

ONE IS:
A READING OF PLATO'S PARMENIDES IN RESPECT OF
PARMENIDES' POEM

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Thesis Abstract

Ergün Ahmet Akça, “One is: A Reading of Plato’s Parmenides in Respect of
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This dissertation offers a new analysis and evaluation of a part of Plato’s dialogue *Parmenides*, focussing on the hypothesis “one is” from the perspective of historical Parmenides’ poem – or, more precisely the goddess’ *muthos* in the poem. This kind of reading shows that the context of the argumentation under the hypothesis “one is” in the dialogue is mainly determined by the restrictions laid out in the *muthos* of the goddess. The main thesis of the goddess’ *muthos* is “to be is,” which may be expressed as follows: only “is” is said of *to be*, and “is” is said of only *to be*. Following hints in the discussion of the hypothesis, it is revealed that the dialogue’s character Parmenides takes this restriction as a model, and extends it to any *phusis* and its proper subject of discourse: (i) only its proper nature is said of a subject of discourse, and (ii) a nature is said of only its proper subject. Such an approach shows that though the hypothesis “one is” is about *the one* in the dialogue, the real issue to be discussed under this hypothesis is about *to be*, and the conditions to say “is” to any subject of discourse.

It is argued that in accord with these restrictions Plato’s character Parmenides begins the first deduction under the hypothesis “one is” with “the one one.” The main question of the deduction is how it can be argued that “the one is” follows from “the one one” under the restrictions about *to be* and *the one*. In the second deduction, following these restrictions, Parmenides takes *to be* as being different from *the one*, and obtain a whole that is composed of *to be* and *the one*. It is argued that the argumentation in this deduction is also valid for *to be*, and produces an *aporia*: *to be* is like and unlike.

This discussion concludes that if we trust Parmenides’ argument in the dialogue, any subject which has *phusis* can in no way *be* if “to be is.” The only way to say that something which has *phusis* “is” is to deny “to be is.”

Tez Özeti

Ergün Ahmet Akça, “bir (var)dır”: Parmenides’in Şiiri Açısından Plato’nun

Parmenides’inin Bir Okuması ”

Bu tez, “bir (var)-dır” hipotezine odaklanarak, tarihsel Parmenides’in şiiri açısından – daha doğru olarak şiirdeki tanrıçanın *muthos*’u açısından, Plato’nun *Parmenides* diyalogunun bir bölümüne ilişkin yeni bir çözümleme ve değerlendirme sunmaktadır. Bu tür bir okuma diyalogdaki “bir (var)-dır” hipotezi altındaki kanıtlamanın bağlamının esas olarak tanrıça’nın *muthos*’u tarafından koyulan kayıtlar tarafından belirlendiğini göstermektedir. Tanrıça’nın *muthos*’unun ana tezi “(var)olmak (var)-dır” şu şekilde ifade edilebilir: (i) *(var)olmak*’a sadece *(var)-dır* denilir (ii) *(var)-dır* sadece *(var)olmak*’a denilir. Hipotezin tartışılmasındaki ipuçların izlenmesi diyalogun karakteri Parmenides’in bu kayıtları model olarak alıp onu her doğaya ve ona has söylem öznesine genişlettiğini açığa çıkarmaktadır: (i) bir söylem öznesine sadece kendine has doğası söylenir, ve (ii) bir doğa sadece kendine has söylem öznesine söylenir. Böyle bir yaklaşım, diyalogdaki “bir (var)-dır” hipotezi *One* öznesi hakkında olmasına karşın, bu hipotez altında tartışılan gerçek meselenin *(var)olmak*, ve herhangi bir söylem öznesine “(var)-dır” demenin koşulları hakkında olduğunu göstermektedir.

Plato’nun karakteri Parmenides’in bu kayıtlarla tam bir uyum içinde “bir (var)-dır” hipotezi altındaki ilk tümdengelimli kanıtlamasına “Bir bir” ile başladığı görülmektedir. Bu tümdengelim ana sorusu, *(var)olmak* ve *Bir* hakkındaki kayıtlar altında “Bir bir” den “Bir (var)-dır” ın nasıl çıkarılacağıdır. İkinci tümdengelimde ise, bu kayıtları izleyerek, Parmenides *(var)olmak*’ı *One*’dan ayrı olarak kabul eder, ve *olmak*’tan ve *One*’dan meydana gelen bir bütün elde eder. Bu tümdengelimdeki kanıtlamanın *(var)olmak* için de geçerli olduğu ve bir *aporia* ürettiği görülmektedir: *(var)olmak* hem kendisiyle benzerdir hem değildir.

Bu tartışma, diyalogdaki Parmenides’in kanıtlamasına güvenirse, eğer “(var)olmak (var)-dır” ise, doğa’ya sahip herhangi bir öznenin hiçbir şekilde *(var)olamayacağı* sonucuna varmaktadır. Kendine has doğası olan herhangi bir özneye “(var)-dır” demenin tek yolu “(var)olmak (var)-dır”ı reddetmektir.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This study analyzes a part of Plato's *Parmenides* in respect to Parmenides' poem, which takes the hypothesis "one is" as its focal point and concentrates on "is," both in the poem and in the dialogue. Before entering into a detailed discussion, I need first to state my reasons for undertaking such a work and to try to point out the importance of this kind of reading in understanding Plato's and Parmenides' writings and in judging their various receptions, and to give a short exposition of the crucial points and guiding theses of the text.

Let us begin with simple observations: The main figure in Plato's dialogue, *Parmenides* as its name also indicates, is the character Parmenides,¹ who appears after the opening scene of the dialogue and takes the traditional role of Socrates as the dialogue's primary questioner. He questions Socrates about his own hypotheses and then he discusses the hypothesis "one is" about the subject *the one* (this part of the dialogue is usually called the second part of Plato's *Parmenides*). At first sight, it seems plausible to assimilate the dialogue's character Parmenides and Parmenides of Elea and take the

¹ In order to avoid confusion, I refer the dialogue itself as *Parmenides*, but the dialogue's character as Parmenides. I use the phrase "historical Parmenides" or "Parmenides of Elea" to signify Parmenides himself who reports the goddess' *muthos* in the poem, unless it is clear from the context that I refer him.

thesis “the one is” as the main thesis of Parmenides’ poem. Most of the commentators share this view, and even mention “historical Parmenides’ One” in their analysis. For this reason, in literature the dialogue is usually read under the assumption that Parmenides’ own thesis is “the one is” and, as a result of this reading, discussions concentrate on the matter of whether the deductions in the second part of the dialogue can be interpreted as a refutation of this thesis. There is even another assimilation here, which is also taken as problematic, i.e., assimilating Parmenides of Elea to the goddess in his poem.² At that point a question can be posed in these terms: Is it possible to represent the main thesis of Parmenides of Elea as “the one is” in a consistent reading of the speech of the goddess in his poem?

Indeed, it is possible to hear the thesis “the one is” regardless of the issue “to whom belongs the declaration,” and the context within which it is asserted. In that case the question “whether the thesis is that of the poem or not” would be a side issue for the discussion. But, a close reading of the second part of the dialogue gives some important clues which indicate that the context within which the discussion of the hypothesis is developed is intimately connected with the restrictions set out by the speech of the goddess in the poem. Thus, it is important to follow these hints to grasp the context of the hypothesis and the problem discussed within it. Under the proviso that the context of the hypothesis is constituted by the speech of the goddess, this hypothesis can be treated

² Strictly speaking, it is not correct to mention the thesis of historical Parmenides. Parmenides’ thesis is the goddess’ *muthos* in the poem. At that point, I agree with the view of Sanday: “Parmenides does not claim anything in the poem as ‘his own.’ The content of the poem is only reported by Parmenides; it is spoken and ‘owned’ by the goddess.” Eric Carlos Sanday, “Dialectic and the Turn Toward Logos in Plato’s *Parmenides*,” (Ph.D. diss., Pennsylvania University, 2003), p.142.

as just an hypothesis discussed by the character Parmenides within the framework described by the poem. And the main determinant of this context is the formulation of the path to *to think* in the speech of the goddess. Thus the argumentation under the hypothesis “one is” may be evaluated by means of the restrictions set out in the poem. But, even if the discussion in the second part of the dialogue develops within the framework described by the poem of Parmenides, it is legitimate to investigate whether “one is” presented as a main thesis of Parmenides of Elea in the dialogue can have any place in the poem itself. In such a reading two things must go together: first as it is posited above to decide whether “the one is” is the thesis of the poem and second, now without any proviso about the context of the dialogue, since the terms which compose “one is,” namely “one” and “is”, are also terms that occur in the poem, to evaluate “the one is” from the perspective of the poem by analysing the fragments in which these terms occur.

This reading must also be an analysis of the part of Plato’s dialogue *Parmenides* in which its character Parmenides discusses *the one* under the hypothesis “one is” from the perspective of the goddess’ speech. In this approach to the hypothesis, it is necessary to find out the hidden presuppositions which govern the argumentation, and investigate whether they are consistent with the sayings of the goddess in the poem. Related to this, to discuss whether the hypothesis “one is” can be taken as a true assertion in respect to the poem and to evaluate the conclusions of the deductions from this perspective and the conclusions that follow the hypothesis “one is” together with these presuppositions – even though they are not expressed in the dialogue – is a task to accomplish.

The following four chapters try to clarify the status of “one” and “is” in the poem and analyze it in this respect. As an introduction to the matter, the second chapter exposes the poem and general outline of its content and the following three chapters consider the senses and functions of “is” and “one” in the poem through the crucial fragments in which “is” and “one” appear both separately and together, and investigates the possibility of assuming “is one” as an assertion of the goddess’ speech.

The poem of Parmenides is divided into three parts: the proem, the way of *aletheia* (truth) and the way of *doxa* (opinion). In the proem a young man (*kouros*) narrates a story about his journey to the abode of the goddess that lies beyond the gates of Day and Night. The other parts of the poem consists of two speeches of the nameless goddess about truth and the opinion of mortals. Since “is” first occurs in the *aletheia* speech of the goddess, most of the scholars claim that the proem is allegorical and has no philosophical importance. But, in my opinion, omitting the proem makes it difficult to answer the question why “is” occurs in the *aletheia* part of the poem. For this reason, it is necessary to analyze the images or names to determine the status of “is” which is beyond these images or names. Following the goddess’ declaration in Fragment 5,

And it is all one to me
Where I am to begin; for I shall return there again,

her speech is considered as a whole, and these images or names are analyzed in relation to the *doxa* speech of the goddess. This opens up a possibility of reading the images or names of Day and Night introduced in the proem from a new perspective. If the analysis of the proem is ignored from the perspective of the entire poem, the full import of the

goddess' speech where it is presented beyond the gates of Day and Night, and the sense of the journey of the young man cannot be understood.

After this proem, the goddess starts her *aletheia* speech, and seems to lay out two options to think. The first path is "the way of persuasion" since "it accompanies the truth," but the second path is "completely unknowable and unutterable." "Is" first appears in the description of the first path in Fragment 2. For this reason, it is necessary to analyze Fragment 2 in detail to find the sense and the function of "is" in the poem. By means of this analysis, it is possible to gain insight into the goddess' use of sheer "is" in Fragment 2. Though in the first of occurrence of "is" its subject purposefully does not appear in the fragment, Fragment 6.1-2 explicitly provides the subject of "is": "to be is." With this fragment, since we have "the one is" to discuss, the question arises whether *is* is said of only *to be* or *is* is said of also *the one* or – as a last option – *the one* is the same as *to be*. Since "is" is an element in the judgment "the one is" presented as a thesis of the poem, the analysis of these fragments helps to clarify both the sense of "is" in the poem and to determine that which [is] "is" is said about. The discussion concerning the subject of "is" illuminates also the question of whether the *muthos* of the goddess is about *the one* or not. The third chapter of this study investigates the meaning of "is" in Fragment 2 and its relation to its hidden subject.

In the formulation of paths in Fragment 2, appears another term that is important in grasping the function of "is" in the poem: "to think" (*noein*). In order to understand the relation of "is" and *to think* Fragment 3 is crucial. This fragment taken together with other fragments provides a new reading of "is" with respect to *to think*. This fragment is

dealt with in detail to find out the complex relation between *to be* and *to think* under the principle of “the same.” In order to reveal this relation, in the fourth chapter, first mortal thinking which has no true trust is compared to *to think (noein)* described in the *aletheia* part of the goddess’ speech, and is discussed whether the relation of *noein* and *to be* can be understood under the principles of mortal thinking. After this search, a reading about the relation between *to be*, *noein* and “the same” is given focusing on Fragment 2, Fragment 3, and Fragment 8.34: with Fragment 2, “is” is detected as *noema* (thought), and with Fragment 3, we have “the same is to think and to be,” and with Fragment 8.34, “the same is to think and wherefore is the thought.” The reading of these three fragments reveals the relation of *noein*, *to be*, *is* and “the same” which is consistent with the remaining parts of the goddess *muthos*. This reading clarifies both the function of “is” with respect to *noein* and *to be* and opens up a way to answer the question of whether a *noema* other than *is* can be within *noein*. The answer to this question is important to grasp the sense of “one” and its relation to “is” from the perspective of the poem.

Discussing the subject of “is” and revealing the relation of *to be* and *noein*, “is” seems to signify the givenness of *to be*. But, we can ask the question whether the relation of “is” and “the same” may be interpreted in such a way that *noein* can receive any content. At that point, in order to decide upon its plausibility and to see its implications, we need to take into account and discuss a strong alternative reading of this relation. This kind of reading is based on Mourelatos’ view of “speculative

predication,”³ and defended by Patricia Curd as a thesis of “predicate monism.”⁴ In that reading the sole function of “is” is to connect any basic entity to its proper nature. The justification of this reading may be based on a reading of Fragment 2, and some evidence about the use of “is” in classical literature, especially in *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*. If this reading is correct, there is no “is” apart from natures, that is, “is” is only a formal structure which indicates the subject’s identity with its nature (*phusis*). This reading, although it is original in changing the reception of the poem completely, cannot be sustained consistently with the *muthos* of the goddess, because its assumption of a plurality of basic entities implies including “is not” into “is,” which is prohibited by its own schema and the speech of the goddess. This discussion shows that even though only its proper *phusis* is said of a subject of discourse, “is” in the poem cannot be reduced to these natures, and thus, Fragments 2 and 3 cannot be interpreted in terms of natures.

The first occurrence of the term “one” comes with the presentation of *semata* (signs) of *to be* by the goddess at the beginning of Fragment 8,

A single story of route still
Is left: that *is*; on this there are signs
Very numerous: that is ungenerated and imperishable;
Whole, unique, unshakable, and with no need of completion;
Nor was once, nor will be; since is, now, altogether, *one*.⁵

³ Alexander P.D. Mourelatos, “Determinacy and Indeterminacy, Being and Non-being in the Fragments of Parmenides” in *New Essays on Plato and the Pre-Socratics*, eds. R. Shiner and J. King-Farlow, *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* supplemental 2 (1976), p. 46.

⁴ Patricia Curd, *The Legacy of Parmenides: Eleatic Monism and Later Presocratic Thought* (Las Vegas: Parmenides Publishing, 2004), p.39.

⁵ As Cordero noted, “only two sources of this line 8.5 have come down to us: Simplicius and Asclepius, and the term ‘hen’ appears only in Simplicius (Phys.78.45).” Nestor Luis Cordero, *By Being, It Is: The Thesis of Parmenides* (Las Vegas: Parmenides Publishing, 2004), p. 175.

As we see, in Fragment 8, after saying that *is* (*estin*) (8.1), the signs (*semata*) (8.1) of *to be* are listed. After the expression “since is now all together” (*epei nun estin homou pan*) (8.5), in 8.6 there appears *one* (*hen*) as a single word. These parts of the Fragment 8 are interpreted by some commentators as an indication that in the *muthos* it is claimed that “the one is.” Here arises a problem to discuss which is crucial in understanding so-called “Parmenides’ one”: Under which assumption to convert this part of the fragment to the thesis that “the one is” is possible. To be consistent with the reading of the other fragments of the poem, it is inevitable to look for another interpretation of this part, otherwise we must admit that the poem itself suffers from inconsistency. But the goddess’ speech suggests a way to find out such an interpretation, by its differentiation of “one” from “is” in declaring *one* as a sign of *to be*. To ignore this aspect of *one* yields a complete misunderstanding of the thesis of the poem. In Chapter Five, we follow this saying of the goddess and try to clarify what is to be a sign and its relation to *to be* in respect of both *noein* and *doxa*.

I offer a reading of relation of signs, *to be* and *is* by interpreting these signs as indications, pointers of *to be*. The meaning of signs is very broad. As scholars note, in Homer it signifies a person’s mark on a shield, a characteristic mark of a thing which makes it recognizable. But there is no particular reference in classical literature to road signs. In the *muthos* of the goddess, however, the choice of the expression is important. These signs are literary road signs which help to understand *to be* and *noein*, but even though they are part of road imagery, they are not identical to the goal of the road. In my reading, I follow this image and try to find a principle to use how a sign candidate is

acceptable as a sign of *to be* in Parmenides' poem. Though, in this chapter, I argue that *one* is only a sign of *to be* and this part of the fragment cannot be interpreted as saying that "is one" or "to be one," yet, the problem formulated above needs to be solved. But at first, it is necessary to see that "to be one" – as expressed also at the level of *phusis* as "is one" – and "the one is" – as expressed also at the level of *phusis* as "one is" – are different assertions – if there is no other hypothesis about *to be* and *the one* which assimilates them. The first, "to be one" claims that *one* [is] a *phusis* of *to be* and the second, "the one is" claims that *is* [is] about *the one*. Since the *muthos* is not about *the one* but about *to be*, a false but plausible reading might be that "to be one," not "the one is."

Now, the problem of how "to be one" might be converted to "the one is," as commentators read, may be investigated. An alternative might be as follows: the reading *one* in Fragment 8.6 as "is one" makes the assertion that *one* [is] a *phusis* of *to be* admissible. Beginning with the *phusis one* – since the subject of the discourse of this *phusis* [is] *the one* – it can also be asserted that – since its *phusis* is *one – to be* in "to be is" is nothing else than *the one*. Hence "to be is" asserts that "the one is." Hence *the one* [is] both *is* and *one*. Thus, for the commentators the problem turns out [to be] whether *the one* can [be] both "is and one." As can be seen, the assumption that the commentators admit under which this conversion is made is that "only its proper *phusis* is said of a subject of discourse."

In this chapter, it is also argued that the relation between *to be* and *noein* does not allow the interpretation of the signs of *to be* as predicates of *to be* or *noemas* within

noein in addition to *is*. The possible cases and their implications for the poem are discussed if it is assumed that the so-called signs as predicates of *to be* or *noemas* within *noein*. This discussion concludes that a sign cannot be taken as *noema* in addition to *is* within *noein*, and cannot be interpreted as a predicate of *to be*. Hence, since *one* is declared in the poem as a sign of *to be*, *one* cannot be supposed to be in *noein* and thus, cannot be interpreted as a predicate of *to be*.

Though this reading shows that “the one is” is not a thesis in the *muthos*, since my concern in the dialogue *Parmenides* is to analyze the deductions under this hypothesis, it is necessary to investigate the conditions under which this hypothesis can be accepted or can not be accepted as a hypothesis about *the one*, with the proviso that it should be consistent with the *muthos* about *to be*. This investigation, which is necessary for proceeding to the deductions under the hypothesis “if one is,” amounts to reconsidering whether “to be one”⁶ and “the one is” can be admitted as the same. In this reconsideration, the goddess’ saying “to be is” is a basis for clarifying the matter whether something can *be* – including *the one*. It is argued that for an analysis of the deductions under the hypothesis “one is,” the standpoint must not be the subjects of discourse but *is* in its relation to *to be*. To understand the sense of these deductions from this standpoint, however, in the first place the similarity must be shown between the first deduction under this hypothesis and the argumentation under the hypothesis “the many is”. The similarity between argumentations under these hypotheses arises from the fact

⁶ Here it must be noted that “to be one” must be taken as a counterpart of “the one is” and read through this work as a statement.

that even though they are asserted about different subjects of discourses, that which is asserted in these hypotheses is the same, i.e., *is*.

To clarify this point Zeno's argumentation in the dialogue is examined and reconstructed, taking how Proclus' interprets his argumentation into account and following what is said about *not the same* and *to be* in the *muthos*. When the character Parmenides says at the beginning of the second deduction, "this time our hypothesis is not if one one, but if one is" he reveals his initial hypothesis. And by positing "participation" as a condition for admitting that "the one is," he approves that in the deductions the restriction which comes from the Parmenides' poem, i.e., "to be is" is accepted. Hence, to understand and to explicate the hypothesis "one is" in respect of *to be*, it is needed to return especially to the second fragment and to discuss variant readings of it in terms of "one" in Chapter Six, and then, interpret the hypothesis itself and try to make its implications clear in respect of "to be is."

After this brief description of the main points that will be discussed in this work and the ground for evaluating the deductions under the hypothesis "one is" in the second part of the dialogue, reading the poem and the dialogue may begin.

CHAPTER II

ON PARMENIDES' POEM

Parmenides: Date and Life

Although there have been many scholarly studies on Parmenides' poem, little is known about his life. Two conflicting testimonies exist for his date. Plato, in his dialogue *Parmenides*, represents him as having visited Athens during the Great Panathenaea when he was about 65, along with his student, Zeno, who was in his late 30s.⁷ They talked to Socrates, who was a young man at that time. Most historians have established that this festival took place in 450 B.C., and it is known that Socrates was born in 469 B.C.. If we assume that when the meeting took place Socrates was about 20, then, on the basis of this testimony, Parmenides must have been born in 515 B.C.⁸ This date contrasts with Diogenes Laertius' report in his work *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*. He gives his

⁷ Plato, *Parmenides*, 127aff.

⁸ See G.S. Kirk, J. E. Raven, and M. Schofield, *The Presocratic Philosophers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957), pp. 239-40. With the translation of Kirk, Raven and Schofield, Plato gives the following information in his dialogue *Parmenides*: "According to Antiphon's account, Pythodorus said that Parmenides and Zeno once came to Athens for the Great Panathena. Parmenides was well advanced in years – about sixty five – and very grey, but a fine looking man. Zeno was then nearly forty, and tall and handsome; he was said to have been Parmenides' favourite. They were staying at Pythodorus' house outside the city-wall in the Ceramicus. Thither went Socrates, and several others with him, in the hope of hearing Zeno's treatise; for this was the first time Parmenides and Zeno had brought it to Athens. Socrates was still very young at the time."

akme (that is, the height of activity, which is usually calculated at 40 intervals) as the 69th Olympiad (504-1). Based on this testimony, Parmenides must have been born between 544 and 541 B.C.⁹ It is difficult to reconcile these accounts. Modern scholars are divided into two camps about the date of his birth. Some rely on Plato's testimony, because while Diogenes' calculation of *akme* is arbitrary, Plato, on the other hand, "whether or not the meeting between Socrates and Parmenides is historical, had no reason to give such exact information about their ages unless he knew it to be correct."¹⁰ Others reject Plato's testimony because in his dialogue he does not "set real characters on his stage but symbolic ones: the young philosopher, enthusiastic but dogmatic; the old master, experienced and didactic."¹¹

⁹ See W. K. C. Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy* vol.2. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), pp. 1-2. With the translation of Kirk, Raven and Schofield, p. 240, Diogenes Laertius' testimony is as follows : "Parmenides of Elea, son of Pyres, was a pupil of Xenophanes (and he, according to Theophrastus in his *Epitome* of Anaximander). But though a pupil of Xenophanes, he did not follow him. He associated also, as Sotion recorded, with the Pythagorean Ameinias, son of Diochaitas, a poor but noble man, whom he preferred to follow. When Ameinias died Parmenides, who came of a distinguished family and was rich, built a shrine to him. It was by Amenians rather than Xenophanes that he was converted to the contemplative life... He flourished in the sixty-ninth Olympiad [*sc.* 500 B.C.]... He is said also to have legislated for the citizens of Elea, as Spesippus records in his work *On the Philosophers*." For further details see Cordero, pp. 6-7.

¹⁰ Guthrie, p.2. Kirk, Raven and Schofield, p. 240, agree with this view: "Whether or not Parmenides and Zeno ever visited Athens and met there the young Socrates, Plato need not have been so precise about their respective ages. The fact that he gives these details strongly suggests that he is writing with chronological accuracy... it is of course true that the date given by Diogenes, which he probably derived from Apollodorus, does not nearly square with this; but, as Burnet, points out (EGP,170), 'the date given by Apollodorus depends solely on that of foundation of Elea (540 B.C), which he had adopted as the flourit of Xenophanes. Parmenides is born in that year, just Zeno is born in the year Parmenides flourished.'"

¹¹ Cordero, p.8, points out that "lack of confidence in antiquity about the reality of this encounter has been shown. Athenaeus had rejected it by claiming that it was highly improbable (Deip. XI, 505f.)." Kingsley insists on the view that the whole of Plato's *Parmenides* is fiction. He claims that Plato adjusted the past to suit his purposes, and had no concern for historical details. See Peter Kingsley, *In the Dark Places of Wisdom* (Inverness, California: The Golden Sufi Center, 1999), pp. 39-45.

Fortunately, it is not the task of the present study to resolve this dispute. Apart from Plato's practice of rearranging historical facts to suit his purposes,¹² however, when we consider the structure of Plato's dialogue *Parmenides*, it seems possible to claim that his main aim is not to narrate a historical encounter, but rather to create a symbolic atmosphere which has structural similarities with Parmenides' poem.

The Work and Its Content

It is generally accepted that Parmenides wrote a single hexameter poem, which may have been titled "On Nature,"¹³ but his work survives only in fragments quoted by other authors. The extant fragments of the poem consist of about 150 lines unevenly distributed. These fragments have been arranged into three parts: the proem, the way of *alethia* (truth) and the way of *doxa* (*opinion*). The poem has two main characters, namely, a nameless *kouros* (youth) and a nameless goddess, and two main parts, namely, a story narrated by the *kouros* about his journey to the abode of the goddess (the proem), and two speeches of the goddess addressing the *kouros*. The first speech of the goddess, what she calls, "my trustworthy speech to you and thought" (8.50), contains her teaching about the "well-rounded heart of persuasive truth"(1.29). The second speech includes an account of beliefs of mortals, in which she presents an account of cosmology in

¹² Cordero, p.8, with reference to M. Unterstenier, gives an example to this type of anachronism from *Timaeus* 20D where Solon becomes younger by twenty and even by thirty years.

¹³ Diogenes Laertius (I.16) reports that "Others left no more than one treatise each, as did Melissus, Parmenides, Anaxagoras." See Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, trans. R.D. Hicks (Inness. Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995).

“deceitful ordering of my words” (8.52). When we look at the received reconstruction of extant fragments, the content of the poem appears as follows.

All but last two lines of the proem has been preserved by Sextus Empiricus in his *Against the Mathematicians*. He claims that the poem begins with the first 30 lines of fragment 1. These lines describe a journey of a man to the abode of a goddess, and introduce a speech by the goddess, and include her words about what he must learn: “both the unshakable heart of well-rounded truth and the opinions of mortals” (1.29-30). There is a general consensus among scholars that the proem is allegorical, but as Curd observes, “it is not clear what the allegory is about.”¹⁴ For this reason, some scholars think that the proem is only a “literary artifice” which establishes setting and characters, but is not philosophically important.¹⁵ On the other hand, some commentators have seen in the proem a summary of the poem in general, and preferred to interpret images in proem as an allegorical presentation of Parmenides’ philosophy.¹⁶

In the following pages, various interpretations of the images in the proem will be presented. The journey in the proem is interrupted when the traveller and his divine partners, the daughters of the Sun, encounter “the gate of paths of Day and

¹⁴ Patricia Curd, *The Legacy of Parmenides: Eleatic Monism and Later Presocratic Thought* (Las Vegas : Parmenides Publishing, 2004), p.19. Curd here writes that the proem “has been alternatively exhaustively analysed and ignored by commentators. The apparent influences of Homer and Hesiod on the proem have been catalogued, but there is little general agreement about how fragment 1 is to be interpreted.”

¹⁵ See F.M. Cornford, *Plato and Parmenides* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1958), p.30. Here he writes that “we need not linger over the allegorical proem.” See also J. Barnes, *Presocratic Philosophy* vol. I. (Boston: Routledge & Keagan Paul, 1982), p.156. He writes: “The poem began with a long allegorical prologue, the interpretation of which is for the most part of little philosophical importance.” Taran agrees with this view and asserts that that proem is only a literary device. For details, see Leonard Taran, *Parmenides* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), pp.31-4.

¹⁶ See Cordero, pp.21-30.

Night” guarded by Dike. Even though Dike, who holds the keys that open and close the gate, appears dangerous (“much-punishing”), she allows the traveller to enter into the realm of the goddess when the daughters of the Sun persuade her with cunning words. Thus, the traveller reaches the realm of the goddess who will instruct him on persuasive truth and the opinion of mortals. After he arrives at the domain of the immortal which lies beyond the gates of Day and Night, the youth never speaks and only hears what the goddess says. In Fragment 2, the goddess lays two paths of inquiry to think: *is* and *is not*, but she eliminates one of them as “wholly unlearnable” because “you could not know what-is-not.” The speech of the goddess determines the only content of *noein*¹⁷ as *is* when she talks about the content of the path of *to think*. This crucial fragment will be analyzed in the following pages in detail.

Fragment 3, which is another crucial fragment, gives the relation between *noein* and *to be* under the principle of “the same.” The claim here will be that when the

¹⁷ In a series of articles von Fritz analyzed the meaning of *noos* and *noein* in the Homeric poems and in early Greek philosophy. According to von Fritz, the fundamental meaning of *noein* in Homeric poems is “to realize or understand the situation... the realization of the truth comes always as a sudden intuition. The truth is suddenly seen.” For this reason, he concept of *noein* is closely related to the sense of vision. But *noein* “is always distinguished from purely perception, it is not conceived of as the result of a process of reasoning... *noos* usually penetrates beyond the surface appearance, and discovers the real truth about the matter.” Thus, *noein* is in direct touch with the ultimate reality. As von Fritz pointed out, in the philosophy of Parmenides, *noein* can not reveal itself without *to be*. *Noein* will be empty if it does not have “is” within it. As a result of his analysis, von Fritz sums Parmenides conception of *noein* in the following way : “Since, as this analysis shown, Parmenides undoubtedly does say that there can be no *noein* without the *being* and that both are inextricably connected, even identical.” Here following the analysis of von Fritz, we can say that “since to be does not only belong to the realm of truth, but *is* the ultimate reality, *noein* sees the ultimate truth, because it is identical with it. For details see Kurt von Fritz, “Nous, Noein, and their Derivatives in Presocratic Philosophy (Excluding Anaxagoras): Part I. From the Beginning to Parmenides,” *Classical Philology*, 40, no.4 (October 1945): 223-42.

goddess says “is,” she both specifies the only content *noein* has and ties *is* and *noein* under the principle of “the same.” However, the important point is that when the goddess’ speech determines the relation of *is* and *noein*, the elements of this judgment are not in *noein*, because the sole content of *noein* [is] *is*. To grasp the *muthos* of the goddess, we must separate her judgments about the conditions of understanding *to be* and *noein* from *noein* itself. The problems that may arise out of this confusion will be discussed in Chapter Five.

Fragment 6 is a criticism of uncritical tribes, “by whom to be and not-to be have been thought are the same and not the same.” By means of this criticism, the goddess instructs the *kouros* about the working principle of doxical thinking which is based on two contrary names established to think *to be*. In order to find out what the basic error of doxical thinking is, both her *aletheia* and *doxa* section of her speech need to be considered.. Fragment 6, which is part of the *aletheia* speech, describes ordinary mortals as “knowing nothing” and “two-headed.” Their “wandering thought” is guided by helplessness. They are uncritical because they cannot distinguish between “is and is not.”

It is not possible, however, to understand the basic error of mortal thought when only *aletheia* speech of the goddess is considered. The goddess marks her transition to the *doxa* speech in these words: “here I stop my trustworthy speech to you and and thought about truth ; from here onwards learn mortal opinions, listening to deceitful ordering my words” (fragment 8.50-52), and in the next two lines, she gives a substantial clue about the error of mortal thought: “they established two forms in their minds for

naming, of which it is not right to name one... they distinguished opposites in body and established signs apart from one another.”

According to the goddess, mortal thinking establishes names that assign a distinguishing characteristic to each thing. They distinguished “things” opposed in form and established distinguishing marks for them. In Fragment 9, she gives the names of these opposites under which all forms are subsumed: “all things have been named light and night.” The essence of mortal thought is characterized by this type of naming activity which divides all that is into contrary signs. As Palmer points out, the opposition between these two forms, Light and Night, “does not appear to be a naturally a given distinction. Light and Night do not seem to be independently distinct forms to which mortals simply assign the respectively assign appropriate marks or signs. Instead, Light and Night themselves belong to the set of marks or signs that mortals bestow upon the object of their naming.”¹⁸ Thus, these two opposite names may be interpreted as two categories according to which all that is is thought.

Since these are contrary names, we can claim that doxical thinking is based on a system of signs in which every sign is defined in terms of what the other is not. The basic error of mortal thought seems to equate these names posited as contraries with *to be*; that is, it tries to think *to be* in terms of a system of signs which is founded on two categorical contraries. Since each of contrary names is defined in terms of the other, that is, Light is what Night is not, when *doxical* thought thinks that they represent *to be*, it falls into error which can be stated in these statements: “to be is and is not, and not to be

¹⁸ John Palmer, *Plato's Reception of Parmenides* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), p.210.

is and is not.” In sum, the mortal thought goes astray when it tries to think *to be* under the principle to which *doxical thinking* is subjected: “the same and not the same.”

In Fragment 7, the goddess wants the *kouros* to judge “the very contentious disproof by his reasoning.” This appears to be an open challenge for the *kouros* to evaluate the goddess’ *muthos*. How can you think *to be* with contrary names as doxical thinking thinks? And if the sole content of *noein* is determined as *is*, and *is* [is] tied to “the same,” to think *is* as *not* would be to think *is* [is] not the same as *is*, or to think *is* as *not-is*, but the end result of this thinking would be an unlimited sequence which *noein* cannot grasp. Now, if the sole content of *noein* [is] *is*, and *is* [is] tied to the same, there is only one *muthos* to say: *is*. If the goal of the journey of the *kouros* is to learn what *noein* is, then his journey seems to end when the goddess determines the sole content of *noein* as *is*, and gives in her *muthos* the principle by which they must be grasped. Thus, the beginning and end of the journey coincide. Even though her speech progresses in a linear form, this is misleading. As she declares in Fragment 5,

And it is all one to me
Where I am to begin; for I shall return there again.

This assertion of the goddess, “wherever I go I return to being,” points to the limitation of the means through which she presents her speech. Then, her speech must be considered as a whole which consists of concurrent and interdependent parts.¹⁹ Now, in Fragment 2, the goddess determines the sole content (*noema*) of *noein* as *is*. In Fragment 3, she says “the same is to think and to be.” This fragment both gives the sameness of

¹⁹ For a full discussion about the wholistic character of the goddess’ speech and the limitation of linear form through her speech is presented, see Matthew Wayne Gorman, “The Nature of Negative Language” (Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, 1998), p.15.

noein and *to be* and when *noein* is considered from the perspective of its content it gives the sameness of *to think* and *to be* and *to be* and *is*. This relation becomes visible when we consider 8.34, “the same is to think (*noein*) and wherefore is the thought (*noema*)”²⁰ under the consideration that *is* [is] the only *noema* of *noein*. These relations must be kept in mind while interpreting the signs of *to be* that are declared at the beginning of Fragment 8.13: “a single story of a path is left: *is*, on this path there are signs.” When this reasoning is followed, it is clear that these signs cannot be in *noein*. These signs are markers that point toward *to be*. The *kouros* hears what these signs are: *one*, ungenerated, indestructible, now. Here, there seems to be an *aporia* at first glance. If these signs are predicates that add certain qualities to *to be*, then the path of “*is*” will be closed, because nothing can be added to *to be* and *noein*. The paradoxical status of signs of *to be* will be examined focussing on two signs, *one* and *now*.

After this general introduction, the discussion moves on to the first part of the journey, called “proem.”

²⁰ Here we follow Mourelatos’s translation in *The Route of Parmenides* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970), pp. 170–2, “And the same is to think of and wherefore is the thinking”, of Fragment 8. 34 “ταὐτὸν δ' ἐστὶ νοεῖν τε καὶ οὐνεκεν ἔστι νόημα”.

CHAPTER III

THE ROUTES

The Proem

The journey begins with these lines:

The mares that carry me as far as *thumos* might reach,
Were taking me, when they brought and placed me upon much speaking
route
Of the goddess, that carries everywhere unscathed the man who knows
along that road I was carried, for thereon the much-guided mares were
carrying me
Straining to pull the chariot, and maidens were leading the way.²¹

The first line seems to determine the motivation of journey and privileged status of the traveller. The meaning of *thumos*²² in Homer encompasses courage and impulse, and a

²¹*Parmenides of Elea: Fragments*, trans. David Gallop (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1984) p.49.

