And yet once [158d] each single part has become a part, it then has a limit in relation to the others and to the whole, and the whole in relation to the parts."

ARISTOTELES "Quite so."

PARMENIDES "So it turns out for the others than the one, it seems, that when the one and they themselves come together, something different comes to be in them, which gives them a limit in relation to one another; while their own nature, by itself, gives them unlimitedness."

ARISTOTELES "Apparently."

PARMENIDES "Thus the others than the one, both as wholes and part by part, are unlimited and share in limit."

ARISTOTELES "Yes, certainly." [158e]

PARMENIDES "Aren't they also both like and unlike each other and themselves?"

ARISTOTELES "How so?"

PARMENIDES "Insofar as they are all unlimited by their own nature, they would presumably have the same property in that respect."

ARISTOTELES "Yes, certainly."

PARMENIDES "And again, insofar as they all share in limit, in that respect too they would all have the same property."

ARISTOTELES "How could they not?"

PARMENIDES "But insofar as they have the properties of being limited and unlimited, they have these [159a] properties, which are opposite to each other."

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "And opposites are as unlike as possible."

ARISTOTELES "Of course."

PARMENIDES "So with respect to each property taken singly, they would be like themselves and each other; but with respect to both together, in both ways, they would be most opposite and most unlike."

ARISTOTELES "It looks that way."

PARMENIDES "Thus the others would be both like and unlike themselves and each other."

ARISTOTELES "Just so."

PARMENIDES "And we'll no longer have any trouble finding that the others than the one are the same as and different from each other, moving and at rest, and have all the opposite properties, since [159b] they were shown to have these, too."

ARISTOTELES "You're right."

PARMENIDES "Then suppose we now let these points go as evident, and examine again, if the one is, whether the others than the one are also not like this, or only like this?"

ARISTOTELES "Certainly."

HYPOTHESIS 5: THE OTHERS, APART FROM THE ONE

If the one is wholly separate from them, the others are not one, many, like, unlike, or anything else.

PARMENIDES "Let's say from the beginning, then: if the one is, what properties must the others than the one have?"

ARISTOTELES "Yes, let's."

PARMENIDES "Isn't the one separate from the others, and the others separate from the one?"

ARISTOTELES "Why?"

PARMENIDES "Because there is presumably nothing else besides these, which is other than the one and also other than the others. [159c] For everything has been mentioned once the one and the others have been mentioned."

ARISTOTELES "Yes, everything."

PARMENIDES "So there is nothing further, different from these, in which both the one and the others could be, in the same thing."

ARISTOTELES "No, there isn't."

PARMENIDES "So the one and the others are never in the same thing."

ARISTOTELES "It seems not."

PARMENIDES "Separate, then?"

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "And further, we say that what is truly one does not have parts."

ARISTOTELES "How could it?"

PARMENIDES "So neither would the one as a whole be in the others, nor parts of it, if it is separate from the others and does not have parts."

ARISTOTELES "How 159d could it?"

PARMENIDES "So the others would in no way share in the one, since they share neither in some part of it nor in it as a whole."

ARISTOTELES "It seems not."

PARMENIDES "So the others are in no way one, nor do they have in themselves any one thing at all."

ARISTOTELES "No, they don't."

PARMENIDES "So the others are not many, either. For if they were many, each of them would be one part of the whole. As it is, the others than the one are neither one nor many, neither whole nor parts, since they in no way share in it."

ARISTOTELES "Right."

PARMENIDES "So the others are not themselves two or three, nor are two or three in them, 159e if they are entirely deprived of the one."

ARISTOTELES "Just so."

PARMENIDES "So the others are neither themselves like and unlike the one, nor are likeness and unlikeness in them. For if they themselves were like and unlike, or had likeness and unlikeness in themselves, the others than the one would presumably have in themselves two forms opposite to each other."

ARISTOTELES "Apparently."

PARMENIDES "But it was impossible for things that do not share even in one to share in any two."

ARISTOTELES "Impossible."

