THE GAME THAT LOOKS LIKE WORK
IN PLATO'S *PARMENIDES*

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It is amusing and yet perhaps not all that accidentally fitting that in an article concerning the playfulness of Parmenides' laborious little game (πραγματειώδης παιδία), in Plato's dialogue *Parmenides*, I begin not where I want to. Where I want to begin is where K. M. Sayre begins his article on Plato's *Parmenides*: commentators on the "second part" of the dialogue have been driven to their "interpretive limits" by the recalcitrance of the hypotheses to reconciliation in any satisfactory form.[1] Sayre proposes to resolve the contradictions by pairing the hypotheses, not in the order they appear but according to Parmenides' instructions (135d8-136d5).

His suggestion is tantalizing