²²See C.P. Casweel, "Study of *Thumos* in Early Greek Epic," *Mnemosyne* Suppl. 144 Leiden:1990. In his study he identifies five senses of *thumos* in Homer: 1. Loss of consciousness / death; 2. Intellect/cognition; 3. Emotion; 4. Inner debate / conflict; 5. Motivation. As Vishwa P. Adluri informs us, "the notion of '*thumos*' undergoes an interesting history of changing meanings in Greek literature. Although it came to exclusively mean desire in later Greek thought, in Homer it is difficult to find a clear-cut distinction between intellect and emotion. In Homeric epic, *thumos* seems to be the most prominent psychic entity in man, which has the above meanings Casweel specified. In subsequent history, the intellectual activities of *thumos* have been taken over by *noos*, and the function of life force and individuality have been taken over by *psuche*. In Plato's tripartite soul, *thumos* becomes subsumed within *psuche* as a part subordinated to *logistikon* (rational). Although both *thumos* and *psuche* are called soul, there is an important difference between them. Both can be detachable from the body, but if the body is to live, *thumos* must return to the body; if it does not, both body and *thumos* die. The *psuche*, unlike *thumos*, has nothing to do with body." For this reason, Adluri calls *thumos* "mortal soul." Thus, the phrase "as far as my *thumos* reach" refers to

certain capacity of deliberation. At Od.12.57-8, when Circe presents Odysseus two ways, one of which he will have to choose (Scylla and Carybdis), she tells him he will decide in his *thumos*. Some scholars see in this connection of *thumos* with deliberation “a break from the presentation of truth by other traditional ‘masters of truth’ in which cases the listener must trust the master, who declares the truth if he likes. Parmenides, as a master of philosophy, demands a voluntary conscious impulse on the part of anyone to learn, and allows him to judge by reasoning the arguments he has heard.”²³

The traveller is carried in a chariot by mares. Taran informs us that Greek athletes preferred mares for racing,²⁴ this imagery seems to be appropriate when we consider the lines just preceding his arrival at the gateway. The chariot reaches the gateway at such a great speed that “its axle, glowing in its naves, gave forth the shrill sound of pipe, for it was urged on by two rounded wheels at either end” (1.7-8). The image of mare and chariot, which is a means of transport used by gods and heroes,²⁵ suggest that the traveller distinguishes himself from ordinary mortals like a hero or semi-divine. While the goddess declares that he is on the path which “is very far from the beaten track of men” (Fragment 1-28), she may be emphasizing his closeness to divine.

the limit of mortality. In the proem, this limit is symbolized by the gates of Night and Day. This means that even if *kouros*' motivation is important for the journey to the realm of the goddess, it is not sufficient to reach the goal. He cannot enter the realm of immortal unless divine partners guide him. For details, see P.Vishwa Adluri, “Mortal Knowledge in Parmenides and Plato: A Study in Physis, Journey, Thumos and Eros” (Ph. D. diss., New School University, 2002), pp.77-90.

²³ Cordero, p.24. For a full discussion of “masters of truth,” see Marcel Detienne *Masters of Truth in Ancient Greece* (New York : Zone Books, 1999).

²⁴ Taran, p.9.

²⁵ Cordero, p.25. “Both Zeus (Il. VIII, 41,438; XIII, 23) and Hera (Il. V,748,380) usually cross the sky by chariot, which they themselves drive.”

The connotations of the term *kouros* may be taken as supporting evidence for this reading. Its usual meaning is “young man,” as opposed to girl, but Kingsley claims that *kouros* had a far wider meaning in practice. The word indicated somebody who is young in attitude rather than age. The *kouros* stands on the border between the world of humans and the world of the divine. He has the purity and innocence of a child, and thus, he has a special status.²⁶ However, this reading is not uncontroversial.

Guthrie explicitly states his astonishment about the gender of the horses: “I do not know why Parmenides made the steeds mares (they are masculine in Pindar, Ol.7.71.).”²⁷ There is another point that is puzzling. Although the traveller seems to decide the journey in his *thumos*, it is obvious that he is in a passive role and in the control of the mares. He is carried and guided by the mares and maidens, who turn out to be Heliades, the daughters of the Sun (Fragment 1-8), lead the way. When he arrives at

²⁶ Kingsley, pp. 72-3.

²⁷ Guthrie, p.7. See also A. H. Coxon, “The Fragments of Parmenides,” *Phronesis* Supplementary Volume III. (Assen :Van Gorcum,1986). He expresses his surprise concerning female charioteers, and claimed that Parmenides preferred female horses, because the feminine is “warmer” than the masculine, and thus, nearer to fire and light. Some scholars, such as Diels connect the image of horse with shamanistic journeys. In his *the Route of Parmenides*, pp.42-43, Mourelatos has pointed out, “...the shaman is a mediator between men and god and men. He has the capacity of leaving his body in a trance to travel to Heaven or to the underworld. The means of conveyance are sometimes flying chariots. There is certain affinity between the shaman and certain animals, especially the horse.” Mourelatos however, thinks that these similarities may be due to coincidence. According to Kirk, Raven and Schofield, p.243, “the evidence for a shamanistic tradition in early Greece is doubtful.” However, as John F. Newel pointed out, all these double-allusions may be very intention of Parmenides, that is, he alludes to shamanistic journey, but it is not a shamanistic journey; we expect the horses to be masculine, but they are female. Newel, in a detailed comparative survey of allusions to images of classical literature, claims that “given that an ancient audience would have expected the first word to have a significant on the content that follows, it appears that Parmenides was intentionally playing against his audience’s natural expectations”. Newel gives many examples of double-imagery which disappoint the reader’s natural expectations. For instance, the horses reminds of chariot racing, but there is no mention of racing in poem; one expects that “intelligent mares” reveals the truth, when one thinks of Achilles’ talking horse, Xanthos, at Iliad, 19.408.417’, but they never speak in poem. The summit of this interplay of natural expectations is the image of the gates of Night and Light. For further details see John F. Newel “Parmenidean Irony” (Ph. D. diss., University of Pittsburg, 2002).

the abode of the goddess, she receives him warmly, and addresses him: “Youth attended by immortal charioteers who come to our House with mares that carry you” (1.24-25). These hints suggest that the youth would not have reached the goal unless the divine escorts had helped and guided him.²⁸

Although it is said that the traveller is carried in a chariot, and is guided by the Heliades, the direction of journey is not given. The main clue comes in Fragment 1-9, “the Heliades, having left the Houses of Night towards light, and having pushed back the veils from their hands.” The sentence is ambiguous and open to two possible readings. Most interpreters believe that the journey is from darkness into the light: the Heliades pick the traveller up, leave the House of Night, approach the Light, and then push back their veils. However, it could also be read that they leave the House of Night into the Light, pick him up, and push back their veils. The first reading suggests that the journey is from darkness toward the light, that light is the symbol of *to be* and darkness is that of *not to be*. The proponents of the second reading claim that the Heliades left the House of

²⁸ For the importance of guidance in the Poem, see Robbiano, Chiara., *Becoming Being On Parmenides' Transformative Philosophy*, (Academia Verlag, 2006), especially pp.121-26. She remarks: “A preliminary journey that precedes the most important journey, both Odysseus and the traveller do not seem to need any specific instruction. They enjoy special guidance. Odysseus is carried by wind. “let there be in thy mind no concern for a pilot to guide thy ship... and breath of North Wind will bear her ownward.” Likewise, the protagonist of Parmenides' Poem portrays himself as being on a chariot led by mares, on a journey to the goddess. Already from the first words of the Poem the importance of guidance is stressed. For instance, we must see the insistence on the verb *phero* in the first four verses in the light of the announcement that guidance is important.” The same point is stressed by Cordero, who reminds us of the myth of Phaethon's flight. Phaethon, who is the brother of Heliades, wanted to take his father's place and drive the Sun's chariot, but his inexperience produced such a great catastrophe that Zeus struck him with his thunderbolt, and he crashed to Earth in flames. He died. The same link has been observed by C.M.Bowra in “The Poem of Parmenides” *Classical Quarterly* 32 (1937) pp.97-112: “He does not mention Phaethon's name, but he used certain elements in his story to make his own myth... But he develops his myth to a different conclusion, and once he passes the gates and is welcomed by the goddess, any association with Phaethon is lost.” Thus, under the category of guidance, scholars contrast the safe journey of *kouros* with the dangerous journey of Phaethon.

Night to pick up the *kouros* and then they accompany him to return into the House of Night. As Tyler J. Young observes,

in the first reading, one has an image of transcendence, an illumination – they have left the dark and are entering the light. In the second reading, the House of Night is where the Heliades originated, not where they pick up the *kouros*: he already begins in his journey in blaze of light.²⁹

Following the first reading, the journey along the way of night is interrupted when the traveler and his divine escorts arrive at two gates, “there stand the gates of the ways of Night and Day.” Following the second reading, the daughters of the Sun come into the light to collect the *kouros*, and escort him on the return to the House of Night.³⁰ To the first reading, it is possible to raise at least two objections. First, as Lisa Atwood Wilkinson observes,

If we do not attend to the entire poem... we might be tempted to conclude, as many have, that the youth’s quest is singularly for the light: his departure is from the House of Night and his destination is signaled by his arrival at the goddess’ ‘House’, which is often conceived as a ‘House of Light’. But, nowhere in the Poem is the House of the goddess described as full of light, shining, and brilliant.³¹

²⁹ J. Tyler Young, “Perceiving Parmenides: A Reading of Parmenides of Elea’s Philosophy By Way Of Proem,” (MA thesis, Dalhousie University, 2006), p.15. The first reading are defended by many scholars. For the first reading, see Charles Kahn, “The Thesis of Parmenides,” *Review of Metaphysics* 22 (1968/69) pp. 704 -724 (1968/69); G. Vlastos, “Parmenides’ Theory of Knowledge,” *Transactions and Proceedings of Amer. Philol. Assoc.* 77(1946) 73, n.43; Cordero, p. 27; Reiner Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), p.63. The ‘*katabasis*’ reading of the fragment can be found in W. Burkert ‘*Das Proömium des Parmenides und die Katabasis des Pythagoras*’, 1969 *Phronesis* 14, 1-30; Kingsley, pp.70-1.

³⁰ Gallop, *Fragments*, p.6 : “It has often been supposed that he is travelling from darkness into light, that light symbolizes ‘being’ and darkness ‘not being’ and that his conveyance into the light (B.1.10) represents his conversion from ignorance to knowledge. But the words for ‘into light’ are most plausibly connected both in grammar and sense, not with the travellers own journey, but with that of the Daughters of the Sun, immediately after they have left the House of Night. They come into the light, we may imagine, to collect their passanger, and they escort him back into the House of Night. Thus, his priveleged access of truth will be gained, like that of Odysseus visiting the underworld, through descent into a magic region.”

³¹ Lisa Atwood Wilkinson, “Reconsidering Muthos and Logos: Parmenides and The Nameless of To Eon” (Ph.D. diss, University of South Floriada, 2002), p.163.

And, secondly, when we consider the whole poem, light and night are depicted in the goddess' speech on mortal opinion as contrary names established by mortals to think *to be*. The ambiguity in the text suggests that the very intention of Parmenides is not to give a precise direction of journey, because when the entire poem is considered, the place where the gates are placed represents the ultimate limit for doxical thinking. Remember, in Fragment 9, as mentioned above: "all things are named 'light' and 'night'." Mortal thinking is limited to these categorical contraries, and thinks that when one is, the other is not. Throughout the journey, Parmenides' play of allusions seems to warn us not to privilege one image over another. The place where the paths of night and light cross is the limit of our mortal thinking. Here, it is seen that these opposites are united, in the sense that they have equal right to represent *to be*. How can it be said that both "Night is" and "Day is"? We believe that when "Night is," "Light is not," and when "Light is," "Night is not," that is, that "to be is and to be is not".

If mortal thinking works under the principle which produces "is and is not," the only way to avoid this error is to go beyond the limitation of doxical thinking. How is it possible to hold these opposites together? The answer is in the abode of the nameless goddess that lies beyond the gates. In the goddess' domain, it is understood that they are only provisional names established by mortals to think the same *to be*. Thus, these are gates dividing *mortal thinking* and *noein, to be* and *doxical names* which are established by mortals. And the *kouros* enters into this realm by permission of Dike, who is a sort of

gatekeeper.³² If the above line of thought is followed, Dike allows *kouros* to pass from the limitation of doxical thinking to the realm of divine where there are no two opposed “thought-forms,”

and for these Dike, much-avenging, holds the keys of retribution.
Coaxing her with gentle words, the maidens
Did cunningly persuade her that she should push back the bolted bar for them
Swiftly from the gates;

When he arrives at the goal of his journey, the goddess welcomes him warmly, takes his right hand in hers, and starts her speech:

Oh youth, accompanied by immortal guides and maers that bring you to
reach my home welcome; for it is no ill fortune that sent you forth to
travel.

The goddess addresses him as *kouros*. Why? The most plausible interpretation seems to be that in the abode of the goddess there are no names, because names belong to *doxa*, and their function is to divide and separate *to be*. *Kouros* does not indicate that the journeying man is young in age, but rather his distance from doxical thinking. He can hear what the nameless goddess says without interfering in what he heard and received.³³ The goddess tells the youth at the beginning of their encounter: “it is fitting

³² For the meaning of Dike (justice), see Robbino, pp.54 -8. It is generally connected with boundaries and divisions. For details, see Rose M. Cherubin, “Parmenides and Problem of Enquiry,” (Ph. D. diss., The City University of New York, 1996), pp.119-20. In the proem, Dike separates doxical thinking from *noein*, the mortal realm from immortal realm. Dike is the divinity which assures that these limits are not overstepped.

³³ Cf. Kingsley, p.73. The general meaning of *kouros* is “young man” and it can be used for a boy as opposed to a girl. In the context of initiation, it may mean “without experience.” For details see M.R. Casgrove, “The *kouros* Motif in Parmenides,” *Phronesis* 19, 1974, 94.

that you will learn all things – the untrembling heart³⁴ of well-rounded truth and the opinions of mortals.” And she starts to instruct the *kouros* about two paths of inquiry to think.

This is the beginning of fragment 2.

³⁴ As Cordero, p.31, informed us, the image of the heart of truth was analysed by E. Martineu: “...its content is plain. the heart is not only the vital core but also the central nucleus of individual truth also has its ‘heart.’”

Fragment 2

1 Well then, I will tell you - and you listen, receive my word - what are
the only ways of investigation there are to think:
3 one, on the one hand, [to think] that “is”, and that it is not not to be;
this is the way of persuasion, since it accompanies the truth;
5 another, on the other hand, [to think] that “is not”, and that it is
necessary not to-be; I tell you that this path is completely unknowable,
since you will not know that which is not (as it is not possible) or utter
it.³⁵

In fragment 2, the goddess seems to lay out two alternative paths to think at first glance. The first path is expressed as the course of persuasion, and the other is described as “completely unknowable and unutterable.” At that point, while the grammatical subjects of “is” and “is not” are not clearly specified, since it is asserted that one of the paths is not viable, there remains only one path to think: that *is*. The complexity of the text begins to emerge when these ways are read as alternative paths of inquiry to think. The question is: how many paths of inquiry are there to think when the whole text is considered? Are there actually two options for thought to choose? How does the goddess posit these two paths at the beginning? What is the nature of the tie that the goddess

³⁵ Εἰ δ' ἄγ' ἐγὼν ἐρέω, κόμισαι δὲ σὺ μῦθον ἀκούσας,
αἵπερ ὁδοὶ μοῦναι διζήσιός εἰσι νοῆσαι·
ἢ μὲν ὅπως ἔστιν τε καὶ ὡς οὐκ ἔστι μὴ εἶναι,
Πειθοῦς ἔστι κέλευθος - Ἀληθείη γὰρ ὀπηδεῖ -,

[5] ἢ δ' ὡς οὐκ ἔστιν τε καὶ ὡς χρεῶν ἔστι μὴ εἶναι,
τὴν δὴ τοι φράζω παναπευθέα ἔμμεν ἀταρπὸν·
οὔτε γὰρ ἂν γνοίης τό γε μὴ ἔδον - οὐ γὰρ ἀνυστόν -
οὔτε φράσσεις·

establishes between *to think* and *to be*? Why and on what basis does she eliminate the second path?

For the accurate appreciation of Parmenides' (or more precisely the goddess') words, different readings are offered in which alternative options appear, and by means of this reading exercise, the crucial point of Parmenides' thesis will be revealed. To enter into this discussion, let us return to and simplify the formulations of the ways:

... that "is", and that is not not to be;
... that "is not", and that is necessary not-to be;³⁶

Even though neither "is" nor "is not" has an explicit grammatical subject in these initial expressions of the paths, grammatical subjects may easily be provided from later fragments.³⁷ The implicit evidence may be found in Fragment 2.7-8, where goddess states the unknowability of *not to be*. If *not to be* is not knowable, what would be the knowable then? The most plausible answer seems [to be] *to be*. Indeed, Fragment 6.1-2 explicitly provides the subject of "is": "It is necessary to say and to think that *to be is*."³⁸ In order to find what the subject of "is" is, one may use *semata* of *to be* laid out in

³⁶ ... ἔστιν τε καὶ ... οὐκ ἔστι μὴ εἶναι ... οὐκ ἔστιν τε καὶ ... χρεῶν ἔστι μὴ εἶναι

³⁷ A large number of scholars dealt with the problem of subject in fragment 2. But, it is generally accepted that the subject in later fragments is *to eon*. For very good analysis of different interpretations for the lack of the subject in fr.2, see, Cordero, 'By Being, It is', Ch.3. Cordero's own view is that "is" produces its own subject. This means that Parmenides does not start from a subject, but a verb "is". That "is" denotes *being* in the present tense, just as "is writing" denotes that the fact of writing "is happening". Thus, in fr.2, "is" means "is being", "the fact of being is present now." It is clear that just as "rain" is the only possible subject of the phrase "it rains", the only subject of "is" will be *Being*.

³⁸ Χρὴ τὸ λέγειν τε νοεῖν τ' ἐὸν ἔμμενα· ἔστι γὰρ εἶναι

Fragment 8.³⁹ According to this fragment, the *signs* of *to be* will be “one” (8.5); “without birth and death” (B8, 5 - 21); “homogeneous” (B8, 22 - 25); “unchangeable” (B8,26 - 31), and “not incomplete” (B8, 32 - 49). From these, it is clear that any phenomenal subject of inquiry which is characterized by change does not survive the test. Moreover, when the goddess says “is” and “is not” she does not merely mean *is* but *is completely* –to be is entirely or not at all (Fragment 8.11 and 24). There is no intermediate term between “is” and “is not” which can open the possibility that to the missing subject may be said both “is and is not.” Hence, at first sight it seems that the domain of the goddess is divided into two exclusive areas: *absolutely is* and *absolutely is not*.

How can a subject candidate be found that is “without birth and death?” If the sign of this “subject” were to be generated and perishable, since becoming presupposes initial *not*, this subject would be *is not* at prior time to its birth; on the other hand, since perishing presupposes final *not*, this “sign” would imply to think it as *is not*. If it were a subject that is completely *is* in the present, which is defined as later than yesterday and earlier than the future, then we would have to think of it as *not* in the future or past. If “divisible” were its sign, since its one part *is* what the other part *not-is*, it would not be completely *is*. If “mobility” were its sign, it would *be* “here,” but *not* “there,” and it

³⁹ As Robbiano, p.109, points out, *semata* can be used to identity of a person. In the *Odyssey*, Penelope recognize Odysseus when he comes home through a testing process. She tests Odysseus by means of “unmoved bed.” And, by saying that it is unmoved, Odysseus persuades her that he is Odysseus, and “unmoved bed” is called *sema* at Od.23,188.

could *not be completely is*.⁴⁰ All the signs listed above point out that the subject of *is* differs from the subjects to which both “is” and “not-is” can be added. In the light of these signs, the only candidate which passes test seems to be the subject “*being*.” To put all of this textual evidence together, they indicate that while “*being*” is the missing grammatical subject of “*is*,” that of “*is not*” is “*not-being*.”

What is the relation of *being* and *is*? The meaning of this relation may be revealed in three alternative relations between “is” and a subject “X.” In the first case, it may be supposed that although they are combined in a sentence, “X” and “to be” are different from each other. This case can be divided into two subcases. In the first instance, although “X is” may be true under some conditions, “X” and “is” do not always go together. This means that “is not” may be added to “X” as well as “is.” Hence, under certain conditions “X is” is true and under other conditions “X is not” true. Suppose “X” is Fire. If it is possible to say both “Fire is” and “Fire is not,” then the “isness” of fire will be attributed to Fire only relative to certain context, and thus, “Fire” will be “is” qualifiedly. But, as observed above, this relation between “X” and “is” that requires some qualifiers that violate the criteria of unchangeability and absoluteness mentioned above: “it must completely *is*” (Fragment 8.11) and “it must be unchangeable.” Even if time qualification is ignored for a moment, the same conclusion would follow, because in this case, “is” and “is not” would be open possibilities for subject “X” by initial hypothesis. Moreover, the true sentence, “Fire is and fire” will

⁴⁰ For a discussion of signs, see Carl Richard Rauscher, “All For Naught: Episodes in The Intellectual History of Nothing” (Ph.D. diss., Emory University, 1984), pp.53-4.

indicate that the subject Fire is not completely *is*, violating the absoluteness “isness” of our subject.

The second subcase assumes that “X” and “is” always go together, and thus, “is not” is never added to “X.” Here, as in the first subcase, the whatness of “X” (that is, “x”) and whatness of “*being*” (that is, “is”) are different from each other by initial hypothesis. This distinction between X and its being becomes apparent when we notice the differences between two pieces of information which are contained in “X is”: what is and that it is. This amounts to saying that neither the whatness of “X” can explain its own being nor can its being explain X. Thus, the togetherness of “X” and “is” must presuppose a prior condition which serves as a ground on which to join “X” and “is.”

To illustrate the point suppose that “X” is Fire. Now, if the whatness of Fire (“It is fire”) does not explain its own being (“Fire is”), or its being does not explain its fireness, the question arises: What is the condition which enables them to join? Or, more precisely, what prevents something else from its togetherness with “is”? For example, if it is claimed that the same relation holds between “Water” and “*is*”, then we may argue that either the relation of “togetherness” will be arbitrary, or the relation will be many. But, this does not pass the test of signs which are used to identify the subject of “is,” because as pointed out above, *oneness* must be a sign of this *being* described by the goddess. Moreover, in every instance of changing subject’s name, since “x” and “is” are different, a whole is obtained which has incompatible natures.

This situation becomes visible when we notice two components that is included in, say, “Water is”: “It is water” and “It is.” The first component says that the nature of

this “It” [is] water, while, by similar reasoning, the second component says that the being of that “It” [is] *is*. Thus, when we say “Water is,” that is, “Water [is] water” and “Being is,” the different natures of different subjects merge into each other. But is it possible to add anything to *to be*? This is one of the basic reason why the proposed subjects cannot survive the test.

The most plausible candidate seems to be *arche* of all appearances, or god. If one posits an *arche* (on the supposition that “is” and this *arche* always go together) to explain the unity of appearances, this *arche* cannot be something whose being needs explanation, because as an ultimate being it explains the coming-to-be of appearances, and thus, it must in some way be on different level from that of which it is the *arche*. This means that if appearances are characterized with change, motion, plurality and differentiation, the posited *arche* must be imperishable, motionless, and immune from differentiation. But if this *arche* is given a name which is different from “*being*,” the whatness of “X” cannot provide an explanation of its own being. Moreover, if we assume that Water is the ultimate being as a source of all things and we derive Fire from Water, as Austin observed,⁴¹ the sentence expressing the entire ontology will be: “Water is both water and fire.” That is, the same thing is both itself and its opposite.

When we take “Water” as “*being*,” this statement turns out to be: “Being is and is not.” Moreover, when we try to reduce all elements into one chosen element as the ultimate being, the same operation can be taken in the opposite direction: “Fire is fire

⁴¹ Scott Austin, *Parmenides: Being, Bounds, and Logic* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), p.130.

and water.” This means that the choice of any particular one of the elements as *arche*, that is, as *being* is arbitrary.

Thus, this conclusion can be generalized: Whenever one of the fundamental elements is elevated to the level of *being*, this would be arbitrary. On the other hand, if it is assumed that all of these opposites may be elevated to the level of *being*, since each of a pair of opposites is defined with its otherness to the other opposite, *being* would be both “is and is not.” Moreover, as noted above, whenever something is elevated to the level of *to be* by naming it, it must be talked about its “isness” which is different from the name that is given to it. In this case, although this *arche* is posited to explain the being of appearances, its own being which is different from its name can not be explained.

As seen, the indivisibility sign of *being* laid out in Fragment 8 precludes any difference which is similar to that posed by our initial assumption. If, say, the whatness of God (“god”) is different from its being (“is”), then in principle it can be divided into its whatness and “isness,” but that is forbidden by our criterion of indivisibility. Thus, whatness of “X” must, in some way, include its “isness.”

This bring us to the second case in which “is” [is] part of “X”, and “X” has also some different parts from “is.” To illustrate this, suppose that Fire is composed of *is* and *fire*. Is this whole *is* or *not- is*? Here the problem is that for the whole of *is* and *fire* it is not said that it completely *is*, because it is composed of *is* and *not-is* (that is *fire*), and one of the parts cannot be extended to embrace complete whole. How can it be said that this whole *is*? Either we must say that *fire* and *is* are the same (but this is out of the case)

or *is* [is] also part of *fire* (but this goes *ad infinitum*). The latter option goes *ad infinitum* because whenever one tries to combine *is* and *fire*, since they indicate different natures although they go together, one obtains a new whole whose each part has *is* and *fire*, and each operation for providing *is* for the part which is other than *is* (that is *fire*) derives a new whole which is composed of *is* and *not-is*, and this goes *ad infinitum*.

It is clear that this case can not pass the test, because the “X” must be complete and homogeneous. This leads us to the last case. In this case, “x” and “is” are the same. There is no need of ingenuity to find the only one candidate that falls under this case: *being*. There are no parts of *being* which can be *is* and *not-is* because it is indivisible. Note that in the phrase “Being is,” *is* does not add anything to *Being*, but rather repeats what its subject affirms. Therefore, this “is” is not a predicate which adds something to the subject of which it is predicated. If “is” had been a predicate in the above sense – that which adds something to its subject – it would be different” from the subject to which it is attributed, then *being* would not be *being*.

For this reason, the goddess says “it would not be incomplete and divisible.” This gives insight into the goddess’ use of the sheer “is” in Fragment 2 and later fragments. She warns us not to interpret the function of plain “is” as connecting a subject to predicates in the familiar sense. Cordero rightly points out that “in any predicative sentence, the predicate clarifies, informs about, or characterizes the subject, and the subject is central to meaning. If Parmenides had made a subject explicit from the beginning of his philosophy course, it would have been said about this subject that it ‘is’” and specifies the the function of “is” as follows,

The fact of being (which ... is expressed both by the participle *eon...* and by the infinitive *einai*) is the only notion whose reality is defined by stating it through the conjugated form 'is'. That 'is' also grammatically only denotes 'being' in the present tense... just as 'it rains' means 'the fact of raining is happening now', 'raining is present now,' 'it is' means 'the fact of being is happening now', the fact of being is present now.⁴²

For our purposes the point is that "being is" is not a proposition in usual sense. Our reasoning is primarily based on propositions which establish a relation between a subject and a predicate, and in a proposition predicate usually adds something to the subject. If nothing can be added to *Being*, then the phrase "Being is" cannot be a proposition in this sense. The notion of "is" cannot be separated from "*Being*," and nothing else can be added to *Being*. In sum, "is" is not a predicate which is attributed arbitrarily to any subject, but rather it signifies the prior givenness ("is") of *Being* whenever we say "is."

As Reiner Schürmann maintains, in the poem,

this word appears in the form of a present participle preceded by an article *to eon...* We will completely miss its significance if it is treated either as infinitive ... or noun... A 'participle' is called precisely because this form of our languages participates – takes part in both the noun and verb.⁴³

Thus, when we say "is" we must think of both noun and infinitive form of *esti*, i.e., both "being is" and "to be is." If we connect this claim with Cordero's point, we can understand why we cannot say, "Water is." When we say it, the noun "Water" replaces "*Being*" and verb of the sentence stand incompatible with this noun. To use Cordero's

⁴² Cordero, pp.52 - 3. It is important to notice that this "presentness" of being is not in time that is structured in temporal moments. "Parmenides characterizes *estin* with a present-tense verb because, in Greek grammar, it is the tense allows him to show the presence proper to the 'now', but that does not mean that this present comes after a past or before a future... it means a permanent present' But, as we shall see, the so called "permanent present" is the sign of 'to be' in the sense that "to be" may be understood as if it were not in time.

⁴³ Schürmann, p.56.

example, when we replace “It” with any noun other than “rain” in “It rains”, the incompatibility of noun and verb becomes evident. This claim can be generalised : whenever you rename this “It,” you fall into error. Hence, whenever we say, “is,” this is “to be is.” And, whenever we say “is,” we must think its both noun and infinitive form together. After this long digression, we will try to analyse crucial Fragment 2 by means of different reading options.

Simple Reading

Now, armed with *being* (*to eon*) and *not-being* (*me eon*), in simple reading, we can identify the one path with *being* and the other with *not-being*. In Fragment 2, the expression “the only paths of investigation there are to think” may be read “there are the only paths that are thinkable” when *eisi* is given potential value, and thus justifies considering *being* and *not-being* as alternatives. These two alternatives may be subsumed under *is*. This amounts to saying that “the first path is” and “the second path is.” At that point the problem becomes evident when we remember that the first path has been identified with *being* and the second path with *not-being*. By appropriate substitution, we obtain the expressions, “being is” and “not-being is,” but “not-being is” is self-contradictory. Here the lesson to be learned is twofold. The first is that *being* and *not-being* are, in themselves not particulars subsumable under a genus, and the second, the ways proposed in line 2.2 are paths to think, and cannot be stripped away from their content to posit two alternatives.

Eliminating Contradiction

What is the situation when the contents of these alternative options are considered? In the text, the goddess leaves no doubt that “the decision about these matters depends on this: “is or is not?”(8.16). Since all thinking is constrained by “is or is not,” there must be a contradiction between two expressions “[it] is” and “[it] is not” if “it” in first hemistiches of the first and the second formulas of the paths are taken to be the same, namely either “to be is” and “to be is not” or “not to be is” and “not to be is not.” In order to avoid the contradiction – which will result in unthinkability – inherent in “to be is not” which yields from the sameness of *to be* and *is* as stated in the previous pages and to open a possibility for thinking of the second path at the beginning, which will be convenient with the saying that “the only paths of investigation there are to think,” at first sight, it seems plausible to tie the path of “is” to “to be is” and that of “is not” to “not to be is not.” This is also consistent with goddess sayings that “it must either be completely or not at all” (8.11) and “Nothing is or will be besides what-is” (8.37). If *not to be* is not, not-being cannot be; and “to be is” and “not-to be is not” are two expressions, which appear to be saying the same thing, one as an affirmation and the other in terms of negations. It seems that there is nothing against positing two viable options one of which about *to be* and the other about *not to be* though they are in opposition.

At that point, the full import of what the goddess says can be understood as follows. She posits two alternatives to think, and both alternatives have their own

content, and thus thought may follow along these paths of inquiry. Hence the unthinkability of the second path does not arise from its content. Though the subject of each statement excludes the other, simply this fact, i.e., exclusion, does not require that one of the disjuncts is unthinkable and unknowable. But still, the second path is not fit for thinking (the *kouros* can walk on this path, but the goddess advise that he should not), and then there remains only one path: “to be is.” So far so good! The problem reemerges in such reasoning when we consider the goddess’ statements about unthinkability and unknowability of the second path: “I tell you this path is completely unknowable”(2.6) and “one (the second path) remains unthinkable and unnamable”(8.17). Even if this is not implied from its content when its first hemistiche read as “not to be is not,” if the second path is posited as unknowable and unthinkable, the problem to decide on the sense in which “not to be is not” is unthinkable arises. And the initial question remains: how would the paths to be followed for thinking still be two in number though one of them is unthinkable?⁴⁴

Separation by Thinking

So let us return to our starting point: “There are two paths of inquiry to think.” Now, one should not rush to conclude that there are actually two paths to think, and that the contents of paths are superimposable on the statements “to be is” and “not to be is not.”

⁴⁴ Under this reading the second hemistiches of the paths, for to be consistent, must be read as inserting the subjects “...that to be is not not-to-be” and “that not-to-be necessarily is not-to-be” instead of “... that is not not-to-be” and “... that is necessarily not-to-be” respectively. Since, if the second hemistiche of the first path were read as “is not not-to-be” without any subject insertion it would be a reiteration of the reading of the first hemistiche of the second path “not-to-be is not.”

Why? After positing two paths to think, the goddess immediately and forcefully refutes the second path as impossible to follow, and ties *to be* essentially with *to think* in the following lines,

‘I tell you that this path is completely unknowable, since you will not know what is not (for it is not attainable) or utter it’ (Fragment 2.6-8)

... since it is the same to think and to be (Fragment 3)

In these lines, for “know” the goddess employs *gnoies*, a form of the verb *gignoskein*, which primarily involves knowledge by acquaintance.⁴⁵ When the meaning of *gignoskein* and *noein* in early Greek is considered, it is plausible to interpret these lines as the weak expression of Fragment 3 which identifies *to think* and *to be*. As Kahn observes,

The sense of *noein* in early Greek is not some vaguely psychological notion of ‘thinking’... but rather one of noticing, observing, realizing, gaining insight into the identity of a person, into the facts of a situation and their true implications... The proper translation for the verb in Parmenides is a term like ‘cognition’ or ‘knowledge’. (1969)⁴⁶

Now, on the basis of these, it may be claimed that proper thinking, in a sense, will be knowing, and knowing will be the knowledge of *is*. Notice that here there is no internal contradiction similar to which is found in the previous reading. If *to be* is the same as *to think*, then *not to be* is not possible for thinking, and judgments about thinkability of *being* and unthinkability of *not-being* will be true. So it seems reasonable to interpret

⁴⁵ Gallop in the glossary section of his translation of “On Nature” gives the following explanation under the entry *gignoskein*: “to know,” “to be acquainted with,” “to recognize.” This verb guarantees the existence of the objects.” Thus, if there is no being, then there is no knowing. For the equivalency of *noein* and *gignoskein* see also W. J. Verdenius, *Parmenides, Some Comments on His Poem* (Groningen: Hakkert, 1942), p. 35.

⁴⁶ Kahn, 704-724.

these expressions that state true judgments as the contents of true path that has been called “is,” and those expressions which state the violations of the condition of thinking as the contents of the unviable second path.

Now, let us try to reconstruct the goddess’ saying on the basis of Fragment 2.6-8 and Fragment 3. First of all, she seems to introduce two options to think, and then she eliminates the second path as practically impossible to think. In the above formulation of the paths, it may be said that both judgments, the possibility of *being* and impossibility of *not being* for thinking may be interpreted as true. If on the basis of fragment 2.6 and Fragment 3, the sentence which expresses that *not-being* is unthinkable as a true judgment, then the walkers on the second path tries to do something which is practically impossible to think. To grasp the sense of the goddess’ announcement, it must be kept in mind that the emphasis is not on the falseness of the second path, but rather on its impossibility to be thought and uttered. Her point may be read that since *not-being* is not possible to think, to think *not being* is not to think. If there is nothing to think, there is no thinking. If so, to try to think *not being* is to attempt something practically impossible. There is then only one option to think, that is *being*.

Perhaps we can gain an intuitive sense of this claim with an example. Imagine a world in which there is no sound. This world is different from another world in which there are some sounds, but we do not hear them. Our world is not the world of sound, rather the world of perfect silence. For this world, when the goddess declares, “You do not hear anything,” this means that there is no hearing in this world, because to hear complete silence is to hear nothing, and to hear nothing is the same as not to hear at all.

If there is hearing, there is a thing heard. If there is nothing there to be heard, there will be no hearing.