PARMENIDES "So the others are neither like nor unlike, nor both. 160a For if they were like or unlike, they would share in one of the two forms, and if they were both, in the two opposites. And these things turned out to be impossible."

ARISTOTELES "True."

PARMENIDES "So they aren't the same or different either, nor moving or at rest, nor coming to be or perishing, nor larger or smaller or equal. Nor do they have any other property of that sort. For if the others submit to having any such property, they will share in one and two and three, and in odd and even. And it turned out that they can't 160b share in these, since they are entirely and in every way deprived of the one."

ARISTOTELES "Very true."

PARMENIDES "So if one is, the one is all things and is not even one, both in relation to itself and in relation to the others alike."

ARISTOTELES "Entirely so."

HYPOTHESIS 6: IF THE ONE IS NOT

A one that is not is still known and different, shares in many things, and in a way is.

PARMENIDES "Very well. But now, if the one is not, mustn't we consider next what follows?"

ARISTOTELES "Yes, we must."

PARMENIDES "So what would this hypothesis be, 'if one is not'? Does it differ at all from this one, 'if not-one is not'?"

ARISTOTELES "Of course it differs."

PARMENIDES "Does it merely differ, or is saying 'if not-one is not' the complete 160c opposite of saying 'if one is not'?"

ARISTOTELES "The complete opposite."

PARMENIDES "What if someone were to say 'if largeness is not' or 'if smallness is not' or anything else of that sort? Wouldn't it be clear in each case that what he calls 'what is not' is something different?"

ARISTOTELES "Certainly."

PARMENIDES "Isn't it clear now as well, then, that what he calls 'what is not' is something different from the others, when he says 'if one is not,' and that we know what he means?"

ARISTOTELES "We know."

PARMENIDES "So when he says 'one,' he is speaking first of all of something knowable, and second of something different from the others, whether he attaches being to it or 160d not-being. For it is known no less what it is that is said not to be, and that it is distinct from the others. Or isn't it?"

ARISTOTELES "Necessarily."

PARMENIDES "Then we must state from the beginning, like this: if one is not, what must be the case? First of all, it seems, this must belong to it: there must be knowledge of it. Otherwise not even what is meant would be known, when someone says 'if one is not.'"

ARISTOTELES "True."

PARMENIDES "And mustn't the others be different from it as well? Or else it couldn't be called different from the others either."

ARISTOTELES "Certainly."

PARMENIDES "So difference belongs to it too, in addition to knowledge. [160e] For when someone says that the one is different from the others, he isn't speaking of the difference of the others, but of its own."

ARISTOTELES "Apparently."

PARMENIDES "What's more, the one that is not shares in 'that' and 'some' and 'this' and 'to this' and 'of these' and all such things. For otherwise the one wouldn't be spoken of, nor would there be things different from the one, nor would anything belong to that or be of that, nor would it be spoken of as anything, if it had a share neither in 'some' nor in these others."

ARISTOTELES "Right."

PARMENIDES "Being, then, is not possible for the one, if it really is not. But nothing [161a] prevents it from sharing in many things. In fact it must, if it is that one, and not some other, that is not. If, however, what is not is to be neither the one nor that, and our talk is about something else, we oughtn't to utter a word. But if it is posited that that one, and not another, is not, then it must have a share both in 'that' and in many other things."

ARISTOTELES "Most certainly."

PARMENIDES "So it also has unlikeness in relation to the others. For the others, being different from the one, would also be of a different kind."

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "And aren't things of a different kind of another sort?"

ARISTOTELES "Of course."

PARMENIDES "And aren't things of another sort [161b] unlike?"

ARISTOTELES "Yes, unlike."

PARMENIDES "Isn't it clear, then, that if they are unlike the one, the unlike things would be unlike something unlike?"

ARISTOTELES "Clearly."

PARMENIDES "Then the one too would have an unlikeness, in relation to which the others are unlike it."

ARISTOTELES "It seems so."

PARMENIDES "But if it has unlikeness to the others, mustn't it have likeness to itself?"

ARISTOTELES "How?"

PARMENIDES "If the one had unlikeness to one, our discussion surely wouldn't be about such a thing as the one, nor would our hypothesis be about one, but about something other than one."

ARISTOTELES "Yes, [161c] certainly."

PARMENIDES "But it mustn't be."

ARISTOTELES "Of course not."

PARMENIDES "So the one must have a likeness of itself to itself."

ARISTOTELES "It must."

PARMENIDES "And again, it isn't equal to the others either. For if it were equal, it would then be, and it would be like them by virtue of the equality. But both of these are impossible, if one is not."

ARISTOTELES "Impossible."

PARMENIDES "And since it isn't equal to the others, mustn't the others also be not equal to it?"

ARISTOTELES "Necessarily."

PARMENIDES "And aren't things that are not equal unequal?"

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "And aren't unequal things unequal by virtue of the unequal?"

ARISTOTELES "Of course."

PARMENIDES "So the one shares in inequality too, [161d] in relation to which the others are unequal to it?"

ARISTOTELES "It does."

PARMENIDES "But largeness and smallness belong to inequality."

ARISTOTELES "Yes, they do."

PARMENIDES "So does such a one also have largeness and smallness?"

ARISTOTELES "It looks that way."

PARMENIDES "Yet largeness and smallness always stand apart from each other."

ARISTOTELES "Certainly."

PARMENIDES "So there is always something between them."

ARISTOTELES "There is."

PARMENIDES "Can you name anything between them other than equality?"

ARISTOTELES "No, only that."

PARMENIDES "So whatever has largeness and smallness also has equality, lying between the two."

ARISTOTELES 161e "Apparently."

PARMENIDES "So the one that is not, it seems, would have a share in equality and in largeness and smallness."

ARISTOTELES "It seems so."

PARMENIDES "What's more, it must also share in being in some way."

ARISTOTELES "How so?"

PARMENIDES "It must be in the condition we say it's in. For if it isn't, we wouldn't be speaking the truth when we say that the one is not. But if we are speaking the truth, clearly we are saying things that are. Or isn't that so?"

ARISTOTELES "Yes, it is."

PARMENIDES "And since we claim to be speaking the truth, we must 162a also claim to be saying things that are."

ARISTOTELES "Necessarily."

PARMENIDES "So, it seems, the one is something that is not. For if it isn't to be something that is not, but somehow lets go of being in the direction of not-being, it will at once be something that is."

ARISTOTELES "Absolutely."

PARMENIDES "So it must have being something that is not as the bond of its not-being, if it is to not be—just as what is must have not being something that is not, so that it, in its turn, may completely be. For that is how what is would most fully be, and what is not would not be: what is, by sharing in being with respect to being something that is, and in not-being with respect to not being something that is not, 162b if it is to be completely; and what is not, by sharing in not-being with respect to not being something that is not, and in being with respect to being something that is not, if what is not, in its turn, is to not be completely."

ARISTOTELES "Very true."

PARMENIDES "Well then, since what is has a share in not-being, and what is not has a share in being, mustn't the one too, since it is not, have a share in being, in order to not be?"

ARISTOTELES "Necessarily."

PARMENIDES "So the one turns out to have being, if it is not."

ARISTOTELES "Apparently."

PARMENIDES "And not-being too, then, if it really is not."

ARISTOTELES "Of course."

PARMENIDES "Now can something that is in a certain state not be in that state, without changing out of that condition?"

ARISTOTELES "It can't."

PARMENIDES "So everything of that sort, 162c which is both so and not so, signifies change."

ARISTOTELES "Of course."

PARMENIDES "And change is motion—or what shall we say?"

ARISTOTELES "Motion."

PARMENIDES "Now didn't the one turn out to be both something that is and something that is not?"

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "So it turns out to be both so and not so."

ARISTOTELES "It seems so."

PARMENIDES "So the one that is not has also turned out to be moving, since it has a change from being to not-being."