Now, let us try to define this world from an outer perspective: “It is not possible to hear in this world.” Thus, to try to hear something in this world is practically impossible. By similar analogy, when the goddess dismisses the second path in earlier fragments on the basis of “unknowability” of *not being* (2.6) and in later fragments as “unthinkability and unnameability” (8.17) of *not being*, she actually claims that on the second path thinking tries to think (know) *not being*, and to name (say) *not being*, and thus try to make something practically impossible. From the reverse reading, we can say that thinking is essentially tied with the possibility of *being* and impossibility of *not being*, and there is no thinking without *being*. As Rits points out,

If knowing is envisaged as a kind of seeing and speaking as a kind of pointing, then it is not hard to see why we cannot ‘see’ or ‘point to’ what does not exist.⁴⁷

For this interpretation, good evidence may be provided by Plato in *Theaetetus* (187c-200d). In the section of the problem of false opinion, Socrates asks, “May it not simply be that one who thinks what is not about anything cannot but be thinking what is false, whatever his state of mind may be in other respects?” After Theaetetus’ affirmative answer, Socrates shows that this is not the case. His argument exploits the analogy of seeing: if a man sees something, he cannot see nothing, but he must see a thing that is. But then to see what is not is to see nothing, and this is the same as not to see at all. By

⁴⁷ J.M.Rits, “Parmenides and Plato’s Parmenides,” *The Classical Quarterly* New Series, vol.20, no.2 (Nov.1970) 223-24 n 4.

using the same analogy, to touch nothing is not to touch at all. So, in similar vein, thought is of something; to think of not-being is not to think at all (189a).⁴⁸

The lesson to be learned from this reading is clear: to think *not-being*, one should take *not being* as *being*. This offers us a substantial clue for fixing the contents of the two paths, but does not give the precise relation between *to think*, *to be* and *not to be*. For a moment, let us ignore these complex relations between *to be* and *to think*, and try to specify the contents of the two paths. To specify the contents of the paths, it may be revealing to ask whether it is possible to posit two paths at the beginning of instruction to think within thinking? Let us clarify the problem. The goddess declares, “There are two paths of investigation to think.” When her entire speech is considered however, a problem that may be formulated in a series of questions emerges: Is this declaration said on the basis of thinking or not? If *to think* is limited to *being*, how would it be possible to posit two paths of inquiry to think by thinking itself? Granting that the initial separation of the ways is decided by thinking, we will discuss the problem in the framework determined above.

Before starting our discussion, let us read Fragment 5, which provides important insight into the goddess’ speech,

And it is all one to me
Where I am to begin; for I shall return there again.

This assertion of the goddess – wherever I go I return to being – points to the limitation of the means through which she presents her speech. In this fragment, she warns us

⁴⁸ For a discussion of this passage, see Fred D. Miller, “Parmenides On Mortal Belief” *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 15, no.3 (1977: July) p. 253.

about the issue that the linear form of speech is misleading. Her speech must be considered as a whole which consists of concurrent and interdependent parts. Thus, as Furth observed, “Basically the entire (ostensible) ontology is best thought of as examined simultaneously.”⁴⁹ The speech of the goddess can only be appreciated from this type of wholistic perspective. In the following discussion, in conformity with this view, we will use Fragment 8, particularly *one* as the sign of *to be*.

Now, let us return to our starting point. To understand Fragment 2, we are considering two paths, to understand the paths, we are taking their contents, and then we try to understand the meaning of these contents. At the beginning, the goddess says, “there are two paths of investigation to think.” The question is whether this very sentence is an expression of thinking or not. If the answer is affirmative, at first sight, it seems plausible to equate two ways with two thought in the following manner: path₁ with thought₁ and path₂ with thought₂. As mentioned before however, on the basis of both Fragment 2.6-8 and Fragment 3, we can construct the sameness of *to think* and *to be*. For we know that for the goddess *to be*, *is* and *being* can be used interchangeably, we obtain: path₁ [is] the same as thought₁ [is] the same as being₁ and path₂ [is] the same as thought₂ [is] the same as being₂. At that point, we extract *one* as a sign of *to be* from fragment 8-1-5 which says,

Only one story still remains of the path: that *is*; on this route there are many signs that Being is ungenerated and imperishable;...it neither was nor will be, but is now, wholly homogeneous, *one* ...

⁴⁹ M. Furth, “Elements of Eleatic Ontology” *Journal of History of Philosophy* 6 (1968) 111-132. For a discussion of the wholistic character of the goddess’ speech, see Gorman, p.15.

Now, if *one* is the sign of *to be*, and it is the same *to think* and *to be*, *one* may be taken as the sign of *to think*. But, if so, how is it possible to distinguish two contents and equate them with two paths? This does not seem possible. If *one* is also the sign of *to think*, we cannot double *to think*, and thus, we cannot talk about two thinking. Or, since *one* is the sign of *to be*, and it is the same *to think* and *to be*, it cannot be two thinking. From these it seems to follow that there are not actually two paths to think.

Now, let us return to our starting point. By assumption, the initial separation of the contents of two paths are carried out by thinking, but as shown above, there are some difficulties to take this thinking as two different thinking of two different paths. If it is assumed that thinking is *one*, what conclusion does it follow concerning the contents of the paths? In this case, the goddess' declaration may be paraphrased in these words: what I said indicates only one content, and the second expression is a different expression of *is*. There is no need to ask what this content which thinking thinks is: "is and not to be is not." For a moment, to take one step further in specifying the contents of the paths, let us suppose that we can talk about the contents of the paths from a "higher level." If, as declared in Fragment 3, the same is *to think* and *to be*, then to think *not to be* requires to posit "the being of not-being," and not to think being claims "not-being of being." If so, these may be expressed in the following manner: "to be is not and not to be is."

If this is the point made by the goddess, it is not hard to recognize the fact that these statements are internally contradictory, the one of which affirms what it denies, and the other which denies what it affirms. Thus, the second path (the so-called "is not")

that seems to be presented a viable option to think is, in fact, closed for thinking. When thinking thinks the second path, it tries to make something practically impossible. At that point, following this path, an insight can be gained into understanding the initial formulation of paths to think in Fragment 2,

... is and not-to be is not
... is not and ... not-to-be is

This search for specifying the contents of the paths may also be carried on the basis of the grammatical structure of the phrases. Even though the subjects of the initial hemistiches of the expressions are not clearly specified, each of the second hemistiches appears to have its own subjects: *not to be*. From this evidence, it is possible to argue that if the first way opposes the second path, each of the first hemistiches must have *to be* as subject. Applying this view into the contents of the paths, we obtain the above statements. The first statement says that “only to be is and not to be is not” and the statements of the second path declares its practical impossibility to think.⁵⁰ Even though Fragment 3 constructs an inextricable connection between *to be* and *to think*, it is open to various reading possibilities. As a result of one interpretation, one may claim that in Fragment 3, the goddess does not equate *to think* with *to be*.

In this formulation, *to be* and *to think* are not the same, but they go together, or they are internally connected in some way. If the relation of being and thinking is interpreted in this manner, does the picture change? Granting that the initial separation is made by thinking, the first path corresponds to thinking₁ and the second path

⁵⁰ For a discussion of the grammatical structure of these phrases, see Cordero, pp.64-80; and Schürmann, p.57.

corresponds to thinking₂. From Fragment 3 and Fragment 2.6-8, we know that under this reading *to think* and *to be* are internally related. Therefore, the first path corresponds to thinking₁ which is internally related to *is*₁, and the second path corresponds to thinking₂ which is internally related to *is*₂. Since *being* and *is* cannot be separated, the thinking of the first path is related to *being*₁ and the thinking of the second path is related to *being*₂. But, the sign of being is *one*, and thus, *being*₁ and *being*₂ are the same.

In this hypothesis, *to think* and *to be* are not the same, we can talk about two thought about the same being. Even though there are two thought, their thought contents are the same (“is and is not not to-be”). Thus, both interpretations seem to show that the paths cannot be taken as two paths, because this contradicts with initial hypothesis formulated in Fragment 2.6-8 and Fragment 3. However, this does not end the discussion. If *to think* is somehow limited to *to be* how does the goddess think and utter the content of the second path on the basis of thinking?

Meta-Thinking

In Fragment 2, the paths are presented as paths to think, and the goddess expresses the content of that thinking through utterance. When it is accepted that the *muthos* of the goddess is a result of thinking defined in terms of being as in Fragment 3, the judgements particularly about *not-being* seem to pose a difficult challenge to its initial expression on the basis of thinking. If it is supposed that the content of these phrases about *not to be*, like any other phrases, is either “that which is thought” or “that which is not thought,” the puzzle arises.

Let us look at two cases. If the content of the phrase about *not to be* is “that which is not thought”, since under the assumption that the initial expressions of inquiry to think is made by thinking, we obtain “that which is not thought” is thought. In this case, the problem of internal contradiction similar to that we came upon before emerges. Furthermore, if it is not thinkable, how could we construct a meaningful phrase at the beginning? For the second case, suppose that it is “that which is thought.” It is clear that there is no internal contradiction in stating that “that which is thought” is thought. But the problem shows itself when we consider Fragment 2.6-8, which declares that *not to be* is not thought. So we obtain “that which is thought” is not thought. Moreover, “that which is thought” (of our assumption) and “that which is not thought”(of Fragment 2.6-8) is incompatible.

To put the points most generally, the claim that the initial expressions of judgments about *not to be* are the end result of thinking faces with inscrutable difficulties. Now, if the goddess limits *to think* to *to be*, the above discussion shows that the restraint of *to think* is not drawn within thinking. How will it possible for the goddess to give judgments about *not to be* within thinking? Therefore, the limit of thinking must be drawn by the goddess from a “higher level.” If so, in the words of the goddess, “I tell you that this path is completely unknowable, since you will not know that which is not” the emphasis is on the external limitation of *noein* by the goddess: “You cannot think not-being.”

This amounts to saying that the *muthos* of the goddess is not internal to *noein*. She describes what *to think* is, and what content *to think* has, and what the relations

between *to think* and *to be* are from *meta-noetic* level. When we hear these judgements, we must keep in mind that they are not *noetic*, and they are not interpreted as *noemas* within *noein*. Concerning the meta-noetic status of the goddess speech, Cordero points out the problem of the higher level and tries to explain it in terms of “language levels” with reference to J. Jantsen,

... there are certain expressions in the poem that operate on a plane that , with J. Jantzen, we might call ‘*metasprachlich*’. In particular, this is the case with judgements about the thesis and its negation that state the content of each day.⁵¹

Though in modern terminology we can claim that the judgments about the paths made by the goddess belong to metalanguage, in the terminology of the poem itself we have to admit that these judgments are made from the *meta-noetic* level. Here, the crucial point is not to confuse the expressions of the *meta-noetic* level with the content of *noein*. This *meta-noetic* speech heard by us says what *noein* is, and how it can be imagined, but the speech itself is not presented within *noein*. Her *muthos* gives the only content what *noein* has, and thus the *kouros* learns the only content that *noein* has when he hears what she says: “is and not to be is not.” It is not possible to mention *noein* before the goddess’ *muthos* starts, in the sense that without the goddess’ speech which determines the content of *noein* as *is* there is no *noein*, and since the only *noema* of *noein* [is] *is*, there cannot be anything in *noein* except *is*, and moreover, as we shall see, in Fragments 3 and 8.34, indeed, there is no difference between *noein* and *to be*. For this reason, the goddess both starts, limits and ends *noein* with her first words in the sense that her following

⁵¹Cordero, p. 67.

words do not add anything to *noein*, but only give conditions as to how *noein* and *to be* must be understood by the *kouros*.

As a first approach, her first words may be interpreted in the following manner: if *to be* is given to *noein*, then to think *not to be* we must first take *to be* and its negation *not to be*, but that is impossible, because to think *not to be* first we must think *to be* and later we must deny it. Even though in ordinary negation, this seems to be possible, however, in the case of *to be*, we have to say “*to be not to be*,” and this does not seem to be possible.⁵² To support this reading, however, we must investigate the relation of *to be* and *to think* which prevents the thinking of *not to be*. The search for the relation between *to be* and *to think* impels us to find a principle declared by the goddess to explain their intimate connection.

Let us start to search for this relation. As pointed out above, the goddess’ speech belongs to a *meta-noetic* level from which judgements can be made about *to think* and *to be*. One of the striking feature of this “*meta-noetic speech*” becomes evident when we include Parmenides the poet in the picture. In the proem, as we know, the goddess addresses the traveller as *kouros*. Is this *kouros* identical with the narrator or a character like the goddess, who is created by Parmenides the poet?

If one assumes that Parmenides the poet is out of the text, and sets the scene, then all the characters are created by the poet, and the whole text is a fiction, that is, a creation of Parmenides. This amounts to saying that Parmenides puts his own words into the mouth of the goddess. How is this possible? As pointed out, the speech of the

⁵² For a full discussion of this point, see Cordero, pp. 78-82.

goddess is given from the meta-noetic level, which is peculiar to the goddess. The apparent conclusion will be that Parmenides the poet is not mortal, but this does not seem to be an acceptable conclusion. In this case, the only plausible option is to accept that Parmenides the poet is the same mortal as the *kouros*. He narrates his own experience in his words, and the goddess puts her own words into his mouth in his language. More precisely, Parmenides has heard it said, and narrates what he has heard.

If Parmenides and the *kouros* are the same “special” mortals who can hear what the goddess says, we must first look at the connotations of the term “*kouros*.” What is to be *kouros* in this context? Kingsley claims that the word *kouros* indicates the quality of a man, not how old he is. He writes that the word can refer to an initiate who has a sort of purity that brings him close to the divine, and who stands at the borderline between the world of the mortals and the world of the divine. He can hear what the nameless goddess says without interfering what he hears and receives.⁵³ This explains why the *kouros* does not speak in his words when he enters into the abode of the goddess. He can hear the words of the goddess, and learn what *noein* is, but neither the goddess nor the *kouros* is *noein*.

Now, we can describe the journey of the initiate. He starts his journey from where the mortals come. The daughters of the sun escorts him during the journey. The “special status” of the travelling man is clearly recognized here. He is not an ordinary mortal, but a mortal accompanied by divine beings. He has been carried before the gates of the paths of Night and Day guarded by Dike. The gate is opened when the daughters

⁵³ Kingsley, pp.71-2.

of the sun persuade Dike, and the *kouros* enters the realm of the goddess. After the goddess greets him kindly, and promises to instruct the unshakable hearth of well-rounded truth, and on the other, the opinions of mortals, in which there is no true conviction, the so-called Fragment 2 opens with these words: “Well then, I will tell you – and you listen, receive my word – what are the only paths of investigation to think.” Listen! The goddess speaks, and the *kouros* hears. What did the initiate hear? What is the function of this outer voice (the goddess’ *muthos*)? These words first determine the only content of *noein* as *is* and then tie *noein* to *to be* by Fragment 3. However, even though we have to express her words in the words “first” and “then,” which imply succession, it is important here to note that there is no succession in the goddess’ speech. As pointed out before, from the goddess’ point of view, “it is common for me that where I begin, there I shall return” (Fragment 5).

These words, “first” and “then,” only indicate the order of the *kouros*’ learning, or his description of *noein* in his words that are means to narrate a story in a linear form. Therefore, this “to have heard it said” marks the crucial moment only for *kouros*’ learning the content of *to think* and tie between *to think* and *to be*. The goddess’ words determine what content *noein* has, and what *kouros* hears is that the sole content of *noein* [is] *is* and also tie *to think* and *to be* under “the same.”

The underlying logic which gives the relation between *to think* and *to be* becomes apparent in the following fragments: “It is the same, to think and to be” (Fragment 3) and “...the same is to think of and wherefore is the thought” (Fragment 8.34). The “secret” of the goddess’ *muthos* lies in these words. The relation between *to*

be and *noein* and “the same” must be deciphered to understand the real import of the goddess’ *aletheia* speech. To understand the relation between “the same,” *to think* and *to be*, it will be helpful to compare the working principle of doxical thinking described in the *alethia* and *doxa* section of the poem and that of *noein* which is depicted by the goddess’ *muthos* and which is heard by the initiated. If we find the working principle of doxical thinking which is described by the goddess as the opinions of mortals in which there is no true trust, we can avoid imposing the principle on the relation of *to be* and *to think*. The negative conclusion we find as a result of our search for doxical thinking may shed light on our understanding of what *noein* is and how the relation of *to be* and *noein* must be understood.

CHAPTER IV

THE SAME

Doxical Thinking

In this chapter, we will examine how doxical thinking names *to be* and thinks *to be* by means of contrary names, and try to extract an argument from both *doxa* and *aletheia* section of the goddess' speech in order to find the working principle of *doxical thinking*. We may recall that at the beginning, in the reception of *kouros* into her abode, the goddess promises to instruct him both about truth and mortal opinions :

It is necessary that you learn all things,
both the untrembling heart of persuasive truth (*aletheies*)
and the opinions (*doxas*) of mortals in which there is no true trust (1.28-30)

This announcement made by the goddess at the outset may be interpreted that later in her speech she will explain the working principle of doxical thinking,⁵⁴ in which is not appropriate to think *to be*. Although the *doxa* section of the goddess' speech starts at 8.50 with the words, "Here I stop my trustworthy speech to you and thought about truth; from here onwards learn mortal beliefs...", we understand the basic error of doxical

⁵⁴ Meijer observes that Parmenides generally uses the term *φροεῖν* for doxical thinking which is entirely bound to names they establish for describing *to be*. See P. A. Meijer, *Parmenides beyond the Gates, The Divine Revelation on Being, Thinking, and Doxa* (Amsterdam: J. C. Giben, 1997), p.66.

thinking considering both parts of her speech. The crucial fragment within the *alethia* section is Fragment 6, which reads,

It is required to say and to think this: Being is, for to be is
Whereas nothing is not; that is what I bid you consider,
For <I restrain> you from this one, on which mortals knowing nothing
And then also from this one, on which mortals knowing nothing
Wander, two-headed; for helplessness in their
Breasts guides their distracted mind; and they are carried
Deaf and blind alike, dazed, uncritical tribes,
By whom to be and not-to be have been regarded as the same
And not the same; and the path of all is backward-turning.

Here, the description of mortals “knowing nothing” is contrasted with the “the man who knows” in the proem (Fragment 1.3). As indicated above, the *kouros* stands at the borderline between the doxical thinking and *noein*. He gains his special status as being “the man who knows” by his ability to distance himself from doxical thinking, and to hear the goddess’ *muthos*. Mortals are carried deaf and blind, because they cannot hear the *muthos* of the goddess about truth. Mortals “know nothing” because they believe that they can think *to be* by the contrary names on which all doxical thinking is based. They are described as two-headed, because, “with one eye they look at to be and with the other at not to be.” The path of mortal thinking is backward-turning because it turns from “to be” to “not to be” and “not to be” to “to be.” They are in uncritical tribes whose thought wanders because they think *to be* and *not to be* are the same and not the same. This last point indicates the basic error of mortal thinking in that if doxical thinking thinks *to be* on the basis of its principle under which it works, it thinks as if “to be is

not” and “not to be is.”⁵⁵ To understand how this happens, we must turn to the *doxa* section of the goddess’ speech. She explicitly marks her transition to *doxa* speech in 8.50-52,

Here I stop my trustworthy speech to you and thought; from here onwards learn mortal opinions, listening to the deceitful order of my words.

And at 8-53-57, she declares the foundation of doxical thinking on opposites,

For they established two forms in their minds for naming
Of which it is not right to name one – wherein they have gone astray –
And they distinguished opposites in body and established signs
Apart from one another: here, on the one hand, aetherial fire of flame,
Which is gentle, very light, everywhere the same as itself,
But not the same as other; ...

and two opposites established by mortals for naming in Fragment 9 ,

But since all that is have been named light and night
And these [have been applied] according to their powers to these things
and to those,
All is full of light and obscure night together,
Of both equally, since for neither [is it the case that] nothing shares in
them.

To put all these sayings together, we can conclude that mortal thinking is based on two contraries which are supposed to name (*onomazein*) *to be*. It is important to notice that Light and Night are not independent realities, but rather they are two contrary names, or labels put onto *to be* by mortal thinking. As Palmer points out,

...the opposition between Light and Night does not appear to be a naturally given distinction. Light and Night do not seem to be independently distinct forms to which mortals simply assign the respectively appropriate marks or signs. Instead, Light and Night

⁵⁵ For the criticism of doxical thinking from the perspective of young’s ontological education, see David C. Jacobs, “Learning to Think *To Eon* in Parmenides’ Poem” (Ph.D. diss., Vanderbilt University, 1993), Chapter 4.

themselves belong to the set of marks or signs that mortals bestow upon the object their naming – the universe or what-is.⁵⁶

Now, the fundamental error of two-headed mortals can be understood. According to the goddess, doxical thinking may be grounded on two opposite names established by mortals (night-light/fire).⁵⁷ When the mortals established two forms for naming all that is, and by doxical habit, they think that these names represent *to be*, they have to say that two contrary things are the same and not the same. By simple reasoning, if they believe that these opposites are names of all that is, that is, they suppose these names represent *to be*, this belief is incompatible with their being opposite names. If they are contrary names, since each pair of contraries is not the same as the other, they cannot both represent *to be*; on the other hand, if they both represent *to be*, then they cannot be opposites.⁵⁸

At that point, an argument may be extracted from the goddess' statement about mortal thinking. Mortals posit two contrary names to which all other names can be reduced and they suppose that they represent *to be*. Hence, they believe that *to be* can be renamed with contrary names, and that they can say “Light is” and “Night is.” The conclusion of this doxical naming *to be* may be stated in four statements: “to be is and is

⁵⁶ Palmer, p. 210. Palmer compares the relation between the mortal and divine domains on the basis of their use of different names for the same thing. While mortals call the offering-table *τράπεζα*, the gods call it *θυωρόν*. The same distinction is made by the Athenian comic poet Sannyrion: “we gods call the barley cake *πελανόν*, which you mortals (*βροτοί*) piously call *ἄλφιτα*. This theme is seen in the early philosophers. Empedocles states that there is no generation (*phusis*) nor death of mortal things but only mixing and unmixing, “though the name *phusis* has been given to these things by humans” (B8).

⁵⁷ In her speech, the goddess takes fire and light as the same.

⁵⁸ For a discussion of this point see Cordero, pp.158-59.

not” and “not to-be is not and is.” Now, let us try to reveal their confusion in the form of an argument. We have three premisses: First, It is. This is the formulation of the path of “is.” Whenever we say, “It is,” we obtain the above formula in the meaning that “Being is.” Following the mortals’ saying for contraries (‘...the same as itself, but not the same as the other’), we obtain the following expressions: “Light is Light” means “Light [is] the same as Light,” “Night is Night” means “Night [is] the same as Night,” “not-Light is not Light” means “not-Light [is] not the same as Light” and “not-Night is not Night” means “not-Night [is] not the same as Night.” Thus, they believe that (i) “Light is and Light [is] the same as itself and not the same as its other,” and, in a similar way, that (ii) “Night is and Night [is] the same as itself and not the same as its other.” Since Light and Night [are] not the same, formulas (i) and (ii) can be read as, (i’) “Light is and Light [is] the same as Light and Night [is] not the same as Light” and (ii’) “Night is and Night [is] the same as Night and Light [is] not the same as Night.”

Here comes the question, whether it is possible to substitute both Light and Night for “It (Being)” in the first premise. Or, more precisely, whether it is possible to name Being as both Light and Night? We can begin by giving the meaning of “Light is” and “Night is” as follows: “Light is” means that “It is Light,” i.e., “It [is] the same as Light,” and “Night is” means that “It is Night,” i.e., “It [is] the same as Night.” In parallel manner, “not-Light is not” means “It is not not-Light,” i.e., “It [is] not the same as not-Light” and “not-Night is not” means “It is not not-Night,” i.e., “It [is] not the same as not-Night.” Now, we may make the substitution, and we have, “It (Being) [is] the same as Light and It (Being) [is] not the same as not-Light” and “It (Being) [is] the same as

Night and It (Being) [is] not the same as not-Night.” Since “Night [is] the same as not-Light” and “not-Night [is] the same as Light,” we can write the above substitution in terms of Light (or Night): “It (Being) [is] the same as Light and It (Being) [is] not the same as not-Light and It (Being) [is] the same as not-Light and It (Being) [is] not the same as Light.” Hence, “It (Being) [is] both the same as and not the same as Light and not-Light”. Thus, in accepting these contrary names as *to be*, they have, “Being [is] the same as and not the same as Being and Being [is] the same as and not the same as not-Being.” Similarly, since, “It (Being) [is] both the same as Light and not-Light and not the same as Light and not-Light,” they have, “It (Being) [is] both the same as Being and not-Being and Being [is] not the same as Being and not-Being.”

It is no doubt that *to be* can not be thought in a system of signs on which doxical thinking is based. Doxical thinking falls into error in thinking *to be*, because it tries to think it by means of established names which are contrary to each other. Here, we need not pay attention to what the names are, because these names given by the goddess are only representatives to which all names established by mortal thinking can be reduced. By means of these contrary names, the goddess reveals the essence of all naming activity that characterize mortal thinking: to divide and separate *to be*. This is the very reason that *to be* cannot be thought within doxical thinking.

The main thrust of the goddess speech is to show the *kouros* how doxical thinking works, and why it cannot think *to be*. As pointed out above, since these names mutually exclude each other, and thus work under the principle of “the same as and not the same,” placing *to be* into the schema which completely determines the working of

doxical thinking results in thinking *to be* as “*to be* the same as *is* and not the same as *is*.” Now, if we look at this error from the goddess’ discourse about *noein*, we can obtain a negative conclusion: *noein* cannot be under the principle of “the same as and not the same as” together. When the goddess says “is” and *kouros* hears “is,” the only content of *noein* is determined as *is*, and *to think* and *to be* are somehow tied.

The above discussion shows that doxical thinking is tied to *to be* under the principle of “the same as and not the same as” and thus, has gone astray. This indicates that to understand what *noein* is, we must explore the relation declared by the goddess about *to think* and “the same.” We know that *noein* cannot be determined under the principle of doxical thinking, but then what is its relation with “the same?” This relation will also help us to understand the relation of *to be* and *to think* from the perspective of the goddess’ *muthos*.

Noein and the Same

To clarify this matter, we need first to recourse to Fragment 3, which mentions the sameness of *noein* and *to be*: “to think and to be [*is*] the same.” At first glance, this fragment may be interpreted as saying that *to think* and *to be* are the same in the sense of weak identity; that is, A [*is*] the same as B, where A and B are different things, but related as having something in common. However, this does not exhaust all possibilities of reading. It may also be interpreted as saying that there is a sameness in simple sense between *to think* and *to be*, expressed mediatedly by the *named* differences. To illustrate this, let us take “X” as a content, and read “A [*is*] the same as B” as “to think X” is the

same as “to be X.”⁵⁹ Since, in the opening words of *muthos* about the first road of Fragment 2, it is said that the only *noema* to think [is] *is*, we can only replace *is* in place of “X” (as content) in the above description. Hence, we have “to think is” [*is*] the same as “to be is.”

This reading enables us to connect this fragment with another which also mentions the relation of *to think* with *to be* under the same. This is Fragment 8.34, which reads, “the same is to think (*noein*) and wherefore (*houneken*) is the thought (*noema*).”⁶⁰ When we consider this fragment and Fragment 2.2-3 “...to think: The one – that *is*, and that *is not not to be*” together, from the first part of Fragment 2.3, which determines the sole content of *noein* as *is* we have *is* as the only *noema* of *noein* and from the second part of Fragment 8.34, we have “wherefore [is] *is*” and thus, we can discover the meaning of *wherefore* in the fragment, that is, *to be*. In this respect 8.34 reads “the same is to think (*noein*) and wherefore [is] *is*”, and we have “the same is to think and to be” under the consideration that *is* as only *noema* of *noein*. As we see, these fragments establish the sameness of *to think* and *to be*.

At this point, it may be useful to look at the semantics of the verb *noein*. Von Fritz observes that *noein* means in Homer “to realize or to understand a situation.”

According to von Fritz, the Homeric characteristics of the verb are still present in

⁵⁹ In these illustrations, we have only paid attention to the object of the verbs. When we try to read “A [is] the same as B” by including the subject “X” into the illustration, it turns out to be as X thinks and X is. At that point, it may be asked whether a subject “Y” that is different from “X” can be assumed to satisfy the above identity : Y thinks and Y is. At that moment, though we have not made a detailed research on signs, we know at least that *one* is the sign of *to be*. *One* makes such an assumption of Y problematic.

⁶⁰ Here we follow Mourelatos’s translation in *The Route of Parmenides*, pp. 170 – 2, “And the same is to think of and wherefore is the thinking”, of Fragment 8. 34 “ταὐτὸν δ’ ἐστὶ νοεῖν τε καὶ οὐνεκεν ἔστι νόημα.”

Parmenides' poem: "*noein* is not identical with a process of logical deduction... It is still the primary function ... to be in direct touch with the ultimate reality."⁶¹ The use of *wherefore* (*houneken*) in Fragment 8.34 may be seen to be in accordance with the semantics of *noein* that we have cited, i.e., *noein* as described "to be in direct touch with the ultimate reality" – whatever this ultimate *res* is. The immediacy of *noein* with respect to "wherefore [is] *noema*" is mediately expressed through the dichotomy, the *noema* and "wherefore [is] the *noema*." This immediacy, however, if admitted as the direct touching of two entities which are not the same, the admitted immediacy would be either hypothetical or a thesis which needs justification. In our reading, Fragment 8.34 may be seen as giving justification of this immediacy, but by rejecting the above conception of *noein*, namely the assumption of two entities, and stating the sameness of *noein* and "wherefore [is] *noema*." If the reason of this immediacy is expressed in other words: "*noein* [is] wherefore [is] the *noema*." Thus, under this interpretation, this means that *noein* can have no other *noema*, the source of which is that which is not the same as *noein*, following Fragment 3, that which is not the same as *to be*.

Though the fragments have a successive order, remembering Fragment 5, "it is common for me that where I begin, there I shall return," we must consider Fragment 2 from this perspective. We need to clarify the way of persuasion that accompanies the truth. In the first part, the goddess says that "is," but her speech does not end there. She

⁶¹ As von Fritz, p.223-242, notes, "... *noein* is always distinguished from pure perception, it is not conceived of as the result of a process of reasoning, much less as this process itself, but rather as a kind of mental perception, if this expression is allowable. In other words it may, in some way, appear as a kind of sixth sense which penetrates deeper into the nature of objects perceived other than the other senses. This connotation of the term was to become of great importance in early Greek philosophy." Again Von Fritz observes that meaning of *noein* in Homer is "to realize or to understand a situation."

says also that on that route “not to be is not” (as negative wordings), on the basis, as discussed above, that “to be is” (as positive). We must investigate what this clause, i.e., “to be is” adds to the clause *is*. In our reading, this addition gives the sameness of *noein* with *to be* in respect to its sole content *is*. As can be also seen in “they are carried deaf and blind alike, dazed, uncritical tribes, by whom *to be* and *not-to-be* have been thought both *the same* and *not-the same...*”(my emphasis), the clause “to be is” gives the sameness of *to be* in respect of *noein*. In other words, the sameness of *to be* is given by the goddess’ words that “not to be is not.” In sum, when the goddess says “is,” this does not only mean that *is*, but also means that *noein* and *to be* are the same with respect to its sole content and also that “to be is the same as is.”

This reading may also help us to understand why the second way is practically impossible to think. This path ties *to be* and *to think* with their other, that is, it requires to think *to be* as *is not* and *not to be* as *is*. It is obvious that this violates the restraint of the sameness of *to think* and *to be*. Let us return and look at the second path from this perspective. We can read the contents of the second path in the following manner: “not to be [*is*] the same as is.” Since “to be [*is*] the same as is,” and here *not to be* assumed as the same as *is*, we have “to be [*is*] the same as not to be.” For an explication of the closedness of second path we may construct a sequence in terms of *to be* and *not to be*. When we consider “to be [*is*] the same as not to be,” in that ordering, as the occurrence of “to be” in “not to be” would be “not to be,” this leads us to a sequence, such as “to be [*is*] the same as not to be [*is*] the same as not not to be [*is*] the same as not not not to be.” This sequence will be unlimited. This is not only the main reason of the closedness of

the second path, but also the unthinkability of a contradiction. Since “to be [is] the same as is” is given, and *noein* and *to be* are the same, neither “to be [is] not the same as is” nor “not to be [is] the same as is” is thinkable. Here we can remember the goddess’ words in Fragment 7: “but judge by reasoning the very contentious refutation that has been uttered by me.” These words are an open challenge to the *kouros* to grasp “to be [is] the same as is not” and “not to be [is] the same as is.”⁶² As pointed out above, one cannot grasp the unlimited sequence which is the result of trying to understand these statements. The sequence is about to grasp *to be* and *not to be* together, or *to be* and *not to be* as “as the same as.”

As seen, from the beginning, we have assumed that *is* in *noein* is the givenness of *to be*, and constructed our interpretation on this basis. The question that arises at that point is that whether the relation of “is” and “the same” may be interpreted in such a way that may open the possibility of understanding *noein* into which it receives every content. For this reason, before proceeding on our account we must discuss a strong alternative position which gives another account of the relation between “the same” and “is.” The following discussion will be important to gain insight into problems of reading “is” as “the same” and thus of carrying “the same” into *noein*, and moreover, by means

⁶² Also, in that respect we may consider the content of the first path. “ὄνκ ἔστι μὴ εἶναι”, on the basis that “to be [is] the same as is”, may be read in two ways, as “it is not the case that not to be [is] the same as is” or as “it is not the case that (to be [is] not the same is).” But here, in both judgments “not to be [is] the same as is” and “to be [is] not the same as is,” “not” which is unthinkable, i.e., that cannot be grasped in *noein*, occurs in *not to be* and “not the same as.” Hence, both “to be [is] not the same as is” and “not to be [is] the same as is” turn out to be problematic with respect to *noein*, since in each one, one of the terms is unthinkable. If we look at it closely, the main point, though for *kouros* is, is not the unlimitedness of the sequence created by the assumed sameness of *to be* and *not to be*. The main point appears when goddess says that it is not possible to think “is not,” i.e., “not.” The sentence here, thus, can only be meta-noetic or else a mnemonic for *doxical thinking* of “not.”

of this operation, of opening the possibility of understanding *noein* as something into which it receives any *noema*.

Predicate Monism and Natures

The above discussion has showed that the notion of “the same” plays crucial role in understanding Fragment 2. However, it was pointed out that our account of “the same” does not prevent a possible interpretation which may be incompatible with our interpretation. In our reading, *is* in *noein* shows sameness of *to be* and *noein* with respect to its sole content, and also sameness of *is* and *to be*. So far in our discussions we have assumed that “is” is given as *is*, but here it seems to legitimate to ask why the goddess does not give with “is” in *noein* any subject’s tiedness with “the same.” If this were the case, we could put any subject instead of “It,” and “is” would show that this “It” is tied to “the same.” In our reading, “is” in *noein* gives “It [is] the same as is,” whereas on the alternative reading, since “is” shows any subject’s tiedness to “the same,” this gives “It [is] the same as It.” Thus, we assume the form “... is” in inquiry to find what “It” is, and see this very “is” as the answer of the inquiry, but other reading assumes the form “... is ...”.

Notice that although there are two blanks on the left and right side of “is,” this does not mean that “is” connects two different things. The left blank, which is represented by “It,” shows the subject of inquiry which will be identified as “It” in the right blank after a process of recognition. This reading may find its justification from Fragments 2 and 3. The former fragment begins with “is.” When it is taken in usual

manner, “is” connects a subject to its nature. This position may also have a textual evidence that comes from a reading of the saying of the goddess “*to gar auto noein estin te kai einai*,” “because the same is to think and to be.”⁶³ This brief sentence prevents us from knowing to which the causal particle “because” is related. Otherwise, it would be possible to interpret it more correctly. However, we have only three terms and grammatical structure. The grammatical structure of the phrase does not allow, since the verbs are in infinitive form, i. e., not conjugated, to take “the same” as its “subject,” i. e., as the same thinks and the same is. But, its structure allows to distribute the same over to think and to be. “Because the same is to think and to be” reads “because to think is the same and to be is the same.” In that reading, “the same” indicates the common principle of *thinking* and *being*. This implies that *to think* and *to be* are tied by the principle “the same.”⁶⁴ When these two interpretations are combined, the function of “is” may be seen to connect any genuine entity of inquiry to its true identity. This kind of reading leads us to an interpretation of the poem which is similar to Patricia Curd’s thesis of “predicate monism” based on Moureletos’s reading of “is.” In the following pages, we will give an outline of this reading and the problems that emerge from this approach.

At the beginning of Fragment 2, the goddess describes the paths as ways of investigation to think. Considering that every type of inquiry starts with the question

⁶³ Fragment 3... τὸ γὰρ αὐτὸ νοεῖν ἐστὶν τε καὶ εἶναι (Clement, Strom. VI, 2, 23, Plotinus Ennead V, I, 8).

⁶⁴ Apart from the use of *esti* in classical literature, this reading provides to equate “is” and “the same.” We will clarify the use of *esti* and discuss the problems that such an equation of “is” and ‘the same’ creates in the following pages.