ARISTOTELES "It looks that way."

PARMENIDES "But if it is nowhere among the things that are—as it isn't, if it really is not—it couldn't shift from anywhere to anywhere."

ARISTOTELES "How could it?"

PARMENIDES "So it couldn't move by [162d] changing place."

ARISTOTELES "No."

PARMENIDES "Nor, surely, could it rotate in the same place, since it is nowhere in contact with the same. For the same is something that is, and what is not can't be in any of the things that are."

ARISTOTELES "Yes, impossible."

PARMENIDES "So the one, being not, couldn't rotate in that in which it is not."

ARISTOTELES "Certainly not."

PARMENIDES "Nor, surely, is the one altered from itself, neither the one that is nor the one that is not. For our discussion would no longer be about the one, if it were altered from itself, but about something else."

ARISTOTELES "Right."

PARMENIDES "But if it is neither altered nor rotates in the same place nor changes place, could it [162e] still be moving in any way?"

ARISTOTELES "How could it?"

PARMENIDES "And what is unmoved must keep still, and what keeps still must be at rest."

ARISTOTELES "Necessarily."

PARMENIDES "So the one, it seems, being not, is both at rest and in motion."

ARISTOTELES "It seems so."

PARMENIDES "And yet if it does move, it is quite necessary for it to be altered. [163a] For in whatever respect a thing is moved, to that extent it is no longer in the same state it was in, but in a different one."

ARISTOTELES "That's so."

PARMENIDES "So the one, in moving, is also altered."

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "And yet if it is in no way moving, it would in no way be altered."

ARISTOTELES "No."

PARMENIDES "So insofar as the one that is not moves, it is altered; and insofar as it doesn't move, it isn't altered."

ARISTOTELES "No."

PARMENIDES "So the one, being not, is both altered and not altered."

ARISTOTELES "Apparently."

PARMENIDES "And mustn't what is altered come to be different from before, and perish out of its [163b] former condition, while what isn't altered neither comes to be nor perishes?"

ARISTOTELES "Necessarily."

PARMENIDES "So the one, being not, comes to be and perishes in being altered, and in not being altered neither comes to be nor perishes. And so the one, being not, comes to be and perishes, and neither comes to be nor perishes."

ARISTOTELES "It can't be otherwise."

HYPOTHESIS 7: IF THE ONE IS NOT, ABSOLUTELY

A one that is not, in no sense at all, has no properties and cannot be known or named.

PARMENIDES "Let's go back to the beginning once again, to see whether the same results will appear to us as now, or different ones."

ARISTOTELES "We should."

PARMENIDES "Well then, 163c if one is not—so we say—what must follow about it?"

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "And when we say 'is not,' does it signify anything other than absence of being for whatever we say is not?"

ARISTOTELES "Nothing else."

PARMENIDES "Now when we say that something is not, are we saying that in some way it is not, but in some way it is? Or does this 'is not,' when said, signify without qualification that what is not is in no way whatever and in no respect, and in no way shares in being?"

ARISTOTELES "Quite without qualification."

PARMENIDES "So what is not could neither be nor in any other way at all 163d share in being."

ARISTOTELES "No."

PARMENIDES "And weren't coming to be and perishing nothing other than, respectively, coming to partake of being and losing being?"

ARISTOTELES "Nothing else."

PARMENIDES "But what has no share in this could neither take it on nor lose it."

ARISTOTELES "How could it?"

PARMENIDES "So the one, since it in no way is, must in no way have being, or give it up, or come to partake of it."

ARISTOTELES "That's likely."

PARMENIDES "So the one that is not neither perishes nor comes to be, since it in no way shares in being."

ARISTOTELES "Apparently not."

PARMENIDES "Nor, then, is it [163e] altered in any way; for if that happened to it, it would then be coming to be and perishing."

ARISTOTELES "True."

PARMENIDES "And if it isn't altered, mustn't it also not be moving?"