“What is it?” at first sight, the most plausible answer seems to take the form: “It is what.” By this answer, we obtain, say, “It is Fire,” in the sense that “It” is a subject which is conveyed to its nature (whatness) by means of “is” and since the nature “Fire” reveals exactly what “It” is. When we say that “It is Fire,” this statement reveals the nature of the thing in question to such an extent that we know just what “It” is, and there is no need to ask more questions about it. It may be useful to correct a possible confusion in evaluating this statement. Here, there are no distinction between “It” and “Fire” – “It” is the only pro-word referring to thing which will be named and identified with a nature that will be recognized as “Fire.” This relation takes its expression in an identity statement, “Fire is Fire,” or “It [is] the same as Fire.” If we had interpreted “is” as a special predicate which captures the true identity, or nature of *any* basic entities we would obtain a position which is called “predicational monism”, defended by Patricia Curd in her *Legacy of Parmenides*. She holds that “is” in *noein* “...is predicative in a certain fundamental sense: what we know in knowing what-is is the real character of a thing; thus it is what we know when we know just what something genuinely is, or what it is to be that thing.”⁶⁵ According to her, the function of “is” is to connect any basic entity to its nature, and this characterizes the first path as in the formulation: “It is F.” Under this interpretation, “is” shows that each nature is defined in positive terms to such an extent that the nature F must be all alike, unified and subject to no divisions. It is not allowed to be defined in negative terms, because this implies that the nature in question is defined in terms of what the other nature is not and thus, this other nature is not what

⁶⁵ Curd, p.39.

the nature is in question. This interdependency of natures prevents the definition of the nature of the entity they constitute, because such an account cannot be completed. This situation is represented in the formula: “It is not-F.” Her claim is mainly based on Mourelatos’ interpretation of the subjectless “is” of the poem as speculative “is.” According to Mourelatos, Parmenides’ subjectless *estin* in Fragment 2 is best understood as syntactically a bare copula, with both its subject and its predicate deliberately suppressed.⁶⁶ Mourelatos calls his view “speculative predication,” because in his view this “is” has a special function. He writes,

Statements of this type imply that the second referring expression somehow directly captures or calls forth the characteristic nature, true identity, intrinsic reality, or essence of that which is merely referred to by the subject expressions.⁶⁷

As pointed out above, Fragment 2 and Fragment 3 give way to this kind of reading.

Apart from this internal evidence, Mourelatos presents some examples about the use of *esti* in classical literature, to quote two of them,

Now, there is (*esti*) a certain island, in mid-sea, rocky, midway between between Ithaca and rugged Samos, Maiden Star, not large (Odyssey, 4. 844).

and

Now there was (*en*) among the Trojans one Dares, bountiful, blameless, priest of Hephaestus (Iliad,5.9).

⁶⁶ Alexander P.D. Mourelatos, “Determinacy and Indeterminacy, Being and Non-being in the fragments of Parmenides” in *New Essays on Plato and the Pre-Socratics*, eds. Shiner and J. King-Farlow, *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* supplemental 2 (1976), p. 46.

⁶⁷ Mourelatos, “Determinacy and Indeterminacy,” p. 53.

Mourelatos claims that in these examples, since “is” has the nuance of identity, both subject term and predicate complement refer to thing. The second referring expression “somehow directly captures the nature of thing”, and under this interpretation, for Parmenides, “... is ...” conveys the subject term to its true identity, or nature. As Mourelatos writes,

This type of ‘is’ moves or transports our thought in a single direction, from merely referential approach to the thing, standarty expressed in subject by a pro-word such as ‘here’ or ‘this’, to the more intimate awareness of its nature or essence, its *physis*, that is conveyed by thing’s characterizing name or kenning expressed by the predicate complement.⁶⁸

Now, we may illustrate Mourelatos’ position in the following manner. Since the path of “is” does not show a proposition, but the form of propositions which determines the subject in positive terms, it will be, “... is ...”, or “It is F,” and in parallel fashion, the path of “is not”, “... is not ...”, or “It is not-F.”

Curd walks along the path of Mourelatos to distinguish three types of monism, and to ground her thesis that Parmenides’ monism was predicational monism,

It is possible to distinguish at least three varieties of monism : material, numerical, and what I call predicational monism. The first asserts that there is a single underlying stuff out of which the cosmos is made. Such a material monism is consistent with the existence in the world of many things or items, but each is made out of or is modification of single material stuff . . . the second there is only one thing or item in the universe ... The third, predicational monism is the claim that each thing that is can be only one thing; it can hold only the one predicate that indicates what it is, and must hold in a particularly strong way . To be a genuine entity, a thing must be a predicational unity, with the single account of what it is; but it need not the case that there exists only one

⁶⁸ Mourelatos, “Determinacy and Indeterminacy,” p.60.

such thing. Rather, the thing itself must be a unified whole. If it is, say F, must be only and completely F.⁶⁹

Curd interprets the *semata* of *to be* as requirements which must be met by genuine entities. Any genuine entity must be a strict unity, a whole of single kind, indivisible, and complete. When we apply Curd's formula to any basic entity, the nature of F implies that that subject is all, only, completely, and unchangingly F. When we assume that there is a plurality of such genuine entities (F and G) which are named by their natures, F is only and completely F, for It is F by nature, and G is only and completely G, for it is G by nature. As clearly seen, on this reading it is assumed that there can be no internal division within what-is F, and no relation between F and G: The water is (by nature) water and nothing else, and Fire is (by nature) fire and nothing else. Since there can be no divisions in what-is, no part of what-is can *not be*. But, when we suppose the plurality of basic entities some problems emerge. Suppose that there are two basic entities: Water and Fire. Each has its own unified nature, but since Water is not the same as Fire, and Fire is not the same as Water, to be Fire is to be not-Water, and to be Water is to be not-Fire. This kind of definition is prohibited by the principle of p-monism, because no nature can be defined in negative terms which instantiate the formula "X is not-F." These kinds of opposites, that is, each of them is defined in terms of what the other is not, are called "enantiomorphic" opposites by Curd. If each is said to be what the other is not, the negations in such opposites are thus internal: "to be F is to be not-G, and to be G is just to be not-F." According to Curd, Parmenides complaint about the cosmology of mortals is that "the ultimate principles of mortal cosmology have enantimorphic natures,

⁶⁹ Curd, int. xviii.

they are an illegitimate mix of what-is and what- is-not. If to be light is to be not-Night and to be Night is to be not-Night, then this is a conception of *kosmos* that accords precisely with Parmenides' characterization of mortals in Fragment 6 as "two headed ... by whom to be and not to be have been thought to be the same and not the same."⁷⁰

If each of opposites is defined by means of internal negation, their natures are intertwined in the sense that any complete account of the one necessarily dependent on an account of the other; and the account of the other will be in negative terms, even if it seems in positive terms. For an internal negation is a negation that is an integral part of the definition specifying the nature of something that is, it leads to the problem of "intertwined nature," and thus it is prohibited. But, granting that there is a plurality of basic things, is it possible to define any nature without referring to other nature which is not the same as that nature?

Suppose that there is a plurality of basic beings, F and G. According to p-monistic schema, the first basic being is defined, "It is the same as F" and the second, "It is the same as G," but why can we not define the first basic being as G-nature, or why can we not write G in place of F in the first formula? The most plausible answer would be that because "F is not-G" and "G is not-F." But, to say that "F is the same as not-G" and "G is the same as not-F," as noted above, leads us to the problem of intertwined nature. To avoid this puzzle, we must say that "It is the same as F and nothing else" and "It is the same as G and nothing else." But the problem seems to continue. As Curd points out, if there is a plurality of basic beings, although their nature can be defined in

⁷⁰ Curd, p.108.

completely positive terms, they are two beings, not one, and so they are not the same, and so one is not another. Thus, the inevitable question arises: “Does it not follow from this that F is not and G is not, and so trying to explain what it is to be F and what is to be G, we have wandered off the route of what-is onto the route of what-is-not? Is this not a violation of the claim ‘is or is not?’”⁷¹

Curds herself pays attention to this puzzle in a short passage, and tries to solve it by tool of “external negation.” She defines external negation as a negative claim about an entity that is not included in the definition specifying its nature. She holds that the internal-external negation distinction allows one to say that one basic entity differs from another without being committed to the claim that one then is to be not-other. Even though there is a problem when we posit a plurality of genuine entities whose natures must be defined in positive terms, she believes that Parmenides did not take this as a problem for its theory. However, this seems to be a genuine problem for the theory, because when we accept the solution of “external negation,” this leads us to accept that in addition to “... is ...” there must be another paradigmatic schema, namely, “...is not ...” which governs the whole system of natures.

The Implications of Predicate Monism

As noted earlier, in Fragment 8, the goddess gives signs of *to be*, and specifies one of them as *one*: “A single story of a route still is left; that *is*; on this route there are signs ...

⁷¹ Curd, p. 95.

being is ... *one*.” At that point, we do not discuss the meaning of signs and their relation of *to be*, but we try to reveal the implications of accepting one as a sign of *to be* for p-monistic reading. As observed above, they use “... is ...” as a paradigmatic formula, i.e., they do not take “... is ...” as indivisible but as a relation which can be divided to its instances – each instances as one. It seems that they read the sign “one” as the sign of “... is ...” and as “one over ones.”

When Water and Fire are instantiated in p-monist’s paradigmatic formula “... is ...”, it is obtained that Water is nature-water and Fire is nature-fire. Let the occurrence of “... is ...” in Water is nature-water be “... is_a ...” and the occurrence of “... is ...” in Fire is nature-Fire be “... is_b ...”. Do we not need to say that “... is_a ...” is not the same as “... is_b ...”? Thus, do we not need to accept that both “... is_a ...” is the same as “... is ...”, and “... is_b ...” is the same as “... is ...”, and “is_a” is not the same as “is_b”? Hence, do we not need to accept that “not the same as” lurks behind “... is ...”?

In p-monistic reading, the sole function of “is” is to connect a subject to its nature. The first challenge to this reading comes from the text. When the whole text is considered, it is observed that the goddess avoids using the term “nature” in the *aletheia* part of her speech. However, when she passes to the *doxa* part of her speech she uses “*phusis*”⁷² in Fragment 10.1, and Fragment 10.5. As mentioned before, in *doxa* “all

⁷² Parmenides’ poem has been traditionally titled “On Nature.” This title has been used for the fragments of several pre-socratic philosophers. Guthrie, p.73, points out that this title “was given indiscriminately to the writings of Presocratics.” What is this nature? Curd traces the sense of nature in Homer and some Presocratic philosophers. In Homer, *phusis* occurs only once in Odyssey X.303. Here, Odysseus seeks a *pharmakon* (drug) because Circe has turned his men into pigs. Hermes, in the form of a youth, digs a magic, moly root, out of ground and shows him its *phusis*. Hermes tells him of its powers, explaining how it will give him power against evil. Gods know about it and name it (Od.x. 304 “and gods call it *molu*”), while men do not know its nature or name. As Odysseus narrates this encounter in his own words, he

things have been named light and night,” and when it is considered that the name of subject is named according to its nature, these names indicate natures (*physis: onoma*). Her avoidance of this term in the *aletheia* part of her speech may be taken as significant evidence for not taking “is” in *noein* as connecting any basic entity to its nature. If the implication of this textual evidence is followed, p-monistic reading can only give the working principle of *doxa*, because in *doxa*, each nature is defined as “the same as itself and not the same as the other” (Fragment 8.54-56). This means that each nature is defined in terms of what the other is not. The interdependency of the natures, that is, “to be fire is the same as not-to be night” and “to be night is the same as not-to be light” makes impossible to give a complete account of a nature. On the other hand, if it is supposed that there are plurality of genuine entities, as “F is F” and “G is G,” since “F is not the same as G,” and “G is not the same as F,” “what is not” must be included into “what is.” The conclusion we can arrive at from this evidence will be that *noein* can neither be limited to *doxa* nor take its content from *doxa*. In *doxa*, whatever we do, each nature goes together with its other, and thus, “what is not” lurks around “what is.” The p-monistic position assumes that it is possible to define more than one nature in virtue of “external negation.” But there seems to be at least two problems here. The first difficulty

describes its nature in terms of outward appearance. As Blachard points out, this implies that the nature of something is its “constitution,” “structure or makeup.” Gods have the knowledge of the natures of all things, but mortals may know these natures by a divine intermediary. Although Xenophanes’ extant fragments do not contain the word *physis*, Curd assumes that he is actually concerned with *physis* on the basis of Fragment 32 that reads: “And she whom they call Iris, this too is by nature cloud, purple, red, and greenish-yellow to see”. Curd connects his use of *physis* with that of Herodotus, “So here in Herodotus, as well as in Heraclitus and Xenophanes, *physis* gives insight into what a thing is” (p.46). The double meaning of *physis* as the “look” or appearances and power that is responsible for it, is seen in Herodotus’ description of the animals of Egypt in Book II. For a full discussion of the sense of nature, see John Blachard, “Parmenides and Plato’s Socrates” (Ph. D. diss., The New School University, 2001), Chapter 2.

is that whether it is possible to substitute a positive nature for the clause “nothing else.” Even if we assume that we can overcome this difficulty, and say, as Curd assumes, that “F is not the same as G” thanks to external negation, this implies that all system works under the principle of “*is*” and “*is not*.” In what follows, I argue against the p-monistic claim that “*is*” in *noein* can work under the schema that is depicted above.

Nothing Else

As discussed above, neither “is not” nor “not the same as” can be in *noein*, because they contain “not.” Even if we accept that these are not problems (at least for p-monistic account) there are problems in the p-monistic interpretation of the goddess’ words. Following the p-monistic conception of “... is ...” relating a subject and its nature and supposing that there are a plurality of basic entities, when we look at one basic entity ignoring the other and we specify its nature, we can rewrite the phrase “It is the same as Light and nothing else” as “Light is the same as nature-Light and nothing else.” Since the only name that we have here is Light, we need to interpret “nothing else” clause as “Light is not not-nature-Light.” When “the same as” is put in place of “... is ...” and “not the same as” in place of “... is not ...” it is obtained that “Light is the same as nature-Light and Light is not the same as not-nature-Light.” As seen, there is no problem here, because our attention is captivated only by one basic entity. Now, let us try to add the second basic entity by supposing the same conditions. At that point, the problem is whether it is possible to substitute any name (i.e., *phusis*) for “not-nature-Light.” Suppose there is another basic entity, say, Night. When the p-monistic schema is

applied, it is obtained now, “Night is the same as nature-Night and Night is not the same as not-nature-Night.” Granted that nature-Light and nature-Night are not the same, neither are not-nature-Light and not-nature-Night. When we consider that p-monist takes “... is ...” in between subject and nature, it is not allowed to use neither “is” nor “is not” in relation to natures.

Since “the same as” is working principle, however, we have right to ask the following question about nature-Light and nature-Night: Is not-nature-Light the same as nature-Night? If not-nature-Light is the same as nature-Night, not-Nature light is substituted for nature-Night in “Night is the same as nature-Night and Night is not the same as not-nature-Night,” and then it is obtained that “Night is the same as not-nature-Light and Night is not the same as not-not-nature-Light.” But, it is prohibited⁷³ to say that Night is the same as not-nature-Light. Otherwise, we have to accept that nature-Night is the same as not-nature-Light, and conversely. In that case, since both nature-Night is the same as not-nature-Light and nature-Light is the same as not nature-Night, nature-Night can only be defined as not-not-nature-Night. That is, undefined. Thus, not-

⁷³ As pointed above, an internal negation is a negation that would be an integral part of the definition specifying the nature of something that is. This may be in two cases. Either internal negation specifies whole nature of something. When we say, “Night is the same as not-nature Light,” and “Light is the same as not-nature-Night,” each nature is defined completely as what the other is not. In that case, it is impossible to define a nature in positive terms. Since “nature-Night is the same as not-nature-Light,” and “nature-Light is the same as not-nature Night,” nature-Night can only be defined as not-not-nature-Night. That is undefined, because an account of nature is not completed. Or internal negation can specify a part of whole nature of something. In this case, not-nature Night is included in nature-Light as part, i.e., nature-light consists of a nature x and not-nature-Night. Similarly, nature-night consists of a nature y and not-nature Light. In this case, for Light, since not-nature-Night is a part of nature-light, we must assume nature-Night. And, similarly, for Night, we must assume nature-Light. This means that these natures are not independent, in the sense that the definition of one includes a reference to other. For this reason, whenever we try to define one nature, we refer to other nature, and because of endless loop of explanation such an account cannot be completed.

nature-Light is not the same as nature-Night. And we have also, not-nature-Light is not the same as not-nature-Night. Hence, under the restraints of p-monistic schema, we can substitute neither nature-Night nor not-nature-Night in place of not-nature-Light in “Light is not the same as not-nature-Light.”

This discussion shows that if thinking were limited to only one basic entity ignoring the other, each one seems to be everywhere the same as itself and nothing else. The justification of this reading may come from Fragment 2. From this fragment we know that “is the same is not” is closed, because this inquiry cannot be completed, that is, it is unlimited, i.e., if is [is] the same as is not, the occurrence of “is” in “is not” would be “is not,” then this leads to an unlimited series such that *is* [is] the same as *is not* [is] the same as *is not not not* etc. This is also the reason of the closedness of the second path. *Noein* cannot grasp the unlimitedness of this sequence, and thus, the second path is not viable option to think. In similar way, we can claim that “Light is the same as not-nature Light” is closed, and from this, when we ignore other basic entity, we can conclude that Light is not the same as not-nature Light. This discussion shows that the position of the p-monist is very similar to that of mortals in *doxa*. As repeatedly expressed, “mortals established two forms in their minds for naming” and they believe that each is “everywhere the same as itself.” (8.54-57). Since mortals posited names on the basis of senses and thus their doxical thinking is limited to the present, when they look at doxical elements in their present, they believe that they name it “is,” and when this present passed, they named another doxical present as “is.” From the former perspective, however, the latter “is” seems to be “is not” and from the latter perspective

the former seems to be “is not.” In a similar way, p-monists look at basic entities *one by one*, and thus, every basic entity seems to be “is,” as discussed above. When you take only A ignoring B as a basic entity, it is not possible to mention any externality. For A, the only sentence that can be constructed with the phrase “not the same as” is that “A is not the same as not-A.” In the same way, when you take B ignoring A as a basic entity, it is not possible to mention externality for B. However, when we look at A and B together, we have to say “A is not the same as B.” In this case, the phrase “not the same as” in the statement “A is not the same as B” does not work as for A and not-A. Otherwise, we have to accept that not-A and B must be the same nature, and this would lead us to the problem of intertwined natures defined in terms of internal negation, and the problem of substitution discussed above.

Now, we can ask the crucial question about the p-monistic claim: What is the ground that prevents us from saying that “Light is the same as Night?” The restraints of the p-monistic thesis do not allow to find a justification which is based on internal negation, that is, we cannot say that “Light is the same as not-Night” that is prohibited by the p-monistic schema’s own restrictions. This means that the ground of “not the same as” that prevents us from stating the above sentence must be “external” to the nature-Light and the nature-Night. When this condition is generalized, “not the same as” and “is not” do not originate from natures. Then, what is their ground? Or more precisely, what is the ground of “external negation” if it is not “internal” to natures?

There seem to be two plausible answers. First, one may suggest that the ground of external negation is the other nature which is other than the natures in question.

Unfortunately, this answer only delays the problem, it cannot solve. The “new” nature posited to explain the ground of “not the same as” would be “not the same as” the former natures, but if its otherness from other natures is not originated from its own nature, there must be another nature, which is external to it, to explain its being “not the same as” other natures, and this “new” nature requires another nature which is external to it, and this goes *ad infinitum*. The only way to avoid this, that is, the second answer, is to claim that “not the same as” must be external to all natures. But in p-monistic schema, since “is” is “what-is” and there is no “is” apart from “what-is,” “not the same as” defined as external to all natures will be provided only from “what is not.” Since in the p-monistic schema “is” is the same as “what-is,” however, the thing that is external to all natures must be “is not.” This amounts to saying that there must be a paradigmatic “... is not...” to provide “not the same as” into the system of natures to distinguish each nature from another. If a paradigmatic “...is...” is needed to give the identity to each nature and a paradigmatic “...is not...” is needed to provide “not the same as” to each nature, then either we must accept that paradigmatic “... is ...” produce “... is not ...”, or in respect of natures “... is ...” and “... is not ...” go together. Or, in the p-monistic reading either “the same” produce “not the same” or “the same” and “not the same” go together.

Concluding Remarks

In the preceding part, it was shown that in the predicate monistic reading of “is” in Fragment 2 line 3, “is” appears to be a paradigmatic structure meaning that “...[is] the

same as ...”. But assuming that, that which is declared by the goddess is “is” in the sense that “the same,” is also to assume that in *noein* there are contents apart from *is* (in predicate monistic reading, as pointed out, “is” is not a content but a formal paradigmatic structure) such as light and night. In that case, any name can be taken as a part of a sentence which consists of “... the same as...”. When “is” in *noein* is taken only as “the same” and as combining subjects and natures assumed to be contents of *noein*, as the schema of the p-monistic reading suggests, the system works under the principle of “the same as and not the same as” which is similar to the working of doxical thinking, i.e., mortal error. We have accepted that “the same” is a principle, but “the same” is not, as p-monists argue, “...is...”, because “the same” is principle under which the sole content of *noein*, i.e., *is* works.

At that point we need to reconsider Fragment 8.34. As stated earlier, the fragment gives the sameness of *to think* and *to be*. But when the fragment is taken in respect of the sole content that *noein* has, i.e., *is*, since *to think* and *to be* [*is*] the same (Fragment 3), *wherefore* in “*wherefore* [*is*] *is*” must be *noein*. The goddess’ saying about *noein* turns out to be an expression of the sameness of *noein* with *einai* through *is*. Thus, one can assume neither that there exists *to be* apart from *to think*, nor that *noein* has any other content apart from *is*, say *x*, since the *wherefore* in “wherefore is the thought *x*” must be assumed [*to be*] the same as *to think*.

In the next chapter, we will investigate the *signs*⁷⁴ of *to be*, what is to be a *sign* with respect to *is*, and the principle with which *is* and *signs* are related. This last point will be crucial in guiding us to understand the status of so-called signs with respect to *noein* and in the discussion of one of the sign, namely *one*, both as something that which is about *to be* as expressed “is one” and as a content of *noein* as “one is” in the first and second deductions under the hypothesis “one is” in the second part of Plato’s dialogue *Parmenides*.

⁷⁴ “A single story of route still / Is left: that [it] is; on this [route] there are signs” (Μόνος δ' ἔτι μῦθος ὁδοῖο / λείπεται ὡς ἔστιν· ταύτη δ' ἐπὶ σήματ' ἕασι) fragment 8 [1 - 2].

CHAPTER V

SIGNS

Plato's dialogue *Parmenides* is divided into two parts. The first part includes a conversation between Zeno, Socrates and Parmenides, and the second part consists of an exercise performed by the character Parmenides and Aristoteles. The aim of this second part is to teach young Socrates how to examine an hypothesis by giving demonstration. For our purpose the interesting point is that in the second part of the dialogue, the character Parmenides puts forward his own hypothesis as the subject of hypothesis, and presents his own hypothesis as "one is." If this thesis of his namesake in Plato's dialogue had been introduced as the "cornerstone"⁷⁵ of the thesis presented by historical Parmenides in his poem, our primary task would be to find out the meaning of that thesis from the perspective of Parmenides' own poem. As is seen, there are only two terms in the hypothesis in question: "one" and "is," and this forces us to pay attention to their relations from the point of view of the goddess' *muthos*.

In the previous chapters, before we investigated the relation of "is" and "one" we looked at the meaning and the function of "is" in the poem. Evaluating the various interpretations, a view was introduced the essential points of which will be recapitulated

⁷⁵ Kenneth Sayre, *Parmenides' Lesson*, (Indiana:University ofNotre Dame Press, 1996), p.127.

below. As repeatedly stated above, since in the speech of the goddess, *is* and *noein* have always been presented as indissolubly connected, in order to understand her full message, the relevant fragments that may help to clarify the meaning of “is” with respect to *noein* received focus. It was crucial to understand this relation to appraise the status of argumentation under the hypothesis “one is,” regarding it as a thinking activity, with respect to *noein* from the point of view of the goddess’ *muthos*. The search for the question whether any thinking activity is *noein* or not requires to deal with a prior question: What is the content of *noein*? Throughout the previous chapters, the relation of “is” with *noein* was explored in order to find an answer to this “content question.” This issue will be important to gain insight into the place of “one” in hypothesis with respect to “is,” and determine in what sense “is” and “one” may be taken together. By listening to the goddess’ speech, a framework was reconstructed through which we can understand the intimate connection of *noein* with *to be*, but the status of “one” with respect to “is” and *noein* has not yet been examined.

The first occurrence of the term *hen* comes with the presentation of *semata* of *to be* by the goddess at the beginning of Fragment 8,

A single story of route still
 Is left: that ‘is’; on this there are signs
 Very numerous: that is ungenerated and imperishable;
 Whole, unique, unshakable, and with no need of completion;
 Nor was once, nor will be; since is, now, altogether, *one*.⁷⁶

The meaning of *sema* is very broad. In Homer, it signifies a person’s mark on a shield (Il.,23,843). It means a characteristic mark of a thing which makes it recognizable. As

⁷⁶ As Cordero, p.175, noted, “only two sources of this line 8.5 have come down to us: Simplicius and Asclepius, and the term ‘hen’ appears only in Simplicius (Phys.78.45).”

noted before, when Odysseus comes home, he persuades Penelope by means of “the unmoved bed,” called *sema* at Od.23, 188. But, there is no particular reference to road signs in Homer and Hesiod,⁷⁷ whereas in the goddess’ speech the choice of expression *semata* in the sense of road signs is important. As Mourelatos points out, “the *semata* are, of course, part of the imagery of the road. They are literal signs, indications, pointers to what one is to find at the end of the road.”⁷⁸ Indeed, the imagery of road may be useful to understand the meaning of sign with respect to *is*, because this image shows explicitly that in the goddess’ *muthos*, the place of these “hints” or “markers” or signposts must be on the prior stage of the goal of the journey. At least on first reading, there seems to be a difference between the place of “signs” and the place of “is.” In our terminology, since the place of sign cannot be on the meta-noetic or *noetic* level, they must be on the place between doxical thinking and *noein*. These signs are somehow related to “is,” but whatever their function is, it is obvious that they cannot be treated as the same as *is*, or *noein*, or *to be*. In this part, the task will be to find out the meaning of these signposts with respect to *is* and determine conditions how a sign candidate may be accepted as sign of *to be* according to the goddess.

Most scholars⁷⁹ interpret these signs as “predicates” of *to be*. The discussion can begin with this question: Is it possible to interpret these signs as predicates of *to be*? If they are predicates of *to be* and *to be* is the same as *noein*, then the so called “predicates”

⁷⁷ For the various senses of *sema*, see Newel, p.615-16.

⁷⁸ Mourelatos, *The Route of Parmenides*, p.61.

⁷⁹ Cf. Meijer, p.18. Here, giving the general meaning of *semata* in Homer, he claims that these signs are properties of Being.

will be *noemas* in *noein* in addition to “is.” Then, the question may be reformulated as follows: Is there any *noema* in *noein* in addition to “is” according to the goddess *muthos*? Or more specifically, can “one” be a *noema* in *noein* in addition to “is”?

To Be, Signs and Is

To provide a general framework for the discussion, let us briefly recapitulate the essential points made so far. While evaluating the possible cases for reading Fragment 2, *noein* was taken in a general sense, i.e., something that can receive any content, and meta-*noein* was grounded on this basis. But, under the light of the previous discussions, the meaning of *noein* for the goddess is known. Now, the words of the goddess at the beginning of this fragment and the function of her meta-noetic speech can be considered from this point of view. When the goddess says in this fragment, “what are the only ways of investigation to think,” she specifies the goal of investigation as *noein*. The main goal of the goddess’ speech is to determine what *noein* is, and present the conditions under which *noein* and *to be* must be understood. When she declares the contents of the paths and eliminates the second path as practically impossible, she determines the only content of *noein* as *is* and the sameness of *to be* and *is*. Even if it seems trivial, this is a crucial hint to gain some insight into the role of the goddess’ speech in the poem.

Once the goddess determines the only content of *noein* as *is*, the *kouros*, or the reader who also hears the goddess’ *muthos* or identifies himself or herself with the *kouros*, must avoid placing the judgments of the goddess about the paths into *noein*. All

judgments about *noein*, including judgments which determine its sole content as *is*, must be understood as external to *noein*. To put it succinctly, all these judgements belong to the *muthos* of the goddess about *noein*, but do not belong to the *muthos* of *noein* about *noein* itself or of *to be* about itself. With Fragment 2, the *muthos* of the goddess may be taken as the *aletheia* speech, but this *muthos* is not *muthos* of *noein* about itself. If these judgments had been interpreted as the words of *noein* about itself, this hearing, in addition to the problems it will create combined with the other words of the goddess' *muthos*, would also lead us to identify *noein* with the goddess. From the first verses of the poem to the last verse, no hint is given to justify this claim, but it is important to realize why the goddess speaks in the poem, instead of *to be* (or *noein*). If the *muthos* in the poem were presented as the speech of *noein*, then this could encourage us to assume that all judgments in that *muthos* were in *noein*. To repeat this point with respect to "is one," this could also give a chance to take "is one" in *noein*. The problems of this reading may help clarify the reason why the *muthos* in the poem must belong to the goddess and why we must distinguish between speech about *noein* and *noein* itself. Identifying the goddess with *noein* leads us to read judgments about *noein* as the words of *noein* itself. Is it possible to accept this hearing? Under this assumption, the sentence declared by *noein*, say, "*noein* is the same as *to be*" must be in *noein*. If we had followed this interpretation, we would have to accept that the elements of this sentence, that is, "*noein*," "the same," and "*to be*" as *noemas* were in *noein* and that *noein* were subjected to the principle of both "the same as and not the same as." And thus, we would have to include "not the same as" into *noein* in contrary to the words of the goddess.

Now, let us try to clarify our way. In Fragment 3, the goddess says, “the same is to think and to be.” As discussed above, even though “the same” is not in *noein*, the words of the goddess determine how we can understand *to be* and *to think*. If it had been assumed that *noein* has both *is* and *the same*, in that case, since in *noein* “is [*is*] not the same as the same,” we would have to include “not the same as” into *noein* again. At that point, it could be asked whether *noein* could only have “the same” that might receive different contents. As discussed in detail above with reference to the p-monistic account of “is,” this suggestion results in consequences such that either the different natures in *noein* can only be defined in terms of the other nature, creating the problem of intertwined natures in that no nature can be defined independently from other nature, or all system of natures ties to “not the same as” to distinguish one nature from another.

As discussed above, a similar suggestion may be made concerning the signs listed in Fragment 8. If these “signs” were predicates of *to be*, since *to be* is the same as *to think*, then, these so-called “predicates” would be *noemas* in *noein* in addition to *is*. Is it possible to assume the so-called signs as thoughts (*noemas*) in *noein*? If the goddess had not determined *is* as a sole content of *noein*, we could then find a support for this claim from Fragment 8.34, which reads: “the same is to think (*noein*) and wherefore [*is*] the thought (*noema*).” Let us proceed step by step to understand the *muthos* of the goddess and to formulate the status of signs from her perspective. In Fragment 3, she declares that “to think is the same as to be.” In the light of what she says about content of the paths in Fragment 2, we know that *is* [*is*] the *noema* in *noein*. When Fragment 8.34 is considered, the sameness of *noein* and *to be* is constructed through *noema*.

Though she insists on the point that the “sole” content of *noein* [is] *is*, we can find what is the sense of “wherefore” in 8.34 and *noema* in question even if her suggestion about “single” content is ignored.

Let us start. From Fragment 2, whatever we read, we can detect that *is* [is] a *noema* of *noein*. With Fragment 8.34, since we hear the sameness of *to think* (*noein*) and “wherefore is the thought (*noema*),” we can substitute *is* – its justification is based on Fragment 2 – for *noema* in that fragment, and thus, we obtain “the same is to think and wherefore [is] *is*.” What can “*wherefore*” from which *is* comes signify? Following the words of the goddess, the only possible answer to the question is *to be*. For this reason, it has been claimed that Fragment 8.34 can be read as a version of Fragment 3 with only one difference, that in this fragment the sameness of *to think* and *to be* is declared in relation to *noema is*.

Let us start again. In this case, we concentrate on Fragment 3, which declares the sameness of *to think* and *to be*. Returning to Fragment 8.34, we substitute *to be* in place of *wherefore*– its justification comes from the sameness of *to think* and *to be* – and thus we obtain “the same is to think and to be (as *wherefore*) is the *noema* – say x.” What can this *noema* x be? The only possible answer to the question, following the words of the goddess, is the *noema is*.

After this recapitulation of essential points made by the goddess in her *muthos*, and the reconstruction of the framework within which her words can be grasped, two crucial questions in respect to our two startings can be formulated to understand signs in connection to *noein*. From the first, we have to investigate whether it is possible to put

any *noema* *y* into *noein* which is not the same as *is* and comes from *Y* that is not the same as *wherefore* [*is*] *is*? From the second, we have to search whether we must accept that only *noema* *x* is in *noein* or we can also assume a *noema* *y* that is not the same as *is* but coming from *to be* like *is*? Hence, in discussing the status of signs of *to be* in respect of *is*, we have to take into consideration whether any sign *x* can be treated as another simple content of *noein*, as *is*, or whether any sign *x* can be assumed to be in *noein* even though it is not the same as *is*, but both contents of *noein* come from *to be*.

Before proceeding in our discussion, let us look at the cases where in *noein* there are *noemas* which are not the same without specifying them. This requires the assumption that any thought-name *x* can be written in place of *noema* in Fragment 8.34, such as “the same is to think and wherefore is *x*.” Hence, it can be claimed that *X* is *wherefore* is *x*, and the same is to think and *X*.

Suppose that *x* and *y* are *noemas* in *noein*. We have, with 8.34, “the same is to think and wherefore is *x*.” Provided that *x* is the only *noema* coming from *X*, we obtain that *to think* is the same as *X*. And also for *y*, we have, “the same is to think and wherefore is *y*,” and provided that *y* is only *noema* coming from *Y*, we may conclude that *to think* is the same as *Y*. For *x* and *y*, either *x* and *y* are the same or not. Let us proceed on the second assumption, that is, *x* and *y* are not the same. Since we assume that *x* is *noema* which comes from *X* and *y* is *noema* which comes from *Y*, either *X* and *Y* are the same or not. As the first case, if they are not the same, since both *X* is the same as *noein* and *Y* is the same as *noein*, we obtain that *noein* is not the same as *noein*. At that point, one can argue that it is possible to avoid the problem by considering the

occurrences of term *noein* in “*noein* is not the same as *noein*” as *noein*₁ and *noein*₂, and claiming that there can be a plurality of *noein* when these are taken as different acts of *noein*. However, as can be seen clearly, this *noein* cannot be the same as *noein* mentioned by the goddess as the same as *to be*.

However, one can also argue that since *x* is not the same as *y*, in order to avoid the above difficulty, *X* and *Y* may constitute a whole *Z* which is both *X* and *Y*. In that case, though *X* and *Y* are not the same, the whole *Z*, from which *x* and *y* come, is the same as *noein*. At first sight, in that case, there seems to be no problem, but this is misleading, because the problem does not arise, as we will remark below, only if we neglect the *muthos* of the goddess that declares sameness of *to be* and *noein*.

At that point we can suppose that the problems arises of accepting that *X* and *Y* are not the same. Thus, we can assume that *X* and *Y* are the same. Let us proceed on this assumption. If *X* is the same as *Y*, then *x* is *noema* which comes from *X* and *y* is *noema* which comes from *Y*. But in that case *x* and *y* must be the same, since for each of them, that is, for *X* and *Y*, we have assumed unique *noema*. But this violates our initial assumption that *x* and *y* are not the same.

So far we have looked possible cases on the basis of the assumption that there are any two *noemas* in *noein* which are not the same without specifying them. Now, specifying *noemas* as *is* and *one*, let us apply the above cases to these *noemas* to see their implications which can help us to understand determining the status of sign *one* with respect to *is* in *noein*.

As the goddess declares, we have *is* as *noema* in *noein* that comes from *to be*. If we assume that a sign of *to be* such as *one* in *noein* as a *noema* on the condition that it is not the same as *is* which comes from *to be*, then by Fragment 8.34, we have, “the same is to think and wherefore [is] one.” Taking *one* as *noema* coming from some X, we obtain that to think is the same as X (say *the one*). If so, given *noein* and *to be* are the same, we obtain that “*noein* is the same as *to be*” and “*noein* is the same as *the one*”, but since “*the one* is not the same as *to be*”, we arrive at the conclusion that “*noein* is not the same as *noein*.”