ARISTOTELES "Necessarily."

PARMENIDES "Nor, surely, shall we say that what is nowhere is at rest; for what is at rest must always be in some one and the same thing."

ARISTOTELES "In the same thing. How could it not?"

PARMENIDES "So once again let's say that what is not is never at rest and never in motion."

ARISTOTELES "No, let's say it's neither."

PARMENIDES "But neither does it have anything that is; for then, sharing in [164a] something that is, it would share in being."

ARISTOTELES "Clearly."

PARMENIDES "So it has neither largeness nor smallness nor equality."

ARISTOTELES "No."

PARMENIDES "Nor, surely, would it have likeness or difference, either in relation to itself or in relation to the others."

ARISTOTELES "Apparently not."

PARMENIDES "What about this? Is there any way the others could be anything to it, if nothing is to be anything to it?"

ARISTOTELES "There's no way."

PARMENIDES "So the others are neither like nor unlike it, nor the same as it nor different from it."

ARISTOTELES "No."

PARMENIDES "And what about 'of that' or 'to that' or 'some' or 'this' or 'of this' or 'of another' or 'to another,' or 'once' or 164b 'later' or 'now,' or knowledge or opinion or perception or account or name or anything else that is—will any of these apply to what is not?"

ARISTOTELES "They won't."

PARMENIDES "So the one, being not, is in no state in any way at all."

ARISTOTELES "No, it doesn't seem to be in any state at all."

HYPOTHESIS 8: THE OTHERS, IF THE ONE IS NOT

Without the one, the others only appear one or many, like masses in a dream or seen from afar.

PARMENIDES "Let's go on to say, then, if one is not, what must be true of the others."

ARISTOTELES "Yes, let's."

PARMENIDES "They must, I suppose, be others; for if they aren't even others, we wouldn't be talking about the others."

ARISTOTELES "That's so."

PARMENIDES "But if our discussion is about the others, the others are different. Or don't you use 'other' and 'different' of the same 164c thing?"

ARISTOTELES "I do."

PARMENIDES "And we say, I take it, that the different is different from something different, and that the other, likewise, is other than something other?"

ARISTOTELES "Yes."

PARMENIDES "So the others too, if they are to be others, have something that they will be other than."

ARISTOTELES "Necessarily."

PARMENIDES "So what could it be? They won't be other than the one, since it isn't."

ARISTOTELES "No."

PARMENIDES "So they are other than each other. For that's all that's still left to them—or else to be other than nothing."

ARISTOTELES "Right."

PARMENIDES "So each of them is other than the others as multitudes; for they couldn't be so one by one, since one is not. Rather, each mass of them, it [164d] seems, is unlimited in multitude. Even if you take what seems to be the smallest, then, like a dream in sleep, suddenly, instead of what seemed to be one, it appears many, and instead of the smallest, enormous in relation to the bits chopped up from it."

ARISTOTELES "Quite right."

PARMENIDES "So it is as masses of that sort that the others would be other than each other, if they are others when one is not."

ARISTOTELES "Quite so."

PARMENIDES "So won't there be many masses, each appearing to be one, though it isn't, if one is not to be?"

ARISTOTELES "That's so."

PARMENIDES "And there will also seem to be a number of [164e] them, if each is also one, while they are many."

ARISTOTELES "Certainly."

PARMENIDES "And among them some will appear to be even and others odd, but not truly, if one is not to be."

ARISTOTELES "Certainly not."

PARMENIDES "What's more, there will seem, we say, to be a smallest among them; but this appears many and large in relation to each of the [165a] many, since they are small."

ARISTOTELES "Of course."

PARMENIDES "And each mass will also be thought to be equal to the many small ones. For it couldn't appear to pass from larger to smaller before it seemed to come to what lies between—and this would be a semblance of equality."

ARISTOTELES "That's likely."

PARMENIDES "And won't it have a limit in relation to another mass, while in relation to itself it has neither beginning nor limit nor middle?"

ARISTOTELES "In what way?"