In order to avoid this difficulty, we can claim that though *is* and *one* as *noemas* are not the same, “*wherefore*” is the *noema one* and “*wherefore*” is the *noema is* [is] the same. Following the description above, let us call it Z. Since Z must be the same as *noein*, and since *noein* and *to be* is the same, Z must be the same as *to be*. But, Z must be both *to be* and *the one*, otherwise neither *one* nor *is* come from Z. Hence, *to be* will be the same as “to be and the one.” In that case, the problem arises from accepting the whole, that is, “to be and the one,” as the same as its part, that is, “to be.” In connection to this problem, we can observe that either *the one* adds nothing to *to be*, since “to be” is the same as “to be one,” or “to be” is the same as something which is more than itself.

As a last case under the assumption that *one* is not the same as *is* will be as follows. if *to be* is the same as *the one*, *is* is that which comes from *the one* and *one* is that which comes from *to be*. In that case, *is* and *one* must be assumed to be the same, since for each of them, that is, for *to be* and *the one*, we have assumed unique *noema*.

So far we have discussed the problems which arise under the assumption that *is* and *one* are the *noemas* in *noein* which are not the same. As we observed that in the first case which yields “*noein* is not the same as *noein*” on the assumption that X is not the same as Y, the problem arises for any content. For other cases, however, the problems arise out of determining that *is* [is] a *noema* in *noein* and *noein* is the same as *to be*. The exclusive character of *is* as *noema* does not allow any *noema* to be in *noein* in addition to itself.

Now, we can assume that *is* as *noema* is the same as *one* as *noema*. Even if they are different expressions, it may be assumed, hypothetically, that they are, as content, the same. Thus, we have, “*noein* is the same as *to be*,” “*to be* the same as *the one*” and “*noein* is the same as *the one*” without any difficulty. Under this assumption, we can treat the expression “to be is” as “the one one,” both having the same meaning. And under this assumption, we also have, “to be one” is the same as “the one is,” that is, “to be is” is the same as “the one one” and “to be one” is the same as “the one one.” Here the problem arises from our initial assumption. How can we argue that *one* is the same as *is*?

This last point is important both to understand the *muthos* of the goddess and Plato’s discussion of Parmenidean position in the first and the second deduction in the second part of *Parmenides*. As stated, the crucial fragments are Fragment 2 declaring that the content of *noein* as *is* and Fragment 3 that “to think and to be are the same” and Fragment 8.34 that “the same to think and wherefore is thought.” As discussed above, the essential point made by the goddess throughout her speech is that nothing can be

added to *noein* as *noema* in addition to *is* that which comes from *to be*. On the basis of the sameness of *to think* and *to be*, this means that nothing can be accepted as in *noein* that which does not come from *noein* itself. Indeed nothing can be treated as *an addition* to *noein*. We have focused on the problems that emerge from adding a *noema* to *noein* which is not the same as *is* under the restraints put forward by the goddess. As will be seen, Plato, in his discussion of Parmenides' thesis as "one is," seems to recognize these problems stated above and explore the conditions that whether it is possible to add *noema one* into *noein* determined exclusively by *noema is* under the assumption that "one [*is*] the same as is" and "many is the same as is."

To put all of the conclusions together, it has been shown that since *noein* cannot have any content except *is*, the so called *semata* cannot be within *noein*. For this reason, any *semata* can be treated neither as the same as *is* within *noein* nor *to be*. According to the goddess, only *is* can satisfy the condition of being the same as *to be*. If we had tried to construct this sameness for a sign, say, *one*, we would have to say "to be [*is*] the same as one." Since *the one* is not the same as *to be*, however, we had to include "not the same as" into *noein*. When the sameness of *noein* and *to be* is considered, we cannot take the words about *noein* cannot be taken within *noein*. Otherwise, these words indicate that we have added something to *to be* and thus, have violated the condition of the sameness of *noein* and *to be*. In sum, neither the judgments about the sameness of *noein* and *to be* nor about listing the signs of *to be* are *noetic* from the perspective of the poem.

At that point, there is no way but to follow the imagery of road to determine the status of "signs." Since it is not possible to put any *noema* into *noein*, and to add

anything to *to be*, neither negative nor affirmative signs can be within *noein* and be added to *to be*. This amounts to saying that these signs point to “what *noein* can be like”, or in other words, how *to be* can be understood as if X . In the light of this suggestion, we may paraphrase the words of the goddess as follows: “*Kouros*, I say that *noein* is the same as *is* and *to be* is the same as *is*. But, notice that none of these judgments is in *noein*. In a similar way, these signs are not in *noein*, but they are only hints that do not violate the condition of “to be is the same as is,” and thus, by interpreting these signs, you can understand “to be as if it were, say, one.” So far we have divided the *muthos* of the goddess into three parts : *muthos* about the content of *noein*, *muthos* about the relations of *noema is*, *noein* and *to be*, and *muthos* about the understanding “to be as if X” under the conditions determined by her previous words. This three partite division may help us to explore the conditions about the connection of *to be* and their signs.

Proceeding further, it is important to notice that when the *kouros* passes through the gates of Night and Day, which symbolize the limit of doxical thinking, “is” heard by him is not something completely unfamiliar in his doxical thinking. In spite of this familiarity there is a crucial difference between “is” in *noein* and “is” in doxical thinking: “is” in latter goes together with “is not” but “is” in *noein* does not go together with “is not.” Thus, “is not” has a sense in doxical thinking that is characterized by a pair of (is, is not), whereas, as the goddess says, the *noein* of *not to be* is not possible. In the parallel manner, *one*, *now* and other signs gain status of sign only after *is* is given as the sole content of *noein*. Indeed, before the goddess declares that these are the signs of *to be*, they belong to doxical thinking together with contraries.

In the above discussion, the negative characteristic of signs, that they are not in *noein* was specified. In exploring the connection of *to be* and its signs, we have to look at the parts of *muthos* – *muthos* about the content of *noein*, *muthos* about the relations of *noema is*, *noein* and *to be* – with the intention of searching for the answers of the following questions: Is there any guiding principle that may serve to specify a sign of *to be*? How ought we to understand the declaration of *one* instead of *many* as a sign of *to be*?

Investigation of Signs through the Same

As is known from what the goddess says about *to be*, *noein* and *is*, the discourse about “to be is” and *to be* is determined under the condition of the same. This gives a clue for finding the guiding principle of being a sign of *to be*. As a first tentative approach, we can claim that anything which can be treated as the sign of *to be* cannot violate the restraint of “the same.” In this case, if any *x* is to be a sign of *to be*, *x* must not violate the condition of the same. Thus, if *x* violates the condition of the same, that is, that “*x* [*is*] the same as *x*,” we cannot accept *x* as a sign of *to be*.

For instance, let us take a pair of *a* and *b*. While we can say that “*a* is the same as *a*,” we cannot say that “*b* is the same as *b*,” we can eliminate *b* from being a sign of *to be*. To give an example, in Plato’s dialogue *Parmenides*, this point may be useful to understand what *Zeno*’s argument against “beings are many” tries to show. When we investigate whether many itself may be a sign of *to be*, if many itself includes “not the same as” in itself, then it is possible to rule out many itself for a sign of *to be* on the

basis of violation of criterion of “the same” mentioned above. In the following arguments, however, since the goddess’ metanoetic speech determines the discourse about *to be*, we will take “the same” with *is*, that is, “*to be* [is] the same as *is*,” and thus our reasoning here will depend on not only the internal relations of these items but also on as mapping *is* with each of these items in the mode of “as if.” Now, we can look at two signs of *to be*: *now* and *one*.

To understand the meaning of *now* as a sign let us first try to find the meaning of *now* according to doxical thinking. In Fragment 19.1, the goddess explicitly declares that,

So according to opinion these things *were* born and *now* are
And afterwards from now on, after growing they *will* come to an end

Here, the connection between doxical time and becoming and perishing is obvious. If we define *now* in a sequential order, *to be* must be understood in terms of change. In Fragment 8.5, however, the goddess declares that “Nor was once, nor will be; since is now, altogether, *one*” and thus, protects *is* from change and determines the discourse of how *to be* can be understood: “is *as if* present”, because, as argued in 8.19-21,

How could Being in the future? How could it have come to be?
If it came into being, it is not, nor is it, if it is ever is about to be.
Thus coming to be vanishes and passing away is unheard of.

If we attempt to understand “is *as if* in the future” we would have to understand “is *as if* is not in present,” or “is *as if* in the past”, we would have to understand “is *as if* is not in present.” How can we understand the goddess’ *muthos* at that point? Her argument may be constructed as follows. For any x , if it comes into being, there must be a time t_i when

it starts to come into being and a time t_{i+1} when the process is completed. In 8.9-10, saying that “and which obligation would have impelled it later or earlier, to come into being beginning from not-being,” in that case, she asserts that there will be a prior time when “is is not.” This argument may be used for coming to be in the past and in the future. When x came into being at past moment, there would be a prior time that it was not, and when x will come to be in the future, x is not in the present. As Newel remarks, there is more here, “8.19-20 can be read as asserting that Being cannot be in the past or in the future... If Being ever was in the past, it is not now.”⁸⁰ If the past “isness” of *to be* considered as a perfected act, it was and no longer *is*. If we consider its past “isness” as continuative, “isness” of the past will be different from “isness” of present when we assume that time passes, and it would be older than before.

Thus, her wordings “is now,” can be heard, “is *as if* present” in the chronological sequence of doxical thinking but isolated from the terms that comes after and before in that sequential order. Since only “present” can be treated as that which is unrelated, “was” and “will be” always defined with respect to “present” which is not the same as themselves. To approach to an understanding of this sign, it will be suitable to ask this question: Under which assumption will *now* not be the sign of *to be*? If there is a “present” which is not the same as another “present.” For clarification, let us call the first “present” as “present₁” and the second “present” as “present₂.” If we assume that “is *as if* present₁” and “is *as if* present₂,” this means that, since “present₁ [*is*] not the same as

⁸⁰ Newel, p.134, discusses possible cases in detail.

present₂”, we accept “is *as if* not the same as itself”. And since “to be [*is*] the same as is”, we must accept that we assume “to be *as if* not the same as itself.”

Similarly, we can ask under which assumption will *one* not be the sign of *to be*? If there is a *one* which is not the same as another *one*. Let us call these ones *one*₁ and *one*₂. In that case, we will have “is *as if one*₁” and “is *as if one*₂.” Since, under the assumption that “*one*₁ [*is*] not the same as *one*₂” as in the above argument, we must accept that we assume “to be *as if* not the same as itself.” These two types of argument may be applied all signs of *to be*. Now, we can generalize the argument for all signs : “without birth and death”(8.5-21), “homogeneous” (8.47), “unchangeable” (8.26-31), “not incomplete” (8.32-49) are signs of *to be*, because otherwise, we would have to understand “to be *as if* not the same as itself.”

In the following chapter, we will focus on the first and second deductions under the hypotheses “one is” in the second part of Plato’s *Parmenides*, which are claimed by the scholars to be directly relevant to the thesis of the historical Parmenides.

CHAPTER VI

ONE IN PLATO'S PARMENIDES

Opening of the Dialogue

The main body of the dialogue may be divided into two parts : a conversation between Zeno, Socrates and Parmenides, and a demonstration of “hypotheses” performed by Parmenides and Aristoteles. The dialogue is narrated by Cephalus of Clazomenae (the birthplace of Anaxagoras) who has journeyed with some fellow citizens -all dedicated philosophers- to Athens to hear a report of a conversation held once between young Socrates and Parmenides. After he arrives in Athens, Cephalus runs into Plato's brothers Adeimantus and Glaucon in the agora, and asks their help to find their half-brother Antiphon, who heard the conversation many times in his youth and memorized it. Adeimantus offers to go together to Antiphon's home in Melite. As they walk, Adeimantus informs them that when he was a young man Antiphon practiced philosophy to perfection, but as an adult he has, just like his grandfather of the same name, devoted most of his time to horses. Antiphon recognizes Cephalus from his earlier visit. Although he at first hesitates to repeat the conversation he memorized because it is a heavy task, he finally tells the whole story. Readers hear the story from Cephalus, who

got it from Antiphon, who heard it from Pythodoros, a student of Zeno, in whose house the conversation occurred originally.

Zeno on Many

The conversation between Socrates, Zeno and Parmenides in the house of Pythodoros begins with a reading from Zeno's treatise. After he has heard it, the young Socrates asks Zeno to read the first argument of the first hypothesis again. This having been read again, Socrates asks Zeno, "what do you mean by this?" (127e) and sums the point of the argument in his own words: (i) "If many is (*polla esti*), then they must be both like and unlike"; (ii) "but, this is impossible, for what is unlike cannot be like nor can what is like unlike." When Zeno confirms that this is what he means, Socrates concludes, (iii) "therefore, if it is impossible for what is unlike to be like and what is like unlike, it is impossible for the many to be, for if the many were, the impossible would be."

In the argument, it is not clear that what Zeno means with the terms "like" and "unlike." But, considering Socrates' reconstruction of the argument, the general form of his argument is *modus tollens*: (i) If many is, then the very same things are both like and unlike, but (ii) it is impossible that the very same things are both like and unlike; thus, (iii) it is impossible that beings are many.

How can we interpret Zeno's argument? According to scholars, what Zeno means by the terms "like" and "unlike" is uncertain. For this reason, each scholar tries to construct the argument in his own terms. According to Cornford, the words "like" and "unlike" may be translated as "homogeneous," because in Parmenides' poem in

Fragment 8.22, the same word, *homoion*, is used in the meaning of “homogeneous.”

Applying this to the first hypothesis of Zeno, Cornford reconstructs the argument as follows :

If things are many, they must be both homogeneous and heterogeneous. For (1) each of them must be one, and what is one is homogeneous; therefore they are homogeneous. But (2) if they are many, they must be distinguishable, and therefore unlike one another, therefore they are heterogeneous.⁸¹

Cornford’s argument does not hit the target. As Allen points out, the argument does not lead to a paradox. He claims that there is no paradox in many being collectively heterogeneous, distributively homogeneous.⁸²

Then how can we interpret Zeno’s argument? In my opinion, to construct the argument, we must keep in the mind the context of Zeno’s argument. The argument is directed against certain figures who adopted an understanding of the goddess’ *muthos* which reduces her word to a question, for given contraries, which one *is*, i.e., whether *the one* or *the many*. As was pointed above, if there is a thesis extracted from the goddess’ *muthos*, this can be summarized as follows: only *is* can be said of *to be* and *is* can be said of *to be* only. Once the goddess determines that “to be is,” the question of “is it?” for any subject whose *phusis* is different from *is* does not emerge.

If so, how can we understand the question whether *the many* or *the one is*. As Palmer points out, having heard Zeno’s treatise from beginning to end, and having heard the first hypothesis of its first argument again, the young Socrates decides that all its

⁸¹ Cornford, p.68.

⁸² R. E Allen,. *Plato’s Parmenides: Translation and Analysis* (Minneapolis. University of Minneseto Press, 1983), pp.74-7.

arguments are intended to demonstrate that there are not many things (127e10). Zeno agrees. Zeno determines the context of his argument with these words :

The treatise is in truth a sort of support for Parmenides' *logos* against those attempting to ridicule it on the ground that, if one is (*hen esti*), the *logos* suffers many ridiculous results that contradict it. This treatise, therefore, argues against those who say the many are, and it pays them back with the same results and worse, intending to demonstrate that their hypothesis – if many is (*polla esti*) – suffers even more ridiculous consequences than the hypothesis than the hypothesis of there being one, if one follows the matter sufficiently.⁸³

These words are important to understanding the reception of the goddess' *muthos* by the opponents of Parmenides. They believe that the view that may be extracted from this *muthos* is that "*hen esti*." Zeno's argument makes sense within this context. Zeno tries to show that within the polemical context of this understanding of *to be* (either "the one is" or "the many is"), it is not possible to say *is* to the *many*, because if *the many* is considered as absolute opposition to *the one*, it has incompatible features. In sum, the question of Zeno is how it is possible to say *many is* when *the many* is considered absolute contrary of *the one*. Thus, to understand his argument, we have to think *phusis* of *the many* which excludes *one* absolutely.

As will be seen, the same investigation will be made in the first and the second deductions under the hypothesis "one is" in the second part of the dialogue for *the one*. In the first deduction, by assuming that *phusis* of *the one* is completely defined as *one* it is investigated how it is possible to say *is* to *the one*. Here, we must keep in mind that all investigation is "hypothetical," and thus, our reconstruction of the arguments of the dialogue's characters Zeno and Parmenides are dependent on our understanding of the

⁸³ 128 c6-b3.

question of investigation. Now, let us try to examine the question of Zeno's argument. When we say *is* to *the many* itself whose *phusis* is defined as absolutely *many* (excluding *one*), what consequences follow for *to be*? His first hypothesis deals with the idea of a pure many, and investigates the condition of saying *is* to this *many*. This amounts to saying that the sense of many in Zeno's argument is not restricted to a certain kind of many, but focuses on all things simply that are called many. How can we read Zeno's argument to embrace its abstract language? What do we mean *many* prior to all kinds of its usage with qualification?

In his *Commentary on Plato's Parmenides*, Proclus puts forward the view that the sense of many in Zeno's argument cannot be restricted to a certain field of sensibles, or intelligibles. Proclus says, "let us assume not merely sensible pluralities, nor merely intelligible ones, but all things simply that are called *many*."⁸⁴ This *many* may be interpreted as having no unity within its *phusis*. As Sanday points out this many is taken

as simply *many* each member is not connected or like another in any way. They are all simply 'unlike', they are a field of unlikes. On the basis of being completely unlike and sharing nothing in common, Proclus says that the many are, in precisely this sense, all completely like. The one thing in common is that they have nothing in common, this very thing is common to them. In this conception of many, we can account for the way in which the many are both 'likes' and 'unlikes', in the sense that their unlikeness makes them like... The many completely deprived of unity will have no mark by which to distinguish one part from another. Each part is simply 'not' the other.⁸⁵

⁸⁴R. Gleen Morrow and M. John Dillon, *Proclus Commentary on Plato's Parmenides*, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University, 1987), Proclus, II. 725.

⁸⁵ Eric Carlos Sanday, "Dialectic and the Turn toward Logos in Plato's Parmenides" (Ph.D. diss., Pennsylvania University, 2003), p.36.

From Simplicius' testimony, we have only one genuine fragment from Zeno's book that indicates the sort of arguments he used:

In proving once again that if there are many things, the same things are limited and unlimited, Zeno's own very words are as follows.

'If there are many things, it is necessary that they are just as many as they are, and neither more nor less than that. But if they are as many as they are, they will be limited (*peperasmena*).

If there are many things, the things that are are unlimited; for there are always others between things that are, and again others between those. And thus the things are are unlimited (*apeira*).' ⁸⁶

Though in the above fragment the argument tries to prove that if *the many* are, they will be limited (*peperasmemon*) and unlimited (*apeiron*),⁸⁷ taking into account what Proclus says about pure *many*, we can construct an argument for *the many* itself in terms of "like" and "unlike" as it is expressed in the dialogue, in order to see whether the nature of *the many* itself [is] proper to be called as *to be*. The above fragment shows to us that Zeno takes *many* as that which is divisible *ad infinitum*. Following his conception of *many* as simply "divisible," let us take a division and name arbitrary parts that we have after this division as part₁ and part₂. part₁ [will be (only)] not-part₂ and part₂ [will be (only)] not-part₁, hence not-part₂ [will not be] not-part₁, hence they [will be] different in respect of "not" [being] the other. And since each [will be (only)] not-the other, they [will be] the same in respect of "not." Thus, "not" both differentiates and assimilates

⁸⁶ Fr. 3, Simplicius in Phys. 140, 28.

⁸⁷ As Frankel notes in "Zeno of Elea's Attack on Plurality" *The American Journal of Philology*, Vol. 63, No.1, (1942) pp.1-25: "whenever Zeno speaks of many, he includes divisibility. If we assume plurality, i.e, divisibility of any unit, some part is here and some other part is there. But even if Here and There are very close together, nothing can prevent us from making the something here and the something there small enough allow for a third thing to be squeezed in between them". It is clear that this operation can be repeated indefinitely without reaching a limit.

part₁ and part₂. Here, the important point is that since part₁ (is (only) not- part₂ and part₂ (is (only) not- part₁, to define the *phusis* of part₁, we have to recourse to part₂, and to define the *phusis* of part₂, we have to recourse to part₁. Thus, they always go together, and always two, we cannot define neither part₁ nor part₂ positively.

In the argument, *the many* is considered by itself, that is, by its own *phusis*. Since *the many* is taken as absolute contrary of *the one*, its *phusis* does not include *one* within it. If we interpret this conception of *many* by means of Fragment 2, those who claim that “the many is” must accept that the path of “the one is” is closed ; thus, on the claimed open path, *the one* cannot be found: “the one is not.” The discussion of Zeno seems to accord with the *muthos* of the goddess. When *the many* is considered solely as what it is by itself, that “its *phusis* does not include *one*” can be read by means of Fragment 2 as follows: “Well then, I will tell you – and you listen, receive my word – what are the only ways of investigation there are to think: one, on the one hand, [to think] that *many*, and that *not many not the many*; this is the way of persuasion, since it accompanies the truth; another, on the other hand, [to think] that *not many*, and that *many necessarily not the many*.” Extending what is said with “to be is” about *is* and *to be* to any *phusis* and its proper subject of discourse and interpreting this fragment in terms of *many* as a *phusis* or consistently with Fragment 8.34 as *noema*, and *the many* as a subject of discourse which is determined solely by its proper *phusis* or again consistently with Fragment 8.34 wherefore the *noema many* [is], we can deduce two restrictions for the *phusis many* and its subject of discourse *the many* and in general for any *phusis* and its proper subject of discourse: (i) only its proper *phusis* is said of a subject of discourse and (ii) a *phusis* is

said of only its proper subject of discourse. As is seen, this is also a corollary of the formal structure of “to be is,” which expresses that only *is* is said of *to be* and *is* is said of only *to be*. But here, we must keep in mind that, in our explication we follow only the formal structure of “to be is” and we do not claim that “to be is” consists only of this formal structure or only a paradigm for any *phusis* and its proper subject of discourse.

As is pointed out in the dialogue, if it is accepted that Zeno follows the goddess’ *muthos*, the problem considered about *many is* has two components that are expressed in “the many many” and “to be is.” Thus posited, the problem has two apparent layers, one of which is twofold: first, to derive “the many is” from “the many many” by means of the analysis of *many* and *is* and to find a way to say that *many is* and to derive “to be many” from “the many many,” similarly, from the analysis of *many* and *is* and to find a way to say that *many is*; and second, to find a basis for the claim “the many is,” i.e., to find out on what condition the claim for any *phusis* that “[it] is” acceptable, within the context of the goddess’ *muthos*.

Given the above restrictions that only its proper *phusis* is said of a subject of discourse and a *phusis* is said of only its proper subject of discourse and that only *is* is said of *to be* and *is* is said of only *to be*, the claim that “the many is” in order to be acceptable, it must be assumed that these two variants of Fragment 2 holds for *many* (i.e., absolute or pure *many* which excludes *one*): “ (i) Well then, I will tell you - and you listen, receive my word - what are the only ways of investigation there are to think: one, on the one hand, [to think] that *is*, and that *is not not the many* (i.e., that *is*, and that *is not the one*); this is the way of persuasion, since it accompanies the truth; another, on

the other hand, [to think] that *is not*, and that *is* necessarily *not the many* (i.e., that *is not* and that *is* necessarily *the one*) and (ii) Well then, I will tell you - and you listen, receive my word - what are the only ways of investigation there are to think: one, on the one hand, [to think] that *many*, and that *not many not to be* (i.e. that *many*, and that *one not to be*); this is the way of persuasion, since it accompanies the truth; another, on the other hand, [to think] that *not many*, and that *many necessarily not to be* (i.e., that *one*, and that *many necessarily not to be*).”

Now, in order to grasp the meaning of the argumentation against *many is* we can reconsider it in respect to the above-stated conditions for the admission of the hypothesis *many is (polla esti)*, since in the dialogue Zeno’s book is posited as “a sort of defence of Parmenides’ argument against those who try to make fun of it by showing that his supposition, that there is a One, leads to many absurdities and contradictions.”⁸⁸ Though we will argue that in the goddess’ *muthos* there is no such a supposition that “there is One,” it will be useful to take the hypothesis *many is* in parallel with the hypothesis that “one is,” that is discussed in the so-called second part of the dialogue.

The evaluation of his argumentation must be made with a close inspection to these conditions, since, as though there is no recourse to *is* through the argument, it reaches the conclusion that it is not the case that *many is*. What must be first pointed out is that, in order to make the claim, for any subject of discourse – whatever its *phusis* [is] –, that [it] *is*, the underlying conditions of this claim with respect to *is* must be the same. These conditions cannot be taken as different from one to another subject and from one

⁸⁸ 128c-d.

to another *phusis* respectively, since what is declared about differents must be the same *is*. Thus must be the case both for *one* and *many*. Hence, for the investigation of both hypotheses the place where we begin must be the beginning, before asking the question, whether a subject of discourse *is* or before hypothesizing that a subject of discourse *is*, what we have only the *phusis* of this subject (as we will considered in detail in the following section, a subject of discourse is solely determined by its proper *phusis*). On this basis, as for any subject of discourse, before the hypothesis that *many is* – similar with the hypothesis that “one is” – what we have is the claim that “the many many” – an expression which relates a *phusis* to its subject of discourse (and for *the one*, “the one one”). Posited in that way, the continuation of the investigation must be, for both *the many* and *the one*, the same, i.e., whether *is* can be said together with their *phusises*; for the many, whether “the many, many is” and for *the one*, whether “the one, one is.”

As will be clear in our discussion about the hypothesis “one is,” given that the underlying condition or assumption that “to be is” and the restrictions that is expressed with it, from the Zeno’s point of view, i.e., in respect of the goddess’ *muthos*, for claiming that “the many is,” *the many* must be admitted as not different from *to be*. As is shown at the end of the argumentation, this means to admit that *many* and *is* [are] not different and that the implications of *many* as a *phusis* are valid also for *is*. Thus follows two conclusions from the argumentation, one for the *phusis many* and its proper subject of discourse *the many* as taken in itself and other for *is* and its proper subject of discourse *to be*: Since many, as it is shown, [is] both like and unlike, it cannot be taken as a determinate *phusis* and *is*, since it must be taken as the same as *many*, the claim that

“to be is” turns out to be the claim that “to be [is] both like and unlike.” Hence, if it is not admitted for *to be* that it [is] both like and unlike – this is just the saying of goddess’ *muthos* as was stated in the previous chapter, it cannot be said that *many is*. Thus we can conclude that the argumentation of Zeno under the hypothesis “many is” shows that “many is no way is.”

To see the implications of “to be many” with respect to the goddess’ *muthos*, the following argument can be made. If it were possible to divide *to be*, since each part would be [a] part of *to be*, each must *be* and *is*, and since each would be different part, each would not be the same as each other. Let us call different arbitrary parts of *to be* that which *is*₁ and that which *is*₂. Since each that which *is is*, for each “*is* [would be] the same for that which *is*₁” and “*is* [would be] the same for that which *is*₂”. Since we have assumed that which *is*₁ [were] not the same as that which *is*₂ in saying that they were different parts of *to be*, we have to accept that we have assumed *is* [were] not the same as *is*, thus also *to be* [would be] both the same and not the same as itself.

It is the exact moment to ask a question: from that it cannot be said that *many is*, does the conclusion about its absolute opposite *one* that “one is” follow? In the so-called second part of the dialogue, *Parmenides*, the character Parmenides investigates the possibility of saying “one is” about *the one* itself, conforming to the restrictions stated above.

Argumentation about the One

In the second part of dialogue, in the first and the second deductions under the hypothesis “one is” we will focus on, the character Parmenides looks for an answer to the question whether *is* can be said of a subject (*the one*) which is exclusively defined by its own *phusis* (*one*). In the first deduction, he investigates the *phusis* of the subject, and concludes that if *is* is to be said of that subject, then *being* must be part of a whole which is composed of *the one* and *being*. In the second deduction, in accordance with this conclusion, he searches for the possibility of *being*’s distinguishable part of a whole.

First Hypothesis : One Is

First Deduction: If One Is

First, the outline of the argument is as follows: If one is (*hen esti*), what consequences follow for *the one*? At the end of the first deduction (141e), Parmenides concludes that *the one* is not even “is one.” This deduction is a negative movement in which all attributes are denied of *the one*. To summarize them, his deduction for *the one* itself concludes that *the one* is unbounded (137d), devoid of shape (137e7) and place (38b), is neither in motion nor at rest (139b), is neither the same nor different with respect to itself or others (139e4), is neither like nor unlike with respect to itself or others (140b); is neither equal nor unequal with itself and others (140d); is neither older nor younger nor the same age with itself or others (141a), and is not in time (141d). Parmenides then concludes that on these assumptions *the one* neither *is* at all nor *is one* at all (141e) nor

subject to name, speech, knowledge, perception, or opinion (142a). Each of these characters under consideration is eliminated either by means of basic assumption that “The one, in so far as it is one is not many (137c4),” because each of them, in a way, presupposes part/whole structure and many, or the exclusive nature of *the one* defined as only *one* and nothing else, because any nature other than *one* pluralizes *the one*, and thus makes it one and many.

Reading the Hypothesis

The first hypothesis is open to various interpretations. The discussion begins about the sense of “*hen esti*.” At 137b2-4, we read,

would you like me to begin with myself, and hypothesize my own hypothesis about the one itself what consequences must follow “if one is” (*hen estin*).

Thus, according to Plato’s character Parmenides, his own thesis is about *the one* itself. At first impression, when the subject is inserted into the conditional, “if the one one is” is obtained. How can this expression be understood? Here, it must be noted that the consequences of the hypothesis is conditional. For this reason, the attempt to evaluate the consequences of hypothesis will be directly dependent on our interpretation of the conditional expression “if one is (*hen esti*).” When the translations of the dialogue are examined, there seems to be two leading interpretations of “if one is (*hen esti*).” In the first camp, Cornford and Sayre translates Eleatic Parmenides’ thesis as “If there is a

One,⁸⁹ or with a slight modification, “If there is one, the one could not be many.”⁹⁰ In the other camp, Taylor and Gill translate it as “If it (the one) is one.”⁹¹ According to Gill, the first hypothesis argues that *the one* is it is by itself, that is, by *oneness*. Given that perspective, all that *the one* is by itself is *one*. Under this assumption (at first sight) it seems that there is no difference between two translations.

According to Cornford (and Sayre), the subject of the first hypothesis is the bare one to which no additional attribute can be added, and thus it is absolutely one and in no sense many or a whole of parts. When the progression of the argument is examined, this reading seems to be justified in itself. As Gill notes, the first hypothesis defies our expectations about the universal applicability of relations like sameness and difference.⁹² When we consider the arguments given below under the heading of “the one, the same and the different” to show that *the one* is not different from anything else and not the same as itself, in these two arguments the character Parmenides rests upon the assumption that the nature of different and the nature of the same differ from the nature of *the one*. So in these arguments, *the one* is taken as *one* by itself, and thus under this assumption it is concluded that it cannot be the same as or different from anything at all, because these features do not belong to the nature of *the one*. Hence, Cornford seems to be justified in his interpretation that the first deduction under the hypothesis “one is” argues that whatever *the one* is it is by itself, that is, by oneness. It is clear that if *the one*

⁸⁹ Cornford, p.116.

⁹⁰ Sayre, *Parmenides' Lesson*, p.17.

⁹¹ A. E. Taylor, *Plato: The Man and, His Work* (London: Methuen & Co., 1926), p.363; Mary Louise Gill and Paul Ryan, trans. *Plato: Parmenides* (Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett, 1996), p.141.

⁹² Gill and and Ryan, p.73.

considered as what it is solely in virtue of itself, it will be *one* and nothing else. Indeed, Cornford explicitly states his comments concerning *the one* of the first hypothesis at the beginning of the first deduction in similar words. He writes, “If the one is defined as absolutely one, it is no sense many or whole of parts,” and adds “all the subsequent inferences follow from this definition. We are to suppose that the one is just simply one and nothing else.”⁹³

Thus, we may paraphrase the translation of Cornford as “If there is a One, considered that One is absolutely one and nothing else.” So, according to Cornford, the investigation of the hypothesis can be expressed in that question: how can “the one defined as absolutely one” take any sense of *is*?” What does it mean that “the one as defined as absolutely one?” At that point, it may be helpful to look at the conclusion of the argument. It says that the *phusis*⁹⁴ of *the one* does not include any *is* which can contribute its nature as additional part. Thus, the starting point of the argument is that “the *phusis* of *the one* (is) only *one*,” that is, “the one one.” We are familiar with this rule from the previous chapter: Only its proper *phusis* is said of a subject of discourse. Under this restriction, if you claim that “the one is,” then the question is how *is* said of *the one* on the condition that its *phusis* is exclusively determined as *one*? In this case, we have to read “if one is” as an investigation of what happens when we add *is* to *the one* as

⁹³ Cornford, p.116.

⁹⁴ Though in the Parmenides’ poem, *one* is not stated as a *phusis*, following *Parmenides* in 139d1 “The nature of the one is not, of course, also that of the same” (*oukh heper tou henos phusis, aute depou kai tou tautou*), since here that which is called as *phusis* of *the one* can be taken only as *one* if we consider the beginning hypothesis, it is conceivable to treat *one* as a *phusis* through our discussion. On the other hand, for the deductions in the second part of the dialogue, as we will show, it can be argued that to say that “is one” and “is light” – though *one* and *light* are different in content – do not differ in the mode of their claims about *to be*.

exclusively *one*. It is clear that we obtain two statements: “the one is” and “the one is one.” If *is* were in the *phusis* of *the one*, it would be possible to say both of them. Under the restriction that the *phusis* of *the one* [is] exclusively *one*, however, there will be no difference between saying “is one” and “one one.” In sum, all sayings about *the one* will be reduced to “the one one”⁹⁵ or all things said of *the one* will be equal to *one*.

Indeed, Parmenides himself gives wanted justification at the beginning of the second deduction to the view that the problem of the first deduction is to search for the possibility of saying *is* to a subject the nature of which is exclusively determined by *one*.

He says that,

...considering from the beginning one if is (*hen ei estin*) can it *be*, but not partake of being? So there would also be the being of the one, would not be the same as the one; If it were, it could not the being of the one, nor could the one partake of it; on the contrary, *saying that one is would be like saying that ‘one one’*. But, this time that is not the hypothesis, namely, what consequences must be, if one one (*hen hen*), but if one is.⁹⁶

In Gill’s translation, the expression “the one is one” indicates that *the one* is *one* in the very strong sense that the only features it has are explained by its oneness. In her interpretation, *is* is used timelessly to ascribe to *the one* its nature – a property it must have what it is. According to her, considering the end of the deduction, the question of the hypothesis may be formulated in the following manner: If the one is considered as what it is solely by virtue of itself, can the one *be one* without *partaking of being*?⁹⁷ We

⁹⁵ Here the dialogue’s character Parmenides follows goddess *muthos* and takes the *phusis one* as *noema* and the one itself as “wherefore the *noema* one.”

⁹⁶ 142 b-c.

⁹⁷ Gill and Ryan, pp. 74 -5.

can paraphrase the condition stated at the end of the argument as follows: If *the one* is considered as what is solely in virtue of itself, can the one *be one* without having *being* as its distinguishable part? In Gill's translation, the problem is put: How can "is one" be said of *the one* defined as completely *one*? In sum, how "is one" can be said of *the one* whose nature completely determined as *one*? The same reduction is at work again. If *one* is said of *the one* exclusively, "the one is" and "the one is one" will indicate that "the one one" and "the one one one," that is, the propositional content of all judgments about *the one* will be reduced into "the one one." If there were a difference between "the one is" and "the one one," either *the one* of which *is* said will be different subject from that of which "one is" said, or both *is* and *one* will be said of *the one*. In the latter case, the *phusis* of *the one* will be a compound which includes both *is* and *one*.

Now, we can say that both Cornford and Gill start from the same assumption: The one one and nothing else. At first sight, this starting point gives the impression that the investigation is "about the nature of the one." As will be remembered, the starting point of both position echos the p-monistic schema discussed above. In sum, the main thesis of p-monism is that the function of formal *is* is to convey any basic entity to its own nature, which is defined in absolute manner excluding all other natures from itself. In this schema, the crucial point is that there is no *being* apart from natures, or among natures, or beyond natures. For this reason, the primary question of predicate monism was that "What is it?" As Curd explicitly says that,

... the speculative *is* serves as the answer to the question 'what is it?' such that it gives 'a complete exposure of, and insight into, the identity of

a thing to such an extent and in such a manner that no further questions with respect to that thing need or may arise?⁹⁸

So for a p-monist the question about ‘Is it?’ does not arise, because he or she grants that these natures are *beings*, and are self-identical. Since he or she assumes that the problem of *being* has already been solved, she asks what sort of *being* are these natures are.