PARMENIDES "Because whenever anyone grasps any of them in thought as being one of these, before the beginning another 165b beginning always appears, and after the end another end remains, and in the middle others more in the middle than the middle, but smaller. This is because it's impossible to grasp each of them as one, since the one is not."

ARISTOTELES "Very true."

PARMENIDES "Then everything that is, I think, which anyone grasps in thought, must be broken up and chopped into pieces; for presumably it would always be grasped as a mass without one."

ARISTOTELES "Very much so."

PARMENIDES "And mustn't such a thing appear one to someone 165c who sees it from far off and dimly, while to someone who considers it close up and sharply each one must appear unlimited in multitude, if it really is deprived of the one, since that is not?"

ARISTOTELES "That's quite necessary."

PARMENIDES "So each of the others must appear both unlimited and having a limit, and both one and many, if one is not, but things other than the one are."

ARISTOTELES "Yes, they must."

PARMENIDES "And won't they also seem to be both like and unlike?"

ARISTOTELES "In what way?"

PARMENIDES "As with things in a scene-painting: to someone standing at a distance, they all appear to be one, and so appear to have the same property and to be alike."[10]

ARISTOTELES "Yes, 165d certainly."

PARMENIDES "But to someone who comes closer, they appear many and different, and, through the semblance of the different, different in kind and unlike themselves."

ARISTOTELES "That's so."

PARMENIDES "So the masses must appear both like and unlike, both to themselves and to each other."

ARISTOTELES "Very much so."

PARMENIDES "And also both the same as and different from each other, both in contact with and apart from themselves, both moving with every motion and at rest in every way, both coming to be and perishing and neither, and presumably all such things, which it would now be easy for us to go through, if, when one 165e is not, many are."

ARISTOTELES "That's very true."

HYPOTHESIS 9: IF THE ONE IS NOT, NOTHING IS

Without the one, the others neither are nor appear anything; finally, all things both are and are not.

PARMENIDES "Let's go back to the beginning once more and say what must be, if one is not, but things other than the one are."

ARISTOTELES "Yes, let's."

PARMENIDES "Well then, the others won't be one."

ARISTOTELES "How could they?"

10 Scene-painting (skiagraphia) used patches of light and shade that blended into a likeness only when viewed from a distance.

PARMENIDES "Nor, surely, many. For in things that are many, one would also be present. If none of them is one, all of them are nothing, so that they couldn't be many either."

ARISTOTELES "True."

PARMENIDES "And if one is not present in the others, the others are neither many nor one."

ARISTOTELES "No."

PARMENIDES "Nor 166a do they appear to be one or many."

ARISTOTELES "Why so?"

PARMENIDES "Because the others have no association of any kind, in any way or respect whatever, with any of the things that are not, nor is any of the things that are not present with any of the others. For things that are not have no part."

ARISTOTELES "True."

PARMENIDES "So there is no opinion of what is not among the others, nor any semblance of it, nor is what is not in any way or respect whatever believed of the others."

ARISTOTELES "Certainly not."

PARMENIDES "So if one is not, none of the 166b others is even believed to be one or many; for it's impossible to believe in many without one."

ARISTOTELES "Yes, impossible."

PARMENIDES "So if one is not, the others neither are nor are believed to be one or many."

ARISTOTELES "It seems not."

PARMENIDES "Nor, then, like or unlike."

ARISTOTELES "No."

PARMENIDES "Nor, surely, the same or different, nor in contact or apart, nor any of the other things we went through earlier as ways they appear: the others neither are nor appear to be any of these, if one is not."

ARISTOTELES "True."

PARMENIDES "Then wouldn't we also be right if we said, [166c] in sum, 'If one is not, nothing is'?"

ARISTOTELES "Absolutely."

PARMENIDES "Let that be said, then, and this as well: whether one is or is not, it and the others, it seems, both in relation to themselves and in relation to each other, all are and are not, in every way, and appear and do not appear."

ARISTOTELES "Very true."