If these observations are correct, according to both Cornford and Gill, the first deduction under the hypothesis “one is” starts from this point: “The one one.” At the end of the argument, Parmenides asks the question: “Can *is* be said of this one?” If the whole nature of *the one* [is] absolutely and completely *one*, *is* cannot be said of *the one* itself, and indeed all judgments about *the one* is the same as “the one one.” There would be no difference in saying that “the one one,” “the one is,” and “the one is one.” All these judgments show only one judgment: “the one one.” This amounts to saying that if you say *is* to this *one*, you cannot find any distinct *is* within this *one*. The argument rests on two assumptions: only *one* is said of *the one* and *one* is said of only *the one*. Thus, it is not possible to say “the one is” (as Cornford’s translation says) or “the one is one” (as Gill’s translation says) as a meaningful judgment about *the one*. In Cornford’s translation, whenever we try to say “the one is,” this is the same as “the one one,” because *is* is the same as *one*. In Gill’s translation, whenever we try to say “the one is one,” this is the same as “the one one one,” because *is* [is] the same as *one*.

In sum, the question is that if we put *is* into the p-monistic schema as an element which contributes to the subject’s nature, what happens? How can *is* said of *the one* exclusively and completely be defined as *one*? If *the one* is separated from all other

⁹⁸ Curd, p. 39.

natures as the p-monist claims, then *the one* cannot take additional character from other natures, or to speak in terms of nature, it cannot have any other character, including *is*, within its nature, except *one*.

In p-monist schema, this indicates that *the one* is a basic entity which does not have any other nature in its definition, and thus, all one can legitimately say of *the one* is “the one one.” if so, however, how is it possible to say that “the one is”? How can we pass from “the one one” to “the one is”? Cornford’s claim that the answer to this question is given in the first paragraph of hypothesis finds its sense within this context. If we accept that the definition of *the one* is given in the first paragraph, and this definition governs the argument, the conclusion itself – that *the one* can have no sort of *being* – could be deduced directly from this definition. In this paragraph, Parmenides says, in Cornford’s translation, that “If there is a One of course the One will not be many.”⁹⁹ Here, *the one* is defined as absolutely *one*, which excludes a conception of a one whole which has different parts, such as *being* and *the one*. Thus, since *the one* cannot be *many*, i.e., cannot be whole and part, and any other nature cannot be part of *the one*, Cornford claims that the argument ends in the first paragraph. According to Parmenides, however, anything is related to anything in one of the following ways: (a) by the same, (b) by different, (c) as part to whole, or part to whole. In his reading of the hypothesis, though Cornford eliminates whole/part relation, the options of “the same” and “different” are left open. To eliminate the relation of the same, it must be accepted at the beginning that *being* and *the one* are already different. We will return this issue

⁹⁹ Cornford, p.116.

later, because this reading may provide justification for the scholars who reject the conclusion of the argument. At the end of the argument, since *the one* is not in time, it is concluded that it is no way *is*, and thus it cannot even *be one*. All scholars, including Cornford, agree with the view that it is not possible to infer from the reason that *the one* is not in time that *the one* in no sense *is*. Even though *the one* is not in time, however, and the sense of *being* is not limited to being in time, the problem continues for any one who may wish to read the conclusion positively: If “the one one,” it [is] timeless *one*. How is it possible for this timeless *one* to *be* timeless *one*?

Now, let us look at Gill’s reading. In her reading, the argument ends with the last word of the hypothesis. As noted above, even though *the one*’s not being in time does not justify the conclusion that *the one* in no sense *is*, that question is left open: If *the one* is taken as only *one* and nothing else, is it possible for *this one* to *be one* (“the one is one”) without partaking of *being* (“the one is”)? At the end of the argument, Parmenides concludes that if *the one* is to *be*, it must have *being* as its parts. This can be expressed as a general principle: To say that X is in some way is to say X must be in a certain relation to *being* (under the assumption that *being* is posited as being different from X). Or, *the one* can *be* only if it has *being* as its part. To put all these together, in the hypothesis, Parmenides examines how “the one” which is exclusively determined by its *phusis one* can *be*.

Now, we can look the argument in detail: At the beginning of the argument, the *phusis* of subject of the hypothesis (*the one*) is defined as absolute contrary of many: “If the one [is] one, then the one (*to hen*) of course, could not be many?” (137c4). For this

reason, the *phusis* of *the one* admits no “many” within it. Here, the reasoning may be given as follows. Since only its proper *phusis* is said of the subject of discourse, and *the one* is a singular subject of discourse which has singular *phusis*, but *many* is said of only plural subject of discourse, *many* cannot be said of *the one*. Since *the one* [is] *one*, it cannot be *many*; therefore, it has no part and is not a whole, for a part is part of a whole, and a whole is composed of parts. Therefore, anything that is whole or has part admits many, but since *the one* is not *many*, it cannot be a part or whole (SubDed.1).

The subsequent deductions are largely dependent on this definition of *the one* as exclusively *one* which does not admit *many*. As Sayre observes, the topics treated in subdeductions 2 through 5 are related by the relation of necessary conditionality.¹⁰⁰ In sum, the running of the argument is as follows: having a limit is necessary condition of having a shape, and having a shape is necessary condition of having a place, and having a place is the necessary condition of motion and rest. Since having a part is necessary condition of having a limit, when Parmenides showed that *the one* has no part, the others follow. Now let us look at these deductions.

The above inference seems to be a consequence of the hypothesis itself: If the one one, then it cannot be many, and since it cannot be many, it cannot be whole and have parts. if it has no *part*, however, then it can have neither beginning, middle nor end, since these would be parts of it. Hence, since the end and beginning are the limits of each thing, it is boundless (SubDed. 2). If the one has no limit, then the one has no

¹⁰⁰ Kenneth M. Sayre, *Plato's Late Ontology: A Riddle Resolved* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), p.53. For a full exposition of subdeductions, see Sayre, *Parmenides' Lesson*, pp.137-158. and Samuel C. Rickless, *Plato's Forms in Transitions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp.112-138.

shape, because having a shape requires having definite boundaries and limiting parts. The one is without shape, since it has no parts and no limit (SubDed. 3). By similar reasoning, the one has no place, for it is neither in another thing nor in itself. For if it is contained in another, it would contact its container in many points with points of itself; but since it is without part and shape, it cannot be contained within another in this way. The one itself, on the other hand, cannot be in itself. If it contains itself, for to encompass is one thing and to be encompassed is another, and to do both the one would be two, that is *many* (SubDed.4). The one is neither in motion nor rest. If it were in motion it would either undergo alteration or move in place. If the one were to alter from itself, it would not still be one. If it rotates around an axis, it must have other *parts* revolving around the center. If it passes from one place to another, it would have to be in a place to begin, but since it cannot be in any place, it cannot move. Moreover, if moving from place to place involves coming to be in a place, this requires having *parts*, but it has no parts, it cannot move. On the other hand, since it cannot be in any place, it cannot be in the same place, but what is not in the same place cannot be at rest (SubDed. 5).

As we see in this first part of the argumentation, the deductions are dependent upon the definition of *the one* as absolutely *one* and absolute contrary of *the many*. After establishing that *the one* cannot be *many*, Parmenides exploits the relation of necessary conditionality between topics treated earlier and later, he deduces conclusions.

In the second part of the argument, Parmenides deals with “other natures” which are separated from the one. This separation assumption¹⁰¹ forbids any addition to the nature of *the one*. If it were possible to say anything which is different from *one* to *the one*, *the one* would not be only *one*, but would be a whole having *one* and that other nature. Under the restriction that only *one* is said of *the one*, *the one* is separated from the sameness, difference, and being. This is the crucial point of the argumentation about *the one*. By hypothesis, only *one* is said of *the one*, and *one* is said of only *the one*; thus, if *the one* is, (if *is* said of *the one*) then *the one* will be a whole which has *one* and *is*. In similar reasoning, if *the one* is the same (or different), it will be more than one. Under these assumptions, Parmenides argues that *the one* is not the same as itself and others, and is not different from itself and others. After he establishes these consequences, he concludes that the one is neither like nor unlike, neither equal nor unequal, because sameness and difference are necessary conditions of all these relations. From these, he arrives at the conclusion that the one is not in time, because being in time requires “equality” and “inequality,” but these relations require “sameness” and “difference,” but the *phusis* of the one exclude both sameness and difference, then the one is not in time. Now, let us look at the deductions in this part.

The one is neither the same as, nor other than, itself or a different thing. If it were different from itself, it would be other than one, but this is impossible. If it were the same as anything else, however, it would be that thing, and could not be one, but that is impossible. Furthermore, it will not be different from a different thing, so long as it is

¹⁰¹ For the separation assumption Louis J.C. Mix, “A Commentary of the Second Part of Plato’s Parmenides” (Ph.D.diss., University of Alberta, 1975), p.113-14.

one. If it were to be other than anything at all, the difference would be part of the nature of the one, and thus, it would be more than one itself. Nor will it be the same as itself, because the nature (*phusis*) of the one is distinct from the nature of sameness. If the natures of the one and the same were identical, then whenever something came to be one, it would become the same, and whenever something came to be the same, it would become one. If something came to be the same as the many, however, then it would become many and not one: therefore *the one* and the same are not identical. Therefore, if *the one* were the same as itself, it would not be one with itself, and so, it would not be one. Hence, the one is neither the same as, nor other than, itself or a different thing (SubDed. 6). The one is neither like nor unlike itself or a different thing.

If the one cannot admit sameness, then it cannot be like itself or a different thing, because to be like means to be affected in the same way. In a similar way, since it cannot admit difference, and to be unlike means to be affected in a different way, the one cannot be unlike (SubDed. 7). The same reasoning can be extended to “equality” and “unequality.” Nor will the one by nature be equal or unequal either to itself or to another, for to be equal means to have the same measure. Since the one does not partake in sameness, it cannot be said to have the same measure as anything. Furthermore, if to be unequal means to have more or less measures, then, it would be as many parts as measures, and thus it would no longer be one, but just as many as its measures (SubDed. 8).

The one can be neither older, nor younger, not the same age as anything. If it were the same age as itself or another thing, it would partake of likeness and temporal

equality, but as we said that the one has no share in these. So the one is not the same age as anything. In similar reasoning, to be older than or younger than something requires partaking of inequality and unlikeness, but since the one does not partake of inequality or unlikeness, it cannot be older than or younger than anything (SubDed. 9). The one cannot be in time. Something that is in time always is becoming older than itself and at the same time younger than itself. And the time in which a thing becomes older than itself is equal to the time in which the thing becomes younger than itself. But, since the one does not partake of sameness, it is not in time.

At that point, as Miller observed, Parmenides tests Aristoteles in the following manner:

- If, then, the one in no way partakes of time, then it never has become nor was it becoming nor was it ever nor has it become, nor is it becoming nor is it (*estin*), nor will it become nor will it be becoming nor will it be.
- Very true.
- Well then, is it possible that something *partake* of being in any other than these?
- It is not possible.
- Therefore the one in no way *partakes* of being.
- Apparently not.
- Nor, consequently, is it even to the extent of being one; for then it would already be being and *participant* in being. But as it seems, the One neither *is one* nor *is*, if it is necessary to believe such an argument (141e3-142a1)". Thus, he concludes that "it has neither a name (*onoma*), nor *logos*, nor any knowledge (*episteme*), perception (*aisthesis*) or opinion (*doxa*).¹⁰²

The conclusion of the argument is puzzling. Even though the *phusis* of *the one* excludes all other natures, the prior consequence (*the one* is not in time) does not support the ultimate conclusion that *the one* no way partakes of being. The argument would be valid

¹⁰² 141e3-142a1. Mitchell H. Miller, Jr. *Plato's Parmenides, The Conversion of the Soul* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986), p.89.

only if the sense of *is* is limited to time, but, as all scholars agree, the sense of *is* is not limited to time. Even though it is accepted that *is* is not limited to time, however, this does not show that we can pass from “the one one” to “the one is”. Under the restrictions of argument, that is, only its *phusis* is said of *the one*, and *is* is only said of *to be*, and *to be* and *the one* are different, we can say “the one is and one” only if *to be* and *the one* are distinguishable parts of a whole *onebeing*.

How can we read the puzzling conclusion of the first deduction under the hypothesis “one is”?

Reading the Conclusion of the Deduction

Let us start from the end of the argument. Among scholars there seems to be a consensus about the end of the argument. As we see, the dialogue’s character Parmenides argues that if *the one* is to *be*, it would have to partake of *being*. Since it is not in time, however, it cannot partake of being, and thus, *the one* cannot *be* in some way. But, if it cannot *be* in some way, it cannot have any *logos*, judgment, knowledge, because according to Parmenides all these require that the discourse of subject must *be* in some way. The end of the argument is correct in denying that *the one* is subject to perception and opinion, because since it is not in time, it transcends the limitation of *doxa*. Is it possible to deny its intelligibility on the basis of its not being in time? Or, in other words, is it possible to infer that *the one* no way *is* from the previous conclusion that *the one* is not in time? All scholars, including Cornford and Sayre, who claim that ultimate conclusion of the argument is sound, seem to agree with the view that neither of two inferences (1) that *the*

one no way *is*, and thus, (2) that *the one* is not even “is one” follow from the previous conclusion that *the one* is not in time.

What is the justification of their view? Why does not *the one*'s not being in time prevent from its *partaking* of being? It is interesting that although they hold different views concerning the conclusion of the argument, they recourse to the same source to question the view that being is always tensed. In the *Timaeus*, Plato has Timaeus explicitly say that eternal present is peculiar to eternal being:

All these (days and nights, months, and years) are parts of time, and “was” and “will be” are forms of time that have come to be, which we incorrectly transfer, without noticing, to eternal being. For we say that it (eternal being) “was” and “is” and “will be”. But according to the true account “is” alone properly applies to it, whereas “was” and “will be” are appropriately used for coming-to-be that proceeds in time, since they are motions. It is not proper for that which remains unchangingly the same to come to be either older or younger through time, nor have to come to be so in the past, or now, or to be so hereafter. (37e-38a).

Now, based on this evidence, it seems to be possible that *the one* may be even if it is not in time. If so, we can arrive at the positive conclusion that ‘if it is, it *has* timeless being.’

Some scholars follow this way and think that when Parmenides claims that *the one* would have to be in time to partake of being, and asks Aristotle, “is it possible then something partake of being in any other than these?”¹⁰³ young Aristotle fell into his trap.

Therefore, since the sense of being is not limited to time, these scholars answer the question as follows: “It is possible for *the one* partake of *being*, even though *the one* is not in time.” One of the scholars who thinks that *Parmenides* uses a bad argument to

¹⁰³ 141e5.

arrive at this conclusion is Forrester. Discussing this puzzling conclusion, he quotes the end of argument with expressions of doubt underlined:

So the one in no way participates in being.
It seems not
Then the one in no way is.
It appears not.
So it is not, even to the extent of being one. For it were (one), it would straightway be and participate in being. But, as it seems, the One neither is nor is one, if one can put faith in such an argument.
That is likely.
But as for what is not, would any existing belong to it?
How could it?
So then it has no name, no logos; there is no knowledge, perception, or opinion of it.
It appears not.
So it is not named nor spoken of nor opined about nor known nor perceived by any existent.
It seems not
Then can these things be true of the One
I think not.¹⁰⁴

And, on the basis of these expressions of doubt expressed by *Parmenides* and Aristotle, he concludes that we cannot trust the end of argument:

...when Parmenides doubts when the argument can be trusted, we must not assume too hastily that he is talking about the argument of the entire first hypothesis. The expressions of the doubt are confined only to the end of his hypothesis ... To say that Plato introduces manifold indications of doubt precisely at one point in the hypothesis where he is serious makes no sense at all. What Plato means for us to dismiss is that section – only that section – where both Parmenides and Aristoteles cannot accept the argument ... Does anyone believe Plato held seriously the proposition that only through existing in time can an object participate in being? Unless Plato waved a long and improbable good-bye to his own theory of Forms, he would allow for non-spatial, non-temporal existents.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ James William Forrester, "An Examination of the Second Part of Plato's *Parmenides*" (Ph.D. diss., The Johns Hopkins University 1968), p.132.

¹⁰⁵ Forrester, p.138.

At that point, Miller agrees with Forrester. He also focuses on the end of the argument, and claims that it is not necessary to believe such an argument. He says,

The conclusion rest upon the fundamentally preemptive assumption that being as such, or every sense in which a being *is*, is temporally determined...Aristotle assumes that the sort of being proper to things – being that, in association with becoming, is either past, present, or future – is universal. More particularly, he fails to recognize the difference between the *is* of time present and the tenseless *is* of what transcends temporal determination...The implications of the objection are significant. Not only does it resolve both contradictions in I, it transforms them into specifications of the One's transcendence of the order of things (in time)... Thus the basic contradiction – if a One is, it is not- turns into the revelation that this One, if it is, it *has* timeless being! Thus the denial takes on the positive sense – confirming the opening characterization, in the process – of affirming the partlessness or simplicity of the One.¹⁰⁶

Now, we can formulate the common view of both scholars in the following words: “If the one is, it *has* timeless being.” Is there a problem of their reasoning? The minor problem is that they base their reasoning on the evidence extracted from the source external to the text. They think that the argument *must* be bad because Plato does not believe that the sense of *is* is limited to time. If we are to be faithful to the text, we must justify our claims by reason from within the text.

To understand the problem formulated in the first hypothesis, let us concentrate for now on the beginning of the exercise. At the beginning of the exercise, Parmenides proposes to start the exercise with himself and his own hypothesis: *The one* itself. We will be faithful to the text to understand the sense of the hypothesis. At that point, it may be helpful to remember the argument of Zeno against many. In this argument, Zeno takes the thesis *many is* and deduces contradictory conclusions from it. In the text, he is

¹⁰⁶ Miller, pp. 90 -1.

represented as a figure who develops an argument against certain figures who adopted a reductive understanding of the Parmenidean thesis. These opponents of Parmenides think that his thesis is about *the one*, or more precisely, “one is.” As Palmer points out, when we concentrate on the opening exchange between Socrates and Zeno, “one will begin to doubt whether the treatise was in fact based on Parmenides’ philosophy and meant to confirm it.”¹⁰⁷

Indeed, in this conversation, when Socrates decides that all its arguments are intended to demonstrate that there are not many things (127e12-128a1), Zeno agrees. But, when Socrates points out to Parmenides that Zeno has upheld the same position that he himself had in his poem, Zeno rejects this view. In sum, Socrates thinks that in claiming that “many is not *is*” Zeno secretly espousing Parmenides’ thesis, that is, “one is.” However, Zeno rejects this view of Socrates. As Palmer says, Zeno’s answer to Socrates may be summed in three points:

- (i) Socrates is right in observing that his treatise repeatedly maintains that there are not many things. ‘You have,’ he says, ‘properly grasped the intention of the entire treatise’ (128a2-3). He indicates, however, that (ii) Socrates is mistaken in supposing that the treatise was intended to say the same thing as Parmenides (128c2-5, 128a6-b6). Yet he says (iii) the treatise was meant to defend Parmenides against his detractors¹⁰⁸.

Now, we can understand the problem of the first hypothesis. Zeno’s argument against many is directed against the opponents of Parmenides who takes his thesis as “the one is.” He responds to these figures by an *ad hominem* argument. This does not show, however, that Parmenides thesis is that “the one is.” Since Zeno’s argument is

¹⁰⁷ Palmer, pp. 99 -100.

¹⁰⁸ Palmer, p.100.

constructed within a polemical context of two theses about “is” (either one is or many is). In the first deduction discussed above, it is seen that these are not exhaustive options for “is,” and their “isness” is subjected to certain restrictions. The question of Parmenides reveals this point without doubt: “Is it possible for *the one* to *be* without partaking of being ?” Thus, we can generalize the question: How can we attribute *is* to a plural subject of discourse whose *phusis* has completely different parts (Zeno’s argument) and a singular subject of discourse whose *phusis* is defined as excluding everything including *is*? (Parmenides’ argument). The question is important because by this question, “is” emerges as a different term apart from *one* and *many*, and as we shall see in the second deduction, *is* only said of *being* unqualifiedly. On these conditions, if you wish to say *is* to some subject other than *being*, according to Parmenides *being* must be made a part of whole which includes both this subject and *to be*. Then, the crucial question: Can *being* part of a whole which is composed of the subject whose *phusis* is other than *is* and *being* itself? And, conversely, can any *phusis* other than *is* be part of *being*? In the second deduction, we will try to find the answers of these questions.

Now, we can return to the end of the first deduction. Can we give a justification for the claim that *being* is not limited to time from within the text? If we suppose that *being* is a third term apart from the one and many, we can apply the argument used for *the one* to *being*, and we can arrive at a similar conclusion. Since the conclusion that *the one* is not in time is dependent on the conclusion that “the one is neither the same as, nor other than itself, or a different thing,” by the same reasoning, we can argue that *being* is not in time. The argument is based on the premise that the same and different cannot be

part of the nature of *the one* exclusively defined as *one*. In a similar way, if *being* is defined in virtue of itself as being and nothing else, being is neither the same as, nor other than, itself or a different thing. The exclusive nature of being prevents us from adding to it an additional nature. Thus, we can conclude that being is not in time, because it does not partake of the same and different.¹⁰⁹ Now, we have found the justification for scholars which claim that sense of being is not limited to time. Then we can argue that “if the one is, it *has* timeless being.” But how do we understand this conclusion? To find out the sense of this solution, let us return to Parmenides’ question again: “Is it possible for *the one* to *be one* without partaking of being?” He states a general principle in question form whether the subject of discourse is in time or not: Can a nature (say, *one*) be said of its subject (*the one*) without saying that this subject (*the one*) is? If you say “the one is one”, this requires that *is* is the part of the nature of *the one*. So, as Gill pointed out,

...if the one is considered as what is solely in virtue of itself, can it *be* (timelessly) one without partaking of a character other than its own? ... If so, then the conclusion of the first deduction stands. If the one considered as what it is solely in virtue of itself, it cannot even *be one*.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹ Since the following section of the deduction based upon the fact that the same and the different are not included in the *phusis one*, for any *phusis* which is such similar conclusions follows, thus as well as *is* provided that the same and the different are not included in. Hence it is possible to rephrase this part of the *Parmenides*’ deduction in terms of *being*: Being is neither the same as, nor other than, itself or a different thing. If it were different from itself, it would be other than being, but this is impossible. But, if it were the same as anything else, it would be that thing, and could not be being, but that is impossible. But furthermore, it will not be different from a different thing, so long as it is being. If it were to be other than anything at all, difference would be part of the nature of being, and thus, it would be more than being itself. Nor will it be the same as itself, because the nature (*phusis*) of being is distinct from the nature of sameness. If the nature of being and sameness were identical, then whenever something came to be being, it would become the same, and whenever something came to be the same, it would become being. Therefore, if being were the same as itself, it will not be being with itself, and so, it will not be being. Hence, being is neither the same as, nor other than, itself or a different thing (139b5-139e6).

¹¹⁰ Gill and Ryan, p.75.

If the necessary condition of saying that “the one is one” is to say “the one is”, and to say “the one is” is to say that the one already partakes of being which is not the same as the one, or the onebeing must have being as its part different from the one, then, since there is no *is* in the nature of the one, we cannot say that *the one is* by virtue of itself, and we cannot say that *the one to be one*. Therefore *the one* neither “is one” nor *is*, but only *one*. As clearly seen, the argument rests on a separation assumption: The *phusis* of *the one* as *one* is separate from all other natures, including *being*. Furthermore, if there is no *is* in the nature of *the one*, then there is no *logos*, and knowledge of *the one*. This is the main clue to understand the assumption of the argument which governs its development: “the one one” (in relation to itself). By this assumption, at the end of the deduction, when the one considered in virtue of itself, Parmenides arrives at the conclusion that *the one* [is] not in time, but from this conclusion we cannot jump the conclusion that “the one is.”

If we wish to say that “the one is,” we have two ways: either we will claim that there is no difference between the nature of *the one* and *being* of *the one*, or we will accept that *the one has being* as its different part. In the first option, our statement will be that if *the one is* (in relation to itself), it *is being* (in relation to itself), but in the second option, if *the one is*, it *has being* as distinguishable part. The first option identifies *the one* with its *being*. In that case, however, it is clear that *the one* will not be *the one* at the beginning. Here, there is a subtle point. If the nature of *the one* [is] exclusively *one*, and only *one* is said of the one, all judgements about *the one* are

reduced to “the one one,” and thus, all additional characters are only empty sounds, or repeat *one*, but the same argument may be read from the perspective of *to be* provided that *is* is said of only *to be*. Then, since only *being is*, when we say “the one is,” we have to equate *the one* with *being* and thus, we may say that *is* is said of just *the one* only if it were not *the one*. This means that we lose *the one*. In similar fashion, on the condition that *one* only [is] said of *the one*, if *one* [is] said of just *being*, then *being* would be *the one*, and *being* [is] lost. For this reason, at the end of the argument, the question is formulated in the “part/whole” relation.

The scholars also formulate their positive conclusion which they find at the end of the first hypothesis within this context: If the one is, it *has* timeless being. This amounts to saying that if the one is, the one has being as its part, or the one can take its being only in certain relation to being which is different from the one itself. The scholars who read positive conclusion in the argument omit the restrictions of the argument. As we have seen, the restriction of the deduction is based upon the relation of a singular subject of discourse and its *phusis*. In sum, if only *one* is said of *the one*, and similarly if *is* is said of only *to be*, then neither *one* is said of just *to be*, nor *is* is said of just the one. In order to say both “the one one” and “the one is” for the same *the one* as in the expression “the one both is and one,” since *is* is only said of *to be*, and *one* is said of only *the one*, and by the restriction that an expression is said of a subject of discourse only if the expression has reference to what is “in” the subject,¹¹¹ then *the one* in the previous sentence must denote a whole of *to be* and *the one* – as can be expressed,

¹¹¹ Mix, p.103.

following the saying of Parmenides, the *beingone* or the *onebeing*. Thus, as Miller asserts, even though *the one* transcends the limitation of time, the one has being only if the one is a whole which has *to be* and *the one* as its parts, and thus, contra to Miller, this one will not be the partless or simple.

In this context, “in relation to” is defined as “partaking relation,” which may be formulated as follows: If X partakes of Y, X possesses a certain character associated with Y, which it would not otherwise possess.¹¹² Thus, if the one partakes of being, the one can have being as a part within a whole composed of *being* and *the one*. From these observations, we can say that the positive conclusion which is found in the argument is dependent on the possibility of a “partaking relation,” and is dependent on the answer to that question: What happens to *the one* and *being* when the one has being as its part? This is the question which will be answered by the second deduction under the hypothesis “one is.” The positive conclusion, however, may help us to solve the contradiction arrived at the end of the argument. Starting from the governing assumption “the one one” Parmenides arrived at “the one is no way is.” At the end of the argument, we have seen that according to Parmenides, since only *being* completely and unqualifiedly *is*, *is* can be said of *the one* only in relation to *being*, that is, qualifiedly. Then, the assumptions of Parmenides are clear: (a) only being *is* unqualifiedly (or in relation to itself) (b) the one *is* qualifiedly (or in relation to being). A subject which has its own *phusis* other than *is* can *be* only if it has being as one of its parts within a whole.

¹¹² For details see Forrester, p. 45.

How does this condition arise? Parmenides posited that *is* cannot be reducible to the *phusis* of *the one*, or to any other subject. In this case, when we consider any other subject in virtue of itself, it appears as “is no way *is*,” because *being* is not the same as the subject in question. Under this assumption, we can arrive at the contradiction only if we ignore the qualifications: If one is, then one is no way *is*. Now, we add the qualifications: If the one *is* (in virtue of being), then the one is no way *is* (in virtue of itself). Thus, we have at the end of deduction, “if the one *is* (in relation to being), it is not the case that the one *is* (in relation to itself).” So, the argument shows that to say “the one is” is logically prior to saying “the one is one”. Thus, the being of any nature except *being* must be explained only in relation to being that is completely *is*. Here, we can understand the governing assumption of the argument. If only *one* is said of *the one*, indeed there will be no difference between saying “the one one” and “the one is,” and if we say that there will be difference between saying “the one one” and “the one is,” under the separation assumption of natures, there must be a subject which is absolutely defined only by *is*, just as *the one* defined absolutely *one*. Hence, the problem posed by the argument for anyone who wishes to say *is* of a subject other than *being* would be expressed in that question: What is the correct account of the relation between *being* and that subject? Parmenides offers “partaking relation” and investigates the implications of this relation in the second deduction. The same condition is expressed in other words: If *is* is said of any subject, *being* must be part of a whole which is composed of that subject and *being*.

At first sight, the above reading and deduction do not provide any evidence against the goddess' *muthos*. In the *muthos*, *is* is said of only *to be*, and *is* in no way can be said of *the one* or *the many*. But, there are scholars who assert that the deduction under the hypothesis "if one is" is a complete rejection of the so-called historical Parmenidean thesis that "the one is," we need to discuss whether "one is" can be treated as a saying of the goddess' *muthos*. In the following section, the view of scholars who interpret the thesis of Parmenides about the one itself and the deduction under the hypothesis "if one is" will be discussed from the perspective of the goddess' *muthos*.

Both Sayre and Cornford claim that the conclusion of the argument is sound, and is directed against the thesis of historical Parmenides. As discussed above, Cornford thinks that all subsequent inferences follow from definition of *the one* as *one* in the first paragraph, though the conclusion of the argument does not follow from the last consequence (namely, the one's not being in time), this does not change the ultimate conclusion: If one is, the one no way *is*. Sayre completely agrees with Cornford on the development of the argument. When we claim that the one is, under the governing assumption that the one one (only its proper *phusis* is said of the subject of discourse), the argument shows that the one no way *is*. As discussed above, the conclusion of the argument states a general principle such that a subject other than *being* can take *is* only in relation to *being* itself or only if *being* is distinguishable part of a whole composed of the subject and *to be*. This may be assumed as a common point with which all parties agree. If so, how does this argument defeat the thesis of historical Parmenides? He claims that the thesis of historical Parmenides is about "the one" on the basis of textual

evidences from both Plato's *Parmenides* and Parmenides' poem. As said above, in opening conversation of Socrates and Zeno, the context is determined in a polemic against the defenders of the view that *the many is*, and the investigation shows that neither the many nor the one itself *is*.

Sayre cites this exchange between Zeno and Socrates as evidence for his claim that the thesis of historical Parmenides is that *one is*. It was argued here that this polemical context of argument does not justify the claim that the thesis of historical Parmenides is about the one itself. The investigation in the arguments may be formulated in the following manner: How is it possible to say *is* to a singular (or a plural) subject of discourse under the initial restriction that only its proper *phusis* is said of the subject? Thus, the investigation in the argument about the one is whether a subject exclusively defined as its *phusis* (*one*) can contain *is* within its *phusis*? Or in other words, is it possible to deduce "the one is" from "the one one"? Under these restrictions, if you claim that *is* can be said of a subject whose *phusis* is defined as completely *one*, you cannot find any *is* which differentiates "the one is" from "the one one," because, by definition, only its *phusis* said of any subject, for this subject, there will be no distinction between saying "the one is" and "the one one."

On the other hand, assuming that "the one" is the same subject of discourse, if you claim that "the one one" is different from "the one is," then you have to say two things about the one itself, that is, it is both *one* and *not-one*. If the goddess' *muthos* were about *the one* itself, then, since by the restriction that only its *phusis* is said of *the one*, to say that "the one is," the one must be a whole which has two distinguishable

parts, and two things would be said of the one in contrary to the goddess' *muthos*, which asserts that only one thing can be said by way of truth, namely, "that it is" (*hos estin*: Fr.8.2). We know, however, that the goddess' *muthos* is about *to be*, not about *the one*. It may be asked how it could be possible to represent in *Parmenides* the goddess' *muthos* about *the one*, and then thesis of historical Parmenides is that "the one is"?

While many commentators have argued that *Parmenides* is to be understood by means of the first and the second deductions a serious philosophical criticism of the historical Parmenides' own thesis, only a few philosophers wonder why and how Plato's character Parmenides took the historical Parmenides' thesis not about *to be*, but about *the one* itself. Furthermore, although there is a consensus among interpreters on view that the first and the second deductions focus on the different relation of *hen* and *esti*, almost no commentator has sought to what this difference corresponds to within the goddess' *muthos*, or how we can understand the sense of the first and the second deductions of *Parmenides* from the perspective of the goddess' *muthos*. Is it possible to interpret the goddess' *muthos* as a thesis about *the one*? Scholars of Parmenidean philosophy reject this view. As Cordero points out, there is no reference to physical ergo quantifiable universe in the poem. As K. Reinhardt says,¹¹³ "*hen*" is almost marginal in Parmenides, and "*hen*" as a sign of being only indicates the uniqueness of being. Taran interprets this in the following way: "Being is the only thing there is,"¹¹⁴ but not that being is the same as the one. This ignored problem is discussed by Ritz to find a clue for

¹¹³ Cordero, p.176.

¹¹⁴ Taran, *Parmenides*, p.190.

this reading in the poem. Ritz reminded us that, in the poem, Parmenides does not discuss the one itself, but *esti*, and claims that,

the only possible ‘filler’ for *esti* would be tautologous *to eon* (There is what there is). We assume, therefore, that his procedure is purely by inspection the word *esti*. He ask himself what could there be. And the tautologous subject *to eon* the only subject he could legitimately propose.¹¹⁵

Then, if Parmenides analyzes *estin* and arrives at the conclusion that “there is what is,” why does Plato’s *Parmenides* (and some scholars) present his thesis as “the one is”? After discussing the signs of being, and noting that in the poem, it is said that “being is one,” Ritz asks the expected question, “What could be enable Plato to represent this hypothesis as the basic hypothesis of Parmenides?” and answers,

both in the *Parmenides* and in Parmenides’ poem Parmenides seems to have regarded his basic tenet as ‘Being is one.’ Now we have *one is*. Is there any light in which we can view the two theses as identical? The most obvious difference between the two of them is that *being* is subject of one, *one* of the other. Hence, for them to be regarded as saying the same thing some kind of conversion must have taken place. Plato must have supposed Parmenides to have thought that *is* can be treated not only existentially but as an identity sign. If that were so, the only further assumption required would be that two propositions, *one is* and ‘One is being’ are logically indistinguishable – and that is not too remarkable assumption for Parmenides. Thus, ‘being is one’ and ‘One is being’ are two ways of saying the same thing : *one* and *being* are merely two names for the same thing.¹¹⁶

In the preceding chapter, it was argued that signs of *to be* cannot be within *noein*, and thus, they cannot be identified with *to be*. To add these signs to *to be* is not in accordance with the spirit of the goddess’ *muthos*, because signs are “road signs”

¹¹⁵J. M. Rist, “Parmenides and Plato’s Parmenides,” *The Classical Quarterly, New Series*, Vol. 20, No.2 (Nov.1970), p.224.

¹¹⁶Rist, p. 224.

pointing to *noein* (or *to be*), but not *noein* (or *to be*) itself. As Schürmann brilliantly writes,

If they resembled real highway signs, it would be correct to write (passing over the mixed metaphor) that they can be compared to the rungs of a “ladder that one must throw away once one has climbed it. After all, what relevance would a signpost still have if it bore a plaque saying ‘Elea’ followed by an arrow, which one then transported into the town to set up right in the middle of the marketplace?”¹¹⁷

Thus, by means of these signs you may approach to understand being as if X, but you cannot identify these signs with *to be* or *noein*.

Now let us look at Sayre’s reception of the goddess’ *muthos* and discuss the problem from the perspective of the goddess’ *muthos*. Sayre gives a summary of Parmenides’ doctrine as follows:

The cornerstone of the Parmenides’ doctrine is that only ‘one thing can be said by way of truth, namely, ‘that it is’ (*hos estin* : Fr.8.2). This thing that is ‘*altogether one*.’

After this summary he adds that this *estin* of Parmenides is claimed (a) to be one, and (b) to exist.¹¹⁸ He thinks that these claims are defeated by the first hypothesis. How does the argument of the first hypothesis pose a threat to “the thesis of historical Parmenides” represented by Sayre? He thinks that the subject of Parmenides’ thesis is “unity” and claims that “the overall lesson is that the totally exclusive unity of the historical Parmenides opposed to plurality in a manner that itself is inconsistent.”¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷Schürmann, p.113.

¹¹⁸ Sayre, *Parmenides’ Lesson*, p. 127.

¹¹⁹ Sayre, *Parmenides’ Lesson*, 1996, p.157.

If we translate Sayre's thesis into our vocabulary, what he takes as Parmenides' thesis is "the one is." If there were some evidence which indicates that the so-called thesis is "the one is" in the *muthos*, Sayre would be correct in his opinion. Hence, we need to find an answer to this question: Is it possible to represent the goddess' *muthos* as similar to Sayre's reception? As discussed earlier, this is a complete misrepresentation of the goddess' *muthos*. The main problem of Sayre's interpretation is that in her *muthos*, it is not possible to find any expression about *is* of the one. Even though there are various interpretations concerning the goddess' *muthos*, at least one thing is certain that her *muthos* is not about *the one*, but about *to be*. All discourse of the goddess' about *to be* deliberately avoids identifying *to be* with something, or adding something to it. Being is the only thing there is. In the previous chapters, we focused on the relation between *is* and *noein*, and saw that only *is* [is] in *noein* that is the same as *to be*. Thus, *is* cannot be identified with *one* in the goddess' *muthos*. The "cornerstone" of the goddess' *muthos* is that the only truth about *to be* is that "to be absolutely is." If we are faithful to the goddess' *muthos* to extract a thesis for historical Parmenides we can only say that only *is* in *noein* which is the same as *to be*. If *to be* were identified with any name which is different from *to be*, since the *phusis* of this name does not include *is* under the assumption that only one thing is said of that name, we could fall into *aporias*. But, this is the uniqueness of *to be*: its *phusis* (what it is) and its *being* (that it is) cannot be separated. Though we will discuss here whether the *muthos* can be read as providing evidence for the claim that "to be one," it is important to note that the main question does not consist of whether there is such evidence in the *muthos*, because even there

were no word *one* in the *muthos*, the question would remain: Is it acceptable to claim that “to be one” or “the one is” under the proviso that “to be is”?

Now, let us look at the goddess’ *muthos*, and try to find the consequences if it had contained “to be one” apart from “to be is”.

Neither “to Be One” nor “the One Is” in the Goddess’ Muthos

In Fragment 8, after saying that *is* (*estin*) (8.1), the signs (*semata*) (8.1) of *to be* are listed. Immediately after “since is now all together” (*epei nun estin homou pan*) (8.5), in 8.6 there appears *one* (*hen*) as a single word. These parts of Fragment 8 are interpreted by some commentators, some have been named previously, as an indication that in the *muthos* it is claimed that “the one is.” Though, through the previous chapters, it was shown that *one* is only a sign of *to be* and this part of the fragment cannot be interpreted as saying that “is one,” yet, we need to investigate whether this assertion – that in the *muthos* it exists the claim that “the one is” – is consistent with the *muthos*. But first, we need to see that “to be one” as expressed also at the level of *phusis* as “is one” and “the one is” as also at the level of *phusis* as *one is* are different assertions – if we do not have any other hypothesis about *to be* and *the one* which assimilates them. The first, “to be one” claims that *one* [is] a *phusis* of *to be* and the second, “the one is” claims that *is* [is] about *the one*. Since the *muthos* is not about *the one* but *to be*, a false but plausible reading might be that “to be one,” not “the one is.”

Now, the problem is how “to be one” might be converted to “the one is,” as the commentators read. An alternative might be as follows: reading *one* in the Fragment 8.6

as “is one” makes the assertion that *one* [is] a *phusis* of *to be* admissable. Beginning with the *phusis one* – since the subject of discourse of this *phusis* [is] *the one* – it can also be asserted that – since its *phusis* is *one – to be* in “to be is” is nothing else than *the one*. Hence “to be is” asserts that “the one is.” Hence *the one* [is] both *is* and *one*. Thus, for the commentators the problem turns out [to be] whether *the one* can [be] both “is and one.”

Keeping these in mind, if the goddess’ *muthos* contained claims which indicated that she had said that both “to be one” besides “to be is,” then it would be possible to interpret the deduction in the dialogue *Parmenides* under the hypothesis “if one is” as the complete rejection of the goddess’ *muthos*. Any argumentation for the rejection of “the one is” or against “to be is and one” and similarly “the one one and is,” just shows that in goddess’ *muthos* there is no indication for “to be one,” i.e., *one* in Fragment 8.6 cannot be read as indicating “to be one.” This is why, in the *muthos*, as shown in the preceding chapter, under the proviso that stated in the *muthos*, i.e., *to be* absolutely *is*, and *to think* and *to be* are the same, *one* is treated only as just a sign (*sema*) of *to be*.

On the other hand, in respecting to the determination “to be is” in the goddess’ *muthos*, the question “is it?” for any subject will be an investigation that either whether the subject is *to be* itself (an affirmative answer indicates that this *phusis* does not differ from *is* – in the following pages the implications of this assumption will be discussed) or granting that this *phusis* is different from *to be*, investigation will be whether *to be* (or *being*) can compose a whole with this *phusis*. When the problem is posed in this manner, it does not matter whether *one is* or *is one* is said. In the former case, *is* is added to *one*,

but in the latter case *one* is added to *is* and thus *to be* becomes a whole which has different parts. As will be shown in the following section, the formal aspect of argumentations both about “to be one” – that is to affirm that to be [is] one, apart from “to be is” – and about “the one is” – that to affirm that the one is, apart from “the one one” – depends on the assumption that one and only one thing can be said about a unique subject. In the case of *the one*, this thing is the *phusis one* and in the case of *to be* this thing [is] *is*. This is evident for *is* from the *muthos*, since one thing can be said by way of truth, namely, “that is” (*hos estin*: Fr.8.2). This conception will hold for *one*, extending this part of the Fragment 8 to *the one*, one thing can be said by way of truth, namely, “that one.” Hence, the problem that arises out of saying that “to be one” and the problem that arises out of saying that “the one is” collapse into each other.

Interpreting the words heard in the goddess’ *muthos* and claiming that “is one” is *muthos* of the goddess, this criterion must be kept in mind. The goddess says nowhere in the poem that *is* can be said of any *phusis*, or *being* can be conceived as a part of a whole. Here the critical question is not whether a *phusis* can compose a whole with being, but rather whether *being* can compose a whole with a *phusis*, or whether *being* is capable of [being] a part of a whole. From the perspective of the *muthos*, the wholes which are composed raise the additional problem that whether *being* can be distributed. Attempting to distribute *being*, as pointed out in the preceding chapter, requires as addition not the same as to *being*. As shown on the discussion about *phusis*, the *muthos* of the goddess’ indicate that *is* cannot be added to any *phusis*. Hence, *to be* is not a

participated thing in the sense that it can be added to something as an additional character.

Now, we can return to the problem whether goddess' *muthos* can be read as stating that "to be one" or "the one is" and try to show why this reading is not admissible under the conditions that stated in the *muthos*, i.e., under *to be* absolutely *is*, and *to think* and *to be* are the same. In the *muthos* there can exist neither "to be one" nor "the one is."

"To be one": If the goddess had said "to be one," this would be a truth about *to be*, and thus, we had to accept that her expressions on the open and closed paths would be read in terms of *one*, even if it was not explicitly mentioned in the poem. Let us first state the second fragment:

1 Well then, I will tell you – and you listen, receive my word – what are
the only ways of investigation there are to think:
3 one, on the one hand, [to think] that *is*, and that it is not possible not to
be; this is the way of persuasion, since it accompanies the truth;
5 another, on the other hand, [to think] that *is not*, and that it is necessary
not to be; I tell you that this path is completely unknowable, since you
will not know that which is not (as it is not possible) or utter it.

As a first attempt, the fragment may be read as follows: "Well then, I will tell you – and you listen, receive my word – what are the only ways of investigation there are to think: one, on the one hand, [to think] that *one*, and that not one not *the one*; this is the way of persuasion, since it accompanies the truth; another, on the other hand, [to think] that *not one*, and that one necessarily not *the one*." However, when Fragment 2 is not taken into account, *is* is not seen here. In that

case, for we erased *is* and *to be*, it is not seen a relation with *to be*, and insofar as we remain within this framework, there seems to be no problem.

We have said, on the one hand, “to be is” and, on the other hand, “the one one.” If we generalize the words of the goddess in Fragment 8, “the same is to think (*noein*) and wherefore is the thought (*noema*),” ignoring her words concerning the sameness of *noein* and *to be*, this expression, in our account, shows that it is possible to pass from to think *one* only to *the one*, but not *to be one*. So, it cannot be said that *noein* which finds its expression *noein one* is the same as *noein* which is the same as *to be*. However, considering Fragment 2, and taking Fragment 3 that says “to think and to be [is] the same” into account, we would obtain *noein one* and *noein is*. So, if *noein* is to be unique, from *to think* [is] the same as *to be* and *to think* [is] the same as *the one*, we had to accept that *to be* and *the one* would be the same. We have to accept that *noein* is unique, because if we had assumed that they were different *noein*, one of them would be the same as *the one* and the other would be the same as *to be*, but then since they are not the same – also when we investigate what differentiates *noein one* and *noein is*, we can have recourse only to the difference of contents, i.e., say that *one* as a *phusis* [is] different from *is* – and since *noein* is the same as *to be*, *to be* would not be the same as itself.

If the goddess’ had said “to be is one,” she would have needed to say that both *is* and *one* must have been found within *noein* that is the same as *to be*. So, the second fragment might have been read as follows: “Well then, I will tell you – and you listen,

receive my word – what are the only ways of investigation there are to think: one, on the one hand, [to think] that *one*, and that not one not to be; this is the way of persuasion, since it accompanies the truth; another, on the other hand, [to think] that *not one*, and that one necessarily not to be ...” If this interpretation, that is, the case that expresses, “to be is one,” were evaluated with Fragment 2, “the same is to think (*noein*) and wherefore is the thought (*noema*)” we would have obtained these: (i) the same is to think (*noein*) and wherefore, i.e., *to be*, is the thought (*noema*) *is*. (ii) the same is to think (*noein*) and wherefore, i.e., *to be*, is the thought (*noema*) *one*. If we had accepted that within *noein* both *one* and *is* were found, what would happen. Let us assume that *is* comes from *to be* (i.e., “to be is”) and *one* also comes from *to be* (i.e., “to be one”). If both *is* and *one* comes from *to be*, then either *one* and *is* [is not] the same or *one* and *is* [is] the same.

One and *is* [is not] the same *phusis*: Under the hypothesis that *one* and *is* were not the same *phusis*, either *to be* would be a whole which has different parts, such as a part from which *is* comes and another part which is not the same as the first, from which *one* comes. Now, only for the sake of expression, let us call the second part *the one*. Since the first part [would be] not *the one*, *to be* would be constituted of *the one* and *not-the one*, which are different. When it was accepted, however, that one was a *phusis*, which is different from *is*, we could not mention from *noein* *one* with respect to *noein* that is the same as *to be*.

Can *one* and *is* [be] the same? In that case, the goddess had to accept that “to be is” and “to be one” were the same. But “to be one” would be no

other judgment about *to be* than “to be is,” and *one* would be simply a word which adds nothing to *is*. Similarly, if it is said that “the one is,” provided that the *phusis* of *the one* [is] *one*, “the one one” – which has the same form as “to be is” – and “the one is” would be the same. But “the one is” would be no other judgment about *the one* than “the one one,” and *is* would be simply a word which adds nothing to *one*. Also, there would be no difference saying “not-one” and “not-is.” Thus, if it is assumed that the goddess says “to be one,” in this case, it must also be assumed that she will have to accept that “to be is” and “the one one” are the same. Hence, there would remain no distinction between saying that “the one is,” “the one one,” “to be is,” “to be one.”

If *one* and *is* [were] taken [to be] the same, depending on the beginning assumption, i.e., depending on whether we start from “to be is” – such is the case for *muthos* – or “the one one,” the conclusions would differ in that: When we start from “to be is” we have to annihilate the *phusis one*, having as its opposite *many*. And concerning *not-one*, we would have to say that *not-one* (since it *is not*) would not have *gnosis*. If so, by mapping *not-one* to *many*, we could not make any deduction.¹²⁰ Or else, when we start from “the one one,” we have to annihilate *is*, having as its opposite absolutely *is not*. And *is not* would only stand for *many* and all the implications of *one* might then be admitted for *to be*. But then, since there [is] no *to be* apart from *the one* – as [is] the case for

¹²⁰ Here, we must remind that, the first deduction under the hypothesis “the one, if one is” assumes that the contrary of one is many. And *is* and *one* are taken to be different.

is and *one* – the conclusions [is] merely just for *the one*. And to extend and apply these conclusions as if there [were] *to be* apart from *the one* and to claim that these conclusions would also hold for *to be* – this also would denote the conception that [were] *to be* apart – would be fallacious.

“The one is”: Now, let us remember that within the framework depicted by the *muthos* of the goddess it is senseless to investigate the possibility of saying *is* to something other than *to be*. Though her *muthos* forbids this investigation, if we ask whether *is* can be said of *the one*, though *is* can only be said of *to be*, we can argue in the following manner. This time let us start from *the one*. But, the same principle also holds in that case: only one thing (that is, i.e., *one*) is said of something (that is, i.e., *the one*). Following the goddess’ *muthos*, “one thing can be said by way of truth, namely, ‘that is’” (*hos estin*: Fr.8.2) and that is “altogether one” (*pan hen*), and not reading “altogether one” as a sign of *to be*, or “altogether one” as is said about *to be*, but reading the expression as *is* is said about “altogether one,” i.e., not a *phusis* is said about *to be* but *is* is said about a *phusis*, the reading of Fragment 2 turns out to be: “Well then, I will tell you – and you listen, receive my word – what are the only ways of investigation there are to think: one, on the one hand, [to think] that *is*, and that *is not not the one*; this is the way of persuasion, since it accompanies the truth; another, on the other hand, [to think] that *is not*, and that *is necessarily not the one*...” But now, since the judgement is about *the one*, under the restriction that, only its *phusis* is said of something, the expression which is obtained concerning the one can be only “the one one.” If we wish to say that

the one is, there would be no difference between the expressions “the one one” and “the one is.”

Now, we can construct the argument of Parmenides in the dialogue from the perspective of the goddess’ *muthos*.

From The One one to The One is in respect of the Goddess’ Muthos

First, let us try to clarify the question. By Zeno’s argument, two opposing views are described. The defenders of the first view claim that *many is* while their opponents hold that *one is*. As we have seen, Zeno’s argument defeats the first disjunct of these possibilities. Parmenides argues against the second disjunct. The reading of the argument is twofold under the restrictions which govern the argument. It is certain that the first restriction is the restriction which is used to define a subject with its *phusis*. By generalizing this, we can write the hidden assumptions of the argument : (i) only its proper *phusis* is said of the subject of discourse. The application of this restriction is clearly seen in the argumentation: *only one is* said of the one: “the one one.” The one [is] one only. The opponents of Parmenides hold the view that *many is*, but Parmenides is represented as a character defending the thesis that *one is*. Then, in his investigation, he questions the possibility of saying “the one is,” given that “the one one.” If only *one is* said of *the one*, but we also claim that “the one is,” we can deduce “the one is” from “the one one” only if we accept that *one* and *is* are the same.

This amounts to saying that “the one one” is nothing else than “the one is.” Hence, under these assumptions, we are at the starting point, because under the above

restriction, indeed, we only passed from “the one one” to “the one one” because *is* does not emerge as distinct part of the one. Parmenides may conclude that the one no way *is*, because the one one. Here, the first conclusion may be paraphrased as follows: given that only *one* is said of *the one*, it is not possible to say the one *is*. Now, let us look at the second restriction.

The second hidden assumption: A *phusis* is said of only its proper subject of discourse. Under this restriction, *one* can be said of only *the one*, and it cannot be said of any other thing than *the one*. Thus, if we assume any other thing such as *to be* which [is] different from *the one*, *one* cannot be said of *to be*.¹²¹ Similarly, if *is* is said of only *to be*, then it cannot be said of just *the one*. In order to say both “the one one” and “the one is” for the same *the one* as in the expression, “the one both is and one,” since *is* is only said of *to be*, and *one* is said of only *the one*, and by the restriction that an expression is said of a subject of discourse only if the expression has reference to what is “in” the subject, then *the one* in the previous sentence must denote a whole of *to be* and *the one* – as can be expressed, following saying of *Parmenides*, *the beingone* or *the onebeing*.

From “Light light” to “Light Is”

Now, in this discussion, the general question is how we can say *is* about a singular subject of discourse which is determined exclusively by its *phusis*. In connection of our discussion in the previous chapter, we can expose the problem about the one itself for

¹²¹ Parmenides’ second deduction under the hypothesis ‘one if is’, as it can be seen in the claimed *dianoetic* distinction between *the one* and *being*, assumes implicitly this fact, i.e. *one only* is said of *the one* and *is only* is said of *to be* (or with the precise wording of the dialogue, *is only* is said of *being*).

the light and *phusis* light.¹²² As discussed above, there are two restrictions. The first says that only *light* is said of Light, and the second says that *light* is said of only Light. Now, given “Light light,” we wish to say “Light is.”

If it is argued that there is no difference between “Light light” and “Light is,” since *is* and the *phusis light* are not different (*is* [is] the same as *light*), then given that “Light light,” there is nothing said with *is* beyond its *phusis light* about the Light. Given that *is* is the same as *light*, hence, beginning from “Light light” there is no way to find out an *is* which is different from *light*. In this conception of being, there is no distinction between saying “Light light,” “Light is” and “Light is light.”

Here, we need to reconsider the problem and ask again whether “Light light” is the same as “Light is.” For the sake of speech, in order to mark the place of subject, let us index the subject Light in “Light light” as Light₁ and the subject Light in “Light is” as Light₂. If it is answered that “Light light” and “Light is” are not the same, since *light* and *is* are different, we have two alternatives. First that Light₁ is the same as Light₂ and second Light₁ is not the same as Light₂. If we look at first, *light* is different from *is* and Light₁ is the same as Light₂, namely that both Light₁ and Light₂ is Light itself, in that case, the *phusis* of Light itself – that which is solely determined by its *phusis* – will not [be] only *light* but both *light* and *is*, i.e., both light and not-light. Though, as a first impression, since the subject of both “Light is” and “Light light” appears to be the same, namely Light, the claim that Light₁ is not the same as Light₂ may seem to be awkward, but it will be clear in our discussion about the second deduction under the

¹²² Thus, we can use *the one* as a placeholder for any singular subject of discourse which is defined by its single *phusis*.

hypothesis “one if is,” Light₁ can be differentiated from Light₂ such that Light₂ called as being (of Light) and Light₁ as Light itself (that which is solely determined by its *phusis light*). In the case *light* is not the same as *is* and Light₁ is not the same as Light₂: Light itself which is, must be a whole composed of different parts such as Light₂ (only just being) and Light₁ (Light itself).

Now, we can look at the problem from the perspective of the goddess’ *muthos*. Under the restrictions which are put on saying “to be is” by the goddess’ *muthos*, what are the conditions of deducing “Light is” from “Light light”?

“Light light” (with Respect to “to Be Is”)

Remember our initial restrictions: *is* is said of only to be and only *is* is said of *to be*.

Given “Light light” and “to be is,” can we say that “Light is” ? Since *is* can *only* be said about *to be*, if we want to say “Light is,” we must admit that Light₂ is the same as *to be*. Hence, we must accept that, (following our naming, Light₁ and Light₂) “Light₂ is” and “to be is” are not different (“Light₂ is” [is] the same as “to be is”). Now the problem is, since our beginning claim is that “Light light”, whether “Light₂ is” follows from “Light₁ light.” But here, since we wish to say *is* to the same thing, namely Light itself (that which is solely determined by its *phusis light*), it is important to notice that Light₁ and Light₂ must be admitted [to be] the same. Hence, we can erase our naming Light₁ and Light₂, and from now on simply say Light.

For such a deduction, i.e., deducing “Light is” from “Light light,” since it must be admitted that what must be shown is “Light is” which is the same as “to be is” (i.e.,

Light is the same as *to be*), as a middle term we need to have “Light light” the same as “to be light.” Hence the deduction might run on this sequence, if we can have (i) “Light light” is the same as “to be light” and (ii) “to be light” is the same as “to be is,” then we have (iii) “Light light” is the same as “to be is,” ergo “Light is.” For such a deduction, either we must presuppose, without justification that “Light light” is the same as “to be light,” i.e., *Light* is the same as *to be*. In that case, since only one thing can be said about *to be*, that is *is* (i.e., “to be is”), the only thing that can be admitted [is] *light* is the same as *is* (i.e., there is no *phusis light* different from *is* if *Light* is the same as *to be*). Hence the assumption “Light light” is nothing else than “to be is.”¹²³ And the conclusion “Light is” [is] only a reiteration of the hidden assumption “to be is.” Or, we try give a justification for “Light light” is the same as “to be light.” But the only justification can be “to be light” is the same as “to be is.”

Now the problem arises as to whether we can admit that “to be light” is the same as “to be is” consistently with the goddess’ *muthos*. Since it is only from this that can be said that “Light light” is the same as “to be light,” from the fact that *light* can be said of Light (i.e., to say “to be light” means “Light light”). Since only one thing can be said about *to be*, that is *is*, we must admit that “to be light” adds nothing to “to be is.” Hence, our beginning assumption, “Light light,” has no other content than “to be is.” Hence we must admit that, though it appears in our wordings, there is no *phusis* such as *light* different from *is*. Here also, the conclusion “Light is” [is] only a reiteration of the hidden

¹²³ What we said here must not be confused with the saying that ‘to be is’ is a paradeigma for any subject and its only *phusis*, expressed as “Light light.” What we argue is that, in this case, there is no other subject (as Light) than to be and no other *phusis* (as light) than *is*.

assumption “to be is.” On the other hand, if we insist on the fact that there [is] a *physis* such as *light* different from *is*, since only one thing can be said about *to be*, that is *is*, we cannot say that “to be light” and thus we cannot deduce “Light is” from “Light light” if we hear goddess’ *muthos*.

“The One One” (with respect to “to Be Is”)

From the perspective of the goddess’ *muthos*, how can we say that “the one is” follows from “the one one”? As discussed above, the goddess’ *muthos* introduces two restrictions about to be: only *is* said of *to be*, and *is* is said of only *to be*. Under these restrictions, given “the one one” and “to be is,” can we say that “the one is”? Since *is* can *only* be said of *to be*, if we want to say “the one is,” we have to accept that the subject of judgment “the one is” the same as *to be*. Hence, we have to admit that there is no difference between the expressions “to be is” and “the one is.” If we say *is* to the same one itself, the problem turns out to be how we can deduce “the one is,” which is the same as “to be is” from our initial claim “the one one.” In that case, since the expression which is deduced, i.e., “the one is,” is the same as “to be is” (that is, *the one* is the same as *to be*), we need to obtain the claim that “the one one” is the same as “to be one” as a middle term. If we could obtain this middle term, the deduction might run as follows : (i) “the one one” is the same as “to be one” and (ii) “to be one” is the same as “to be is,” (iii) then, “the one one” is the same as “to be is,” and hence “the one is.”

How can we accept that “the one one” is the same as “to be one,” that is, *the one* is the same as *to be*? Under the restriction that only *is* [is] said of *to be*, if *the one* is to be

the same as *to be* there would be no difference between *one* and *is*. In that case, “the one one” would have the same content with “to be is,” and thus, the conclusion “the one is” would be reiteration of “to be is.” If we could say that “to be one” and “to be is” are the same, then we could say that “the one one” and “to be one” are the same. This cannot be said, however, consistently with the goddess’ *muthos*. Since only *is* can be said of *to be*, “to be one” can only indicate the same content with “to be is”. Hence, “the one one” will not be different from “to be is.” Thus, the conclusion “the one is” will be only a reiteration of this assumption. If it is claimed that *one* is different from *is*, since only *is* is said of *to be*, it is not possible to say “to be one,” and thus we cannot deduce “the one is” from “the one one” under the restrictions of the goddess’ *muthos*.¹²⁴

If we admit that “the one one” and “the one is” are different, *is* cannot be said of *the one* whose *phusis* is exclusively determined by *one*. If you wish to say for a subject both *is* and *one*, on the condition that what is said of a subject of discourse only must

¹²⁴ From another point of view – in respect of *noein* – if we reconsider the first deduction of *Parmenides* under the hypothesis ‘the one if one is’, from the perspective of goddess’ *muthos*, for saying that *one is*, it must be accepted that within *noein* that is the same as to be, both *is* and *one* must be found. The second fragment declares that “to be is”. Under the above assumption, we can rephrase Fragment 2 for the governing assumption of *Parmenides* as follows : Well then, I will tell you - and you listen, receive my word - what are the only ways of investigation there are to think: one, on the one hand, [to think] that *one*, and that ‘not one not the one’; this is the way of persuasion, since it accompanies the truth; another, on the other hand, [to think] that *not one*, and that ‘one necessarily not the one’... We must notice that, from the perspective the goddess’ *muthos*, the matter in the first deduction is to look at the possibility of saying both “the one one” and “to be is” together, because to say *one is* requires to say both of them (that is, “to be is” and “the one one”). Moreover, to accept the expression “the one one” as a judgement of truth is possible only if it had been the same as the judgment “to be is” that is the only truth. Thus, to say this, it must be shown that *the one* and *to be* [is] the same, because Fragment 8 for to be says that “ the same is to think (*noein*) and wherefore, that is, *to be* is the thought (*noema*) is”, and for the one, “the same is to think and wherefore, that is, *to be* is the thought one.” Therefore, *noein* must be the same as both *to be* and *the one*. Considering the restraints put by the *muthos* of the goddess, *is* can only come from *to be*. The only truth about to be is “to be is”. Everything said except this truth falls out of *noein* that is the same as to be. This includes the expression *one is* and “the one one”. In sum, except “to be is”, all ‘judgments’ about *to be* are out of the truth about *to be*.

have reference to what is within the subject, this subject must be a compound of the part that which *is* and the part that which [is] *one*.

Under the restrictions previously stated, *one* can be said of only *the one*, and it cannot be said of any other thing than *the one*. Thus, if we assume any other thing such as *to be* which [is] different from *the one*, *one* cannot be said of *to be*.¹²⁵ Similarly, if *is* is said of only *to be*, then it cannot be said of just *the one*. In order to say both “the one one” and “the one is” for the same *the one* as in the expression “the one both is and one”, since *is* [is] only said of *to be*, and *one* is said of only *the one*, and by the restriction that an expression is said of a subject of discourse only if the expression has reference to what is “in” the subject,¹²⁶ then *the one* in the previous sentence (the one both is and one – i.e., the one one that is) must denote a whole of *to be* and *the one* (as can be expressed, following saying of the dialogue’s character Parmenides, *the beingone* or *the onebeing*).

If we return to our discussion about “Light light,” and reconsider it in terms of “the one one” and in the case where *one* [is] a *phusis*, which is different from *is* and thus their subjects *the one* and *to be* respectively: In order to say that “the one is,” in this expression we need to make a differentiation in the apparent subject *the one*. Here *the one* must be taken [to be] “the one that which is” and the expression turns into “the one that which is is.” Now, as in our case of “Light light,” we can consider “the one that

¹²⁵ Parmenides’ second deduction under the hypothesis “one if is”, as it can be seen in the claimed *dianoetic* distinction between *the one* and *being*, assumes implicitly this fact, i.e., *one only* is said of *the one* and *is only* is said of *to be* (or with the precise wording of the dialogue, *is only* is said of *being*).

¹²⁶ Mix, p.103.

which is” as composed of different parts such as the one₁ and the one₂, first the one₁, following the second deduction under the hypothesis “one if is,” as just being (of the one) and the one₂ as the one itself that which is solely determined by its *phusis* one. Under the restriction that only “to be is,” the subject the one₁ has nothing about the *phusis* one and [is] only just being – following goddess’ word is just *to be* and nothing else. And here the subject which is differentiated as the one₁ [is] only a wording or a renaming of *to be*, and nothing else. Thus, the one that which is [is] a whole composed of *to be* and ‘the one₂’ (solely determined by its *phusis* one).

Our aim here is to investigate the assumptions of Parmenides’ deductions in respect of their conclusions. The above arguments have tried to clarify under which restrictions the first deduction under the hypothesis that “if one is” is made. They are (i) only its proper *phusis* is said of the subject of discourse and (ii) a *phusis* is said of only its proper subject of which it is *phusis*. These restrictions, applied to a subject of discourse, *the one*, we have a reformulation of the problem considered in this deduction. Both from the goddess’ *muthos* perspective and from the deduction itself, the main problem appears to be: how it is possible to say *is* of a *phusis*, in *Parmenides*’ case the problem is stated in the expression *one is* (and similarly how it is possible to say a *phusis* of *is* – as can be stated “is one”). Thus stated, the problem itself opens the possible ways for a deduction from the judgement stating the restrictions, i.e., “the one one” to “the one is.” In the previous pages, the implications of these possibilities have been discussed. In the end, we have arrived at a search for a relation between *the one* and *to be* such is a part/whole relation. Thus our argumentation have tried to clarify a second point. This is

the point which is expressed both in the end of the first deduction under the hypothesis that “if one is” and in the beginning of the second under the hypothesis that “one if is”: participation.

To understand the sense of the phrase “can the one itself be without participating being?” and the need for a concept such as participation, in order to discuss what happens to *the one itself* “one if is,” the argument has tried to show that participation is necessitated by the restrictions both about *to be* and about any subject of a discourse which is determined solely by its *phusis*. Hence we should not be satisfied just by saying that participation is just a case for analysis; participation appears to be not just a beginning of analysis, but a necessary beginning for the reconsideration of the problem. The beginning of the second deduction investigates whether participation can be a way in order to say that “one is” under the restrictions posited by “to be is” and “the one one.”

Second Deduction: One if Is

Parmenides introduces the second deduction as follows :

Now would you like to go back to the hypothesis from the beginning, to see whether our consideration might bring some other results to light?¹²⁷

He distinguishes this deduction from the first by changing the relation between *estin* and *hen* and thus the subject of discourse,

...consider from the beginning one if is (*hen ei estin*) can it *be*, but not partake of being? So there would also be the being of the one, would not

¹²⁷ 142b1.

be the same as the one; If it were, it could not be the being of the one, nor could the one partake of it. On the contrary, saying that *one is* would be like saying that 'one one'. But this time that is not the hypothesis, namely, what consequences must be, if one one, but if one is ?¹²⁸

As have shown above, in the first deduction, Parmenides investigates the possibility of saying *is* to *the one* which is solely defined with its *physis one*. We have argued that under the restrictions about the subject of discourse there will be no distinction between "the one one" and "the one is" and thus, in the first deduction under the hypothesis "if one is" *the one* must be read as "the one one" by definition. This time, however, Parmenides poses the hypothesis as "one if is." This means that *one* and *is* are different as stated by him, "is that because *is* signifies something other than *one*?" (142b5). Then, in the second deduction, Parmenides investigates the conditions of saying that the one is, under the assumption that *is* and *one* is different.

When we posited *is* and *one* signify different things, and *is* is said of *being* and *one* is said of *the one*, and *being* and *the one* are different, then any subject of discourse of which it is possible to say both *is* and *one* must be a compound of which the *being* and *the one* are distinguishable parts within it. Thus, if *being* and *the one* are not the same, but both belong to that same thing, then this thing, namely, "*the one that is*" will be a whole, and the parts of this whole will be *the one* and *the being*. If so, what consequences follow for *the one* and *to be*? If *is* [is] said of this *one that is*, and *one* is said of the *being* that is *one*, but *the one* and *being* are different, then *the one that is* is a whole, and *being* and *the one* are its parts. Since *the one that is*, has parts and is a whole, and since *many* is to have parts and be a whole, *the one is many* (142 c7).

¹²⁸ 142b5.

After this subdeduction, Parmenides gives an argument that show that *the one that is* is many, unlimited in multitude. In the argument, he points out that “if one is”, it has two parts, *being* and *the one*. Here, it must be noted that even though *being* and *the one* are parts of *the one that is*, *being* is not the part of *the one* itself, and *the one* itself is not the part of the *being*, but both parts of a whole. Now, as Mix points out, if *the one* and *being* are distinguishable parts within a whole, we can ask, “if the one and being are different elements, by reason of what will the one is?”¹²⁹ If *the one* and *being* are different within a whole, since *is* only said of *being* and *one* is only said of *the one*, *the one* will not be *being*, and thus, will not *be*. Following Mix’s point, it can be claimed that although the whole appears to be “is and one”, since *the one* is different from *the being*, *the one* part is the threat of *not-is*, and the whole is the threat of being both *is* and *not-is*.

To avoid this threat, Parmenides asks Aristotle, “Of each of these parts of *the one that is the one* and *being*, would *one* ever absent *being* part, or *being* from *the one* part?” and after Aristoteles’s response “No it would not,”¹³⁰ he argues that *the one that is* is indefinitely multitudinous. If one is, then *being* and *the one* are parts of *the one that is*. If one is, however, then *being* and *the one* are parts of being, and if one is, *being* and *the one* are parts of *the one*, each of which will have two parts in turn, and so on indefinitely. Whatever part comes always has two parts, and so *the one that is* is indefinitely multitudinous. This is the crucial part of deduction both for our purpose and the

¹²⁹ Mix, p.111.

¹³⁰ 142 d 9.

whole hypothesis. For this reason, let us try to analyse this consequence of deduction for *the one* and *to be* in detail. We will look at what happens *the one* itself and *to be* when they compose a whole within which *the being* and *the one* are comparable elements.

As Parmenides asserted, if *is* and *one* are different, by the restrictions about *being* and *the one*, *is* is said of *being* and *one* [is] said of *the one*. Thus if *is* were said of just *the one*, *is* would be said of *the one* part. Under the restriction that *is* is said only of *being* (i.e., of *to be*), if *is* were said of just *the one itself* determined solely by its *phusis one*, *is* would be said of *that which is not being*. It is possible to say *is* of *the one* only if *the one* [is] a compound of that which its *phusis* [is] *one* and *that which* [is] *is*. Hence, *the one that which is* must be a whole of *the one itself* determined solely by its *phusis one* (i.e., that which its *phusis* [is] *one*) and *being* (i.e., *that which* [is] *is*). Indeed, whenever *is* is said of *the one*, *is* is said of this whole *the one that which is* as it is called in this deduction *the onebeing*. At that level, as we stated, neither *being* [is] a part of *the one itself* determined solely by its *phusis one* nor *the one* itself determined solely by its *phusis one* [is] a part of *being*. Within this compounded whole, *being* and *the one itself* still remains different. If the case is as stated, i.e., if the *being* part is different from *the one* part, since only “being is” *the one part not is*, similarly, since only “the one one” *being part* [is] *not one*, the whole may only be described as a whole of “*is* and *not is*” and as a whole of “*one* and *not one*.”

In the previous paragraph it was stated that a whole which has separated parts *the one itself* and *being* would only be a composite of *that which* [is] *one* and *that which* [is] *not one* (if we express the fact in terms of *one*) and a composite of *that which* [is] *is* and

that which [is] is not (expressed in terms of *is*). And it has been argued that if the *being* part were different from *the one* part, the whole might only be described as a whole of “*is and is not*” and as a whole “*one and not one*.” In that case *is* [is] said of [one] part, *is not* [is] said of other and by the same token *one* [is] said of [one] part, *not one* [is] said of other. But for the whole it can be claimed neither that *is* nor that *is not* (similarly neither that [is] *one* nor that [is] *not one*), since what can be said only to [one] of its parts cannot be said of the whole. That is, the *onebeing* [is] neither *is* nor *is not* neither *one* nor *not one*. The situation thus can be expressed: in order the whole – as Parmenides calls *onebeing* – *to be* each of its part must *be* (similarly in order the whole [to be] *one* each of its parts must [be] *one*), conversely if the whole *is*, each of its parts must [be] *is* (similarly if the whole [is] *one*, each of its parts [is] *one*). Hence, each of its parts must both [be] *is* and *one*, i.e., each part must *be one*.

In the second deduction Parmenides searches for the implications of assuming a whole *onebeing* which will [be] constituted such that the part of this whole of *onebeing*, *the one itself* determined solely by its *phusis one* will itself [be] *being* – i.e. *the one itself* which *is* – and other part of this whole of *onebeing*, *being* (i.e., *to be*) will itself [be] *the one itself* solely determined by its *phusis one* – i.e., *being* which [is] *one*, in order that each of them will [be] “one is” and “is one,” respectively. The problem recurs, however, since as a part of the whole *onebeing*, *the one itself* determined solely by its *phusis one* will [be] itself *being*, this part will also [be] a whole *onebeing* (i.e. not *the one itself* determined solely by its *phusis one* but a whole of *the one itself* determined solely by its *phusis one* and *being* that *is*) and since as a part of the whole *onebeing*, *being* (i.e., *to be*)

will [be] itself *the one itself* solely determined by its *phusis one*, this part will also [be] a whole *beingone* (i.e. not *being* that *is*, but a whole of *being* and *the one itself* determined solely by its *phusis one*), thus will go *ad infinitum*. To quote Parmenides' own words, "Then each of these two parts has *one* and *is*, and the last part again, and so on with the same reasoning, the very thing that would have a part, always has these two parts. For the one always has being and being always the one. So that it is necessary that they are always becoming two and never one. Thus the one that is would be unlimited in number."¹³¹ Hence, at the end, the deduction shows us that "the one one" does not hold for *the one that is* : "if the one is" by participation "*the one that is [is] many*. If we recapitulate it, "if the one, is one" it *is not one (esti me hen)*. If the one, is one, it loses its *phusis* proper to it and becomes many. Thus, if *being* were part of a whole which has another part that has its own *phusis* other than *is*, this other part would lose its *phusis* proper to it. In sum, "if the one, one is" *the one* that is would be many.

But the converse is also the case. If our hypothesis were "is one" about *to be*, the argumentation would not differ. This time we would claim that since only *is* said of *to be* and *one* is only said of *the one*, when we had attempted to say "is one" we would accept that *being* must partake of *the one*, i.e., *to be* and *the one* must be distinguishable parts a whole called *beingone*. In such a case, if *one* and *is* are different, and *one* and *is* comes from self-same thing, then *the one* and *being* must be parts of this self-same whole. To see the implications of this, the only thing we must make is to substitute *the one* in place of *being* and conversely, *being* in place of *the one* and converting *one is* into *is one* in

¹³¹ 142 d 15.

Parmenides' words. So we have: "So whenever someone says "is one" would this simply mean that *being* partakes of *the one*"¹³² and thus, *the one* belongs to *being*, but *being* and *the one* are different, they can only be parts of *beingone*. Now, since *beingone* is a whole, and whole and parts are interrelated, it will exhibit both features of whole and parts.

Now, considering each of the parts of this *beingone*, following the above substitution, we have *Parmenides*' question as "Is *one* ever absent from *being* part, or *being* from *the one* part?"¹³³ and after *Aristoteles*' response, "No it would not,"¹³⁴ we have that *being* is indefinitely multidious. If *is one*, then *the one* and *being* are parts of *being that [is] one*. But, if *being one*, then *the one* and *being* are parts of *the one*, and if *being one*, *the one* and *being* are parts of *being*, and each of which will have two parts in turn, and so on indefinitely. Whatever part comes always has two parts, and so *being that [is] one* is indefinitely multidious.

Here what has been done is only to reverse the order of the sentences of *Parmenides*.¹³⁵ If, in order to say that *one is* we must have recourse to participation, in the sense that constitution of a whole of "*one and being*," namely *onebeing*, in order to say that *is one* we must also have recourse to participation, in the sense that constitution

¹³² "So whenever someone says *one is* would this simply mean that the one partakes of being."

¹³³ "Is being ever absent from the one part, or the one from being part?"

¹³⁴ 142e1.

¹³⁵ See above: If one is, then being and the one are parts of the one. But, if the one is, then being and the one are parts of being, and if the one is, being and the one are parts of the one, and each of which will have two parts in turn, and so on indefinitely. Whatever part comes always has two parts, and so the one that is is indefinitely multidious.

of a whole of “being and one,” namely *beingone*. The conclusion arises not from the fact, that that which participates is *the one* and that which is participated is *being*, but from accepting a whole which has parts as *being* and *the one*. If we recapitulate, there is no difference, for Parmenides’ argumentation in this deduction, between the participation of *the one* to *being* and the participation of *being* to *the one*. Since in both cases, the same whole will be constituted. Hence, all the conclusions with respect to *the one*, following such a constitution, will also be the case for *being*. To understand this point, it is enough to focus on *the being* part of the whole. As clarified above, both *being* part and *the one* part must be a whole if we want to say “is one” (or “one is”) to the whole composed of *the one* and *being*. When we consider the *being* part, we have to say *one* to *being* part, and thus, to do it, we have to convert the *being* part into a whole which is composed of *being* and *the one*, and by this whole, we obtain *beingone* which is indefinitely multitudinous.

Now at the end we return to our starting point: if “to be is one” (in Parmenides’ wordings if “being is one”) if *to be* by participation “to be is one” then “to be is not one.” If we recapitulate it, “if to be is one” then “to be is many” (*esti polla*). Since “to be is,” instead of “to be is one” we can simply write “to be one,” thus we have, if “to be one” then “to be many.” As can be seen, the conclusion of Zeno’s argument holds also for “to be one.”

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

This dissertation evaluated a part of Plato's dialogue *Parmenides* centered on the hypothesis "one is" from the perspective of Parmenides' poem – as called here the goddess' *muthos*. Before recapitulating the conclusions reached, at the outset, it will be convenient to expose the foundation of the evaluation. As an initial observation: the thesis "one is" and "is one" are apparently different in that the first claims that *is* [is] about *the one* and the second claims that *one* [is] a *phusis* of *to be*. But after the analysis of the thesis "one is" with respect to the thesis "is one," it was possible to disclose the main issue discussed by Parmenides in the dialogue under this hypothesis. Even though the hypothesis "one is" is certainly about *the one* and even both in the first and the second deduction Parmenides explicitly begins with *one* – considering it with respect to its contrary *many* – these deductions and their implications were analyzed in reverse order, and *is* in the hypothesis received focus, following the conception that was arrived at in reading goddess' *muthos* that saying *is* to any subject of discourse has a hidden assumption about *to be*.

It was insisted on the view that, contrary to its general reception, the issue to be discussed in the second part of the dialogue is not *the one* but *to be*; and as its corollary,

the conditions to say *is* – which *is* only said of *to be* – to any subject of discourse – whatever it [is]. At this point it can be argued that the final consequence of each deduction that was analyzed – though their content is determined by the *phusis one* and they have a specific subject *the one*, and thus have specific implications about *the one* – are valid for any subject assumed that *is*.

After the exposition of the foundation of our evaluation it will be suitable to note down the track pursued in this work. Prior to the analysis of the deductions under the hypothesis “one is” three things were attempted in the reading of the poem: to determine the main thesis of the poem, to decide upon whether “the one is” can be a thesis of the poem as most of the commentators agree upon it, and since the terms which compose “one is” are also the terms that occur in the poem, to evaluate “the one is” from the perspective of the poem.

The main thesis of Parmenides’ poem, which is the *muthos* of the goddess is – as it is justified by Fragment 6 – “to be is” and the claim “to be is” has central importance in understanding whether something can *be*. If we look at “the one is” in connection with the condition that only “to be is” and taking “to be is” as a paradigm for any *phusis* and its subject of discourse in such a way that any *phusis* can only be said of its proper subject and for any subject of which only its proper *phusis* is said, “the one is” cannot be a thesis of the poem. The restriction on *to be* set out in the goddess *muthos* prevents our reading “the one is” as the main thesis of the poem. For this reason, the reception of historical Parmenides’ thesis that “the one is” was rejected from our point of view which is nothing else than “to be one,” and it was argued that “one” which

occurs in the *muthos* cannot be taken as a *phusis* of *to be*, but rather, as the *muthos* declared, it must be considered as a sign of *to be*. If it were possible to consider *one*, contrary to *muthos*, as a *phusis* of *to be*, this would amount to saying that *to be* has two aspects, namely a *phusis* and *is*, each of which is different from another. To posit such a *phusis* would require the acceptance of a differentiation of *phusis* and *being* for *to be*. As argued, this cannot be the case for *to be*. On the other hand, it was also argued to the same conclusion from the perspective of *noein*. It was shown that the relation between *noein*, *to be* and *is* presented in the *muthos* does not allow to add any *noema* to *noein* apart from *is*. According to the *muthos*, since *noein* is the same as “wherefore” *noema* comes, and “the same is to think and to be,” there cannot be any *noema* within *noein* which does not come from *to be*. On the basis of these relations, it was argued that *one* cannot be in *noein* that is the same as *to be*. These arguments showed that *one* can be neither an additional predicate of *to be* nor an additional *noema* within *noein*.

In the poem, *one* occurs as a single word in Fragment 8 where the signs of *to be* are listed. On the basis of this occurrence of *one*, some commentators claim that the main thesis of the *muthos* is “the one is.” Under which assumption is it possible to convert this part of the fragment to the thesis “the one is”? It was shown that this would be possible only if *one* were read as “is one” which asserts that *one* is a *phusis* of *to be*, and thus, beginning with the *phusis* *one*, it could be claimed that “to be is” asserts “the one is.” As we argued, this reading is not consistent with the other fragments of the poem. It is important to notice that *muthos* does not give “one” a status of *phusis* of *to be* by talking about *one* only as a sign of *to be*. If its differentiation of “one” from “is” in

declaring “one” as sign of *to be* is ignored, the point of *muthos* cannot be heard, and thus, the thesis of the poem can be misinterpreted. The *muthos* is about *to be* and its main thesis is “to be is”. In other words, “only is [is] said of to be” and “is [is] said of only to be.” To determine the main thesis of the *muthos* is important both to correct misunderstanding of the thesis of the *muthos* and to understand the context of the deductions in the second part of the dialogue.

The deductions under the hypothesis “one is” can be understood when their context within which they find their sense is supplied. Even though in the dialogue the thesis of dialogue’s character Parmenides is presented as “the one is” the context within which the argumentation makes sense is determined by the thesis of historical Parmenides, or to put more precisely, of the goddess’ *muthos*. For this reason, it was argued that the analysis of the deductions under the hypothesis “one is” must be made by focusing on “is” in relation to “to be.” As can be seen, in this approach to the hypothesis the center of the analysis shifts from the subject about which “is” [is] is said to “is.” This point was clarified by establishing the similarity between the argumentation in the first deduction under the hypothesis “one is” about the subject the one and the argumentation under the hypothesis “many is” about the subject the many. Reconstructing Zeno’s argumentation in the dialogue on the basis of Proclus’ interpretation and the words said in *muthos* about *to be* and *not the same*, this similarity was shown.

As for the deductions under the hypothesis “one is,” two clues are crucial to understanding the main issue discussed in these deductions and the context within which the argumentation runs. At the beginning of the second deduction, when Parmenides

points out that the issue discussed in the second deduction is “if one is” but not “if one one” gives hint about the governing assumption of the first deduction. Positing “participation” as a condition of accepting that “the one is” what he reveals is that in these deductions he conforms to the restriction set out in Parmenides’ poem, i.e., “to be is.” For this reason, a return was made to the second fragment in the poem, and discussion was made on variant readings of it in terms of “one,” interpreted the hypothesis “the one is” and made its implications explicit in respect of “to be is.”

The reading showed that Plato’s character Parmenides’ deductions on the hypothesis “one is” strictly follow the restrictions stated in the goddess’ *muthos* in the poem. Parmenides’ deductions are based on these restrictions, and the structure of the argumentation is in perfect accord with the *muthos*. Thus, it was shown that the main thesis in the *muthos*, that is, “to be is” or as Parmenides puts “being is” determines all the framework of the deductions about “the one is.”

Parmenides, in the dialogue, in discussing the judgment “the one is” as a careful follower of goddess’ *muthos*, takes the restrictions expressed in “to be is” as his ground, and using “to be is” as a paradigm, extends the intimate connection of *is* and *to be* – as shown in different replicas of Fragment 2 – to any *phusis* and its subject of discourse: a *phusis* is said of only its proper the subject of discourse, and only its proper *phusis* is said of a subject of discourse. In accord with these restrictions, that Parmenides’ first deduction under the hypothesis “if one is” begins with “the one one” was shown. Discussion was undertaken of how it can be argued that “the one is” follows from “the one one.” It was shown that, since *is* can only be said about *to be* and *one* can only be

said about *the one*, in order to argue that “the one is,” it must be accepted that the subject of judgement “the one is,” namely *the one* [is] the same as *to be* and this amounts to admit that the claim “the one one” [is] only a reiteration of the claim “to be is.” Or to put it in reverse order, “to be is” is only a reiteration of “the one one.” Thus, it was concluded that depending on the apparent beginning of the deduction, that *one*, *is* and *to be* as different terms from *one* and *the one*, respectively, are annihilated within this discourse. It was shown, however, that when we assume that there [is] a *phusis* such as *one* different from *is*, it cannot be argued that “to be one” and thus “the one is” from “the one one.”

Under the restrictions of the *muthos* followed by Parmenides, taken *to be* different from *the one*, *one* cannot be said of just *to be* and *is* cannot be said of just *the one* – which is solely determined by its *phusis one*. In order to say both “the one one” and “the one is” for the same *the one* as in the expression “the one both is and one,” by the restriction that an expression is said of a subject of discourse only if the expression has reference to what is ‘in’ the subject, then *the one one that is* must denote a whole of *to be* and *the one* – as called in the deduction under the hypothesis “one if is,” the *beingone* or the *onebeing*. Hence it was shown that a conception such as participation arises as an inevitable condition for an attempt to reconsider whether it can be said that “the one is.”

On that point, what follows from the hypothesis “one if is” is the fact that *the one that is* [is] *not-one*. As *not-one* – as pointed out in our section on *Zeno’s* argument – [is] *many*. The deduction, as shown, does not depend on whether *being* participates in *the*

one or *the one* participates in *being* but from accepting a whole which composed of the *being* and *the one*. By taking into account that *the one* that *is* [is] (i.e., *the onebeing*) posited in the deduction as *being* that [is] *one* (i.e., *the beignone*), the conclusion can be rephrased from the perspective of the *beingone*. The above conclusion of the deduction, besides being valid for *the one* that *is*, is valid also for *being* that is *one* which has as its parts *being* and *the one itself*. The thesis “the one is” assumed to be grounded through participation implies the thesis that “being [is] a whole”, i.e., *the one* that *is* turns the *being* into a whole in that participation.

Such a conception of the whole of *being* and *the one* generates also the *aporia* that the reconstruction of Zeno’s argument yielded, since *being* (*to be*) in that case must also be assumed [to be] *many*. Here, the *muthos* must be kept in mind: *is* and *not-is* cannot be said about *to be*, and neither *to be* can be conceived as giving way to the partition of *is* and *not-is*. Beginning with the initial stage of the whole of *beingone* in the deduction: since *the one itself* [is] *not-is* but only *being is* – this must be admitted, otherwise there is no need for an assumption such as participation –, this assumed whole of *the one itself* and *being* has parts that *is* and that *not-is*. In the subsequent stage, if it is assumed that this whole *is* – otherwise it is not admissible that “the one is” –, this whole must [be] *being* having *being* and *the one itself* as its parts. But, if the whole *is*, and *is* said of only *to be*, the whole [is] *to be*.

Since the assumed parts of *to be* could only *be* – as Parmenides accepts in the deduction – the assumed part that [is] *not-is* must also *be* together with the part that *is*. Since the part that [is] *not-is* cannot itself *be*, there needs [to be] participation with *to be*.

If we follow the series generated in the deduction, however, each supposed participation assumes a partition of *to be* – if such a partition were not assumed what we would have were only a whole of *to be* and *the one itself* which is neither *is* nor *one*. For a supposition of such participation this assumption of partition of *to be* has priority. If there were a partition of *to be*, each part in the partition would only [be] different by only *not-being-other*. Hence, *to be* would be both *like* and *unlike*. As can clearly be seen, this conclusion follows not from the specification of the whole as *beingone* which is necessitated for grounding the thesis “the one is.” For any subject of discourse, X taken with its *phusis* x, to ground the thesis that “X is” with a supposition of participation – as taken in its formulation in the deduction – implies a whole of *beingx*. Hence, in this case, the assumption of the partition of *to be* must be admitted for any assertion “X is,” as in the case that saying both “X is” and “Y is” regardless of how “is” [can] be said of each, if both Parmenides’ and Zeno’s argumentations are trusted.

To put all conclusions together, reading Parmenides’ deductions leaves with the *aporia* that anything that which has *phusis* can in no way *be* if “to be is.” If we trust Parmenides’ argument, the only way that is left to claim that something that which has *phusis* *is*, is to deny “to be is” – if possible. Now, at the end, we return where we begin in this concluding chapter: If the turning points of the deductions are followed, the problem of saying that “the one is,” is not the problem whether *the one’s phusis one* allows to say that “the one is,” thus the problem does not arise from the *phusis one*; but it is the problem to say “*is*” to any subject of discourse taken with its *phusis* – including

the one – under the proviso that “to be is.” As can be seen, this formulation of the problem discussed through the deductions captures all the declaration in the form “x is.”

In closing, to illustrate both the extension of the problem and the applicability of the arguments: consider *the good* itself, and ask, how one can argue that “the good is” under the hypothesis “good is” if it is accepted both “the good good” and “to be is”. As a corollary, the question about “*good*” and “*is*” may be reformulated in terms of “*good*” and “*one*”: how one can argue about *the good* that “the good one” under the hypothesis “good one” if it is accepted both “the good good” and “the one one.”

APPENDIX

PARMENIDES' POEM

Fragment 1

[1-30 : Sextus Empiricus, *Adv. Math.* VII]
[28-32: Simplicius, *De Caelo*, 557, 25 ff]

The mares that carry me, as far as impulse might reach,
Ἴπποι ταί με φέρουσιν, ὅσον τ' ἐπὶ θυμὸς ἰκάνοι,
Were taking me, when they brought and placed me upon the much-speaking route
πέμπον, ἐπεὶ μ' ἐς ὁδὸν βῆσαν πολύφημον ἄγουσαι
Of the goddess, that carries everywhere unscathed the man who knows;
δαίμονος, ἣ κατὰ πάντ' ἄσινῃ φέρει εἰδότα φῶτα·

[Mss κατὰ πάντ' ἄτη. D-K : ἄστη]

Thereon was I carried, for thereon the much-guided mares were carrying me,
τῆ φερόμην· τῆ γάρ με πολύφραστοι φέρον ἵπποι
5 Straining to pull the chariot, and maidens were leading the way.

ἄρμα τιταίνουσαι, κοῦραι δ' ὁδὸν ἡγεμόνευον.

The axle, glowing in its naves, gave forth the shrill sound of a pipe,

Ἄξων δ' ἐν χνοίησιν ἴει σύριγγος αὐτήν

(For it was urged on by two rounded

αἰθόμενος - δοιοῖς γὰρ ἐπείγετο δινωτοῖσιν

Wheels at either end), even while maidens, Daughters of the Sun, were hastening

κύκλοις ἀμφοτέρωθεν -, ὅτε σπερχοῖατο πέμπειν

To escort me, after leaving the House of Night for the light,

Ἡλιάδες κοῦραι, προλιποῦσαι δώματα Νυκτός

[D-K place a comma at the end of this line]

10 Having pushed back with their hands the veils from their heads.

εἰς φάος, ὡσάμεναι κρᾶτων ἄπο χερσὶ καλύπτρας.
 There are the gates of the paths of Night and Day,
 Ἐνθα πύλαι Νυκτός τε καὶ Ἡματός εἰσι κελεύθων,
 And a lintel and a threshold of stone surround them,
 καὶ σφας ὑπέρθυρον ἀμφὶς ἔχει καὶ λάινος οὐδός·
 And the aetherial gates themselves are filled with great doors;
 αὐταὶ δ' αἰθέριαι πλῆνται μεγάλοισι θυρέτροις·
 And for these Justice, much-avenging, holds the keys of retribution.
 τῶν δὲ Δίκη πολύποινος ἔχει κληϊδας ἀμοιβούς.
 15 Coaxing her with gentle words, the maidens
 Τὴν δὴ παρφάμεναι κοῦραι μαλακοῖσι λόγοισιν
 Did cunningly persuade her that she should push back the bolted bar for them
 πείσαν ἐπιφράδέως, ὡς σφιν βαλανωτὸν ὀχῆα
 Swiftly from the gates; and these made of the doors
 ἀπτερέως ὥσειε πυλέων ἄπο· ταὶ δὲ θυρέτρων
 A gaping gap as they were opened wide,
 χάσμ' ἀχανὲς ποίησαν ἀναπτάμεναι πολυχάλκους
 Swinging in turn in their sockets the brazen posts
 ἄξονας ἐν σύριγξιν ἀμοιβαδὸν εἰλίξασαι
 20 Fitted with rivets and pins; straight through them at that point
 γόμοις καὶ περόνησιν ἀρηρότε· τῇ ῥα δι' αὐτέων
 Did the maidens drive the chariot and mares along the broad way.
 ἰθὺς ἔχον κοῦραι κατ' ἀμαξιτὸν ἄρμα καὶ ἵππους.
 And the goddess received me kindly, and took my right hand with her hand,
 Καί με θεὰ πρόφρων ὑπεδέξατο, χεῖρα δὲ χειρὶ
 And uttered speech and thus addressed me:
 δεξιτερὴν ἔλεν, ὦδε δ' ἔτος φάτο καὶ με προσηύδα·
 'Youth attended by immortal charioteers,
 ὦ κοῦρ' ἀθανάτοισι συνάορος ἠνιόχοισιν,
 25 Who come to our House with mares that carry you,
 ἵπποις ταί σε φέρουσιν ἰκάνων ἡμέτερον δῶ,
 Welcome; for it is no ill fortune that sent you forth to travel
 χαῖρ', ἐπεὶ οὐτι σε μοῖρα κακὴ προὔπεμπε νέεσθαι
 This route for it lies far indeed from the beaten track of men),
 τήνδ' ὁδόν - ἧ γὰρ ἀπ' ἀνθρώπων ἐκτὸς πάτου ἐστίν-,
 But right and justice. And it is right that you should learn all things,
 ἀλλὰ θέμις τε δίκη τε. Χρεῶ δέ σε πάντα πυθέσθαι
 Both the steadfast hearth of persuasive truth,
 ἡμὲν Ἀληθείης εὐπειθέος ἀτρεμεῖς ἦτορ

[D-K follows Simplicius and print εὐκυκλέος. Proclus gives εὐφεγγέος here.]

30 And the beliefs of mortals, in which there is no true trust,
ἡδὲ βροτῶν δόξας, ταῖς οὐκ ἐν πίστις ἀληθῆς.
But nevertheless you shall learn these things as well, how the things which seem
Ἄλλ' ἔμπης καὶ ταῦτα μαθήσεται, ὡς τὰ δοκοῦντα
Had to have genuine existence, permeating all things completely.
χρῆν δοκίμως εἶναι διὰ παντὸς πάντα περῶντα.
[Some mss give περ ὄντα.]

Fragment 2

[1 - 8: Proclus, Commentary on *Timaeus* (Diehl, vol I, 345)]

[3 - 8: Simplicius, Commentary on *Physics* (*Comm. Arist. Gr.* IX, 116)]

Come, I shall tell you, and do you listen and convey the story

Εἰ δ' ἄγ' ἐγὼν ἐρέω, κόμισαι δὲ σὺ μῦθον ἀκούσας,

What routes of inquiry alone there are for thinking:

αἴπερ ὁδοὶ μοῦναι διζήσιός εἰσι νοῆσαι·

The one – that [*it*] *is*, and that [*it*] *cannot not be*,

ἢ μὲν ὅπως ἔστιν τε καὶ ὡς οὐκ ἔστι μὴ εἶναι,

Is the path of Persuasion (for it attends upon truth);

Πειθοῦς ἐστὶ κέλευθος - Ἀληθείη γὰρ ὀπηδεῖ -,

[An emendation for Ἀληθείη in the ms.]

5 The other – that [*it*] *is not* and that [*it*] *needs must not be*,

ἢ δ' ὡς οὐκ ἔστιν τε καὶ ὡς χρεῶν ἐστὶ μὴ εἶναι,

That I point out to you to be a path wholly unlearnable,

τὴν δὴ τοι φράζω παναπευθέα ἔμμεν ἀταρπὸν·

[Variant reading: παναπειθέα]

For you could not know what-is-not (for that is not feasible),

οὔτε γὰρ ἂν γνοίης τό γε μὴ ἔον - οὐ γὰρ ἀνυστόν -

Nor could you point it out.

οὔτε φράσαις·

Fragment 3

[Clement, *Strom.* VI, 2, 23]

[Plotinus *Ennead* V, I, 8]

... because the same think is there for thinking and for being
... τὸ γὰρ αὐτὸ νοεῖν ἐστὶν τε καὶ εἶναι.

Fragment 4

[Clement, *Strom.* V, 2, 15,5]

Look upon things which, though far off, are yet firmly present to the mind;

Λεῦσσε δ' ὅμως ἀπεόντα νόῳ παρεόντα βεβαίως·

For you shall not cut off what-is from holding fast to what-is

οὐ γὰρ ἀποτιμήξει τὸ ἐὸν τοῦ ἐόντος ἔχεσθαι

For it neither disperses itself in every way everywhere in order,

οὔτε σκιδνάμενον πάντη πάντως κατὰ κόσμον

Nor gathers itself together.

οὔτε συνιστάμενον.

Fragment 5

[Proclus, *in Parm.* I, (p. 708, 16 Cousin)]

And it is all one to me

Ἐυνὸν δέ μοί ἐστιν,

Where I am to begin; for I shall return again.

ὀπόθεν ἄρξωμαι· τόθι γὰρ πάλιν ἴξομαι αὐθις.

Fragment 6

[1-9: Simplicius, Commentary on Physics (Comm. Arist. Gr. IX, 117)]

[8-9: Simplicius, Commentary on *Physics* (Comm. Arist. Gr. IX, 78)]

It must be that what is there for speaking and thinking of is; for [it] is there to be,

Χρή τὸ λέγειν τε νοεῖν τ' ἐὼν ἔμμεναι· ἔστι γὰρ εἶναι,

Whereas nothing is not; that is what I bid you consider,

μηδὲν δ' οὐκ ἔστιν· τὰ σ' ἐγὼ φράζεσθαι ἄνωγα.

For <I restrain> you from this one, on which mortals knowing nothing

Πρώτης γὰρ σ' ἀφ' ὁδοῦ ταύτης διζήσιος <εἴργω>,

And then also from this one, on which mortals knowing nothing

αὐτὰρ ἔπειτ' ἀπὸ τῆς, ἣν δὴ βροτοὶ εἰδότες οὐδέν

⁵ Wander, two-headed; for helplessness in their

πλάττονται, δίκρανοι· ἀμηχανίη γὰρ ἐν αὐτῶν

Breasts guides their distracted mind; and they are carried

στήθεσιν ἰθύνει πλακτὸν νόον· οἱ δὲ φοροῦνται.

Deaf and blind alike, dazed, uncritical tribes,

κωφοὶ ὁμῶς τυφλοὶ τε, τεθηπότες, ἄκριτα φύλα,

By whom being and not-being have been thought both the same

οἷς τὸ πέλειν τε καὶ οὐκ εἶναι ταῦτὸν νενόμισται

And not the same; and the path of all is backward-turning.

κοῦ ταῦτόν, πάντων δὲ παλίντροπὸς ἔστι κέλευθος.

Fragment 7

[1-2: Plato, *Sophist* 237a]

[1: Aristotle, *Metaphysics* N 2, 1089a2]

[2-6: Sextus Empiricus, *Adv. Math.* VII, 114]

For never shall this prevail, that things that are not are;

Οὐ γὰρ μήποτε τοῦτο δαμῆ εἶναι μὴ ἔόντα·

But do you restrain thought from this route of inquiry,

ἀλλὰ σὺ τῆσδ' ἀφ' ὁδοῦ διζήσιος εἴργε νόημα·

Nor let habit force you, along this route of much-experience,

μηδέ σ' ἔθος πολύπειρον ὁδὸν κατὰ τήνδε βιάσθω,

To ply an aimless eye and ringing ear
 νωμᾶν ἄσκοπον ὄμμα καὶ ἠχῆεσαν ἀκουήν
 5 And tongue; but judge by reasoning the very contentious disproof
 καὶ γλῶσσαν, κρῖναι δὲ λόγῳ πολύδηριν ἔλεγχον
 That has been uttered by me.
 ἐξ ἐμέθεν ῥηθέντα.

Fragment 8 [1 - 49]

[1-52: Simplicius, Commentary on Physics (Comm. Arist. Gr. IX, 144)]

[1-14: Simplicius, Commentary on Physics (Comm. Arist. Gr. IX, 78)]

A single story of route still

Μόνος δ' ἔτι μῦθος ὁδοῖο

Is left: that [*it*] is; on this [route] there are signs

λείπεται ὡς ἔστιν· ταύτη δ' ἐπὶ σήματ' ἔασι

Very numerous: that what-is is ungenerated and imperishable;

πολλὰ μάλ', ὡς ἀγένητον ἐὸν καὶ ἀνώλεθρόν ἐστιν,

Whole, single-limbed, steadfast, and complete;

οὔλον μονομελές τε καὶ ἀτρεμές ἠδὲ τέλεστον·

[ἔστι γὰρ οὐλομελές (*Simplicius*, Kirk and Raven) : οὔλον μονογενές
 (*Plutarch*, Burnet, DK)]

[ἠδ' ἀτέλεστον (*Simplicius*, Kirk and Raven): ἠδὲ τέλειον (Burnet, DK)]

5 Nor was [*it*] once, nor will [*it*] be, since [*it*] is, now, all together,

οὐδέ ποτ' ἦν οὐδ' ἔσται, ἐπεὶ νῦν ἔστιν ὁμοῦ πᾶν,

One, continuous; for what coming-to-be of it will you seek?

ἔν, συνεχές· τίνα γὰρ γένναν διζήσεται αὐτοῦ;

In what way, whence, did [*it*] grow? Neither from what-is-not shall I allow

πῆ πόθεν αὐξηθέν ; οὐτ' ἐκ μὴ ἐόντος ἑάσω

You to say or think; for it is not to be said or thought

φάσθαι σ' οὐδὲ νοεῖν· οὐ γὰρ φατὸν οὐδὲ νοητόν

That [*it*] is *not*. And what need could have impelled it to grow

ἔστιν ὅπως οὐκ ἔστι. Τί δ' ἂν μιν καὶ χρέος ὤρσεν

10 Later or sooner, if it began from nothing?

ὑστερον ἢ πρόσθεν, τοῦ μηδενὸς ἀρξάμενον, φῦν ;

Thus [*it*] must either be completely or not at all.

οὕτως ἢ πάμπαν πελέναι χρεῶν ἐστιν ἢ οὐχί.

Nor will the strenght of trust ever allow anything to come-to-be from what-is

Οὐδὲ ποτ' ἐκ τοῦ ἐόντος ἐφήσει πίστιος ἰσχύς

[τοῦ (Taran, Barnes (*Presocr. Phil.*, 178)) : μή]
 Besides it; therefore neither [its] coming-to-be
 γίνεσθαι τι παρ' αὐτό· τοῦ εἵνεκεν οὔτε γενέσθαι
 Nor [its] perishing has Justice allowed, relaxing her shackles,
 οὐτ' ὄλλυσθαι ἀνήκε Δίκη χαλάσασα πέδησιν,
 15 But she holds [it] fast; the decision about these matters depends on this:
 ἀλλ' ἔχει· ἡ δὲ κρίσις τούτων ἐν τῷδ' ἔστιν·
Is [it] or is [it] not? But it has been decided, as is necessary,
 ἔστιν ἢ οὐκ ἔστιν· κέκριται δ' οὖν, ὡς περ ἀνάγκη,
 To let go the one as unthinkable, unnameable (for it is no true
 τὴν μὲν ἐᾶν ἀνόητον ἀνόνημον - οὐ γὰρ ἀληθῆς
 Route), but to allow the other, so that it is, and is true.
 ἔστιν ὁδός - τὴν δ' ὥστε πέλειν καὶ ἐτήτυμον εἶναι.
 And how could what-is be in the future; and how could [it] come-to-be?
 Πῶς δ' ἂν ἔπειτα πέλοιτὸ ἐόν ; πῶς δ' ἂν κε γένοιτο ;
 20 For if [it] came-to-be, [it] is not, nor [is it] if at some time [it] is going to be.
 εἰ γὰρ ἔγεντ', οὐκ ἔστ(ι), οὐδ' εἴ ποτε μέλλει ἔσεσθαι.
 Thus, coming-to-be is extinguished and perishing not to be heard of.
 Τῶς γένεσις μὲν ἀπέσβεσται καὶ ἄπυστος ὄλεθρος.
 Nor is [it] divisible, since [it] all alike *is*;
 Οὐδὲ διαιρετόν ἔστιν, ἐπεὶ πᾶν ἔστιν ὁμοῖον·
 [ἔστιν : ἔστιν]
 Nor is [it] somewhat more here, which would keep it from holding together,
 οὐδέ τι τῆ μαλλον, τό κεν εἴργοι μιν συνέχεσθαι,
 Nor is [it] somewhat less, but [it] is all full of what-is.
 οὐδέ τι χειρότερον, πᾶν δ' ἔμπλεόν ἔστιν ἐόντος.
 25 Therefore [it] is all continuous; for what-is is in contact with what-is.
 Τῷ ξυνεχὲς πᾶν ἔστιν· ἐὸν γὰρ ἐόντι πελάζει.
 Moreover, changeless in the limits of great chains
 Αὐτὰρ ἀκίνητον μεγάλων ἐν πείρασι δεσμῶν
 [It] is un-beginning and unceasing, since coming-to-be and perishing
 ἔστιν ἀναρχον ἄπυστον, ἐπεὶ γένεσις καὶ ὄλεθρος
 Have been driven far off, and true trust has trust them out.
 τῆλε μάλ' ἐπλάχθησαν, ἀπῶσε δὲ πίστις ἀληθῆς.
 Remaining the same and in the same, [it] lies by itself
 Ταυτόν τ' ἐν ταύτῳ τε μένον καθ' ἑαυτό τε κεῖται
 30 And remains thus firmly in place; for strong Necessity
 χούτως ἔμπεδον αὔθι μένει· κρατερὴ γὰρ Ἀνάγκη
 Holds [it] fast in the chains of a limit, which fences it about.
 πείρατος ἐν δεσμοῖσιν ἔχει, τό μιν ἀμφὶς ἐέργει,

Wherefore it is not right for what-is to be incomplete;
 οὐνεκεν οὐκ ἀτελεύτητον τὸ ἐὼν θέμις εἶναι·
 For [it] is not lacking; but if [it] were, [it] would lack everything.
 ἔστι γὰρ οὐκ ἐπιδευές· ἐὼν δ' ἂν παντὸς ἐδεῖτο.
 [οὐκ ἐπιδευές· ἐὼν : οὐκ ἐπιδεές· μὴ ἐὼν]

The same thing is for thinking and [is] that there is thought;
 Ταῦτὸν δ' ἐστὶ νοεῖν τε καὶ οὐνεκεν ἔστι νόημα.
 35 For not without what-is, on which [it] depends, having been declared,
 Οὐ γὰρ ἄνευ τοῦ ἐόντος, ἐν ᾧ πεφατισμένον ἐστίν,
 Will you find thinking; for nothing else <either> is or will be
 εὐρήσεις τὸ νοεῖν· οὐδὲν γὰρ <ἦ> ἔστιν ἢ ἔσται
 [οὐδὲν γὰρ <ἦ> : οὐδ' ἦν γὰρ <ἦ>]
 Besides what-is, since it was just this that Fate did shackle
 ἄλλο πάρεξ τοῦ ἐόντος, ἐπεὶ τό γε Μοῖρ' ἐπέδησεν
 To be whole and changeless; wherefore it has been named all things
 οὐλον ἀκίνητόν τ' ἔμεναι· τῷ πάντ' ὀνόμασται,
 [ὀνόμασται : ὄνομ' ἔσται]
 That mortals have established, trusting them to be true,
 40 ὅσσα βροτοὶ κατέθεντο πεποιθότες εἶναι ἀληθῆ,
 To come-to-be and to perish, to be or not to be,
 γίγνεσθαί τε καὶ ὄλλυσθαι, εἶναι τε καὶ οὐχί,
 And to shift place and to exchange bright colour.
 καὶ τόπον ἀλλάσσειν διὰ τε χροῶ φανὸν ἀμείβειν.
 Since, then, there is a furthest limit, [it] is completed,
 Αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ πεῖρας πύματον, τετελεσμένον ἐστί
 From every direction like the bulk of a well-rounded sphere,
 πάντοθεν, εὐκύκλου σφαιρῆς ἐναλίγκιον ὄγκῳ,
 Everywhere from centre equally matched; for [it] must not be any larger
 μεσσόθεν ἰσοπαλὲς πάντῃ· τὸ γὰρ οὔτε τι μεῖζον
 45 Or any smaller here or there;
 οὔτε τι βαιότερον πελέναι χρεόν ἐστι τῆ ἢ τῆ.
 For neither is there what-is-not, which could stop it from reaching
 Οὔτε γὰρ οὐκ ἐὼν ἔστι, τό κεν παύοι μιν ἰκνεῖσθαι
 [Its] like; nor is there a way in which what-is could be
 εἰς ὁμόν, οὔτ' ἐὼν ἔστιν ὅπως εἶη κεν ἐόντος
 More here and less there, since [it] all inviolably is;
 τῆ μᾶλλον τῆ δ' ἦσσον, ἐπεὶ πᾶν ἐστιν ἄσυλον·
 For equal to itself from every direction, [it] lies uniformly within limits.
 οἱ γὰρ πάντοθεν ἴσον, ὁμῶς ἐν πείρασι κύρει.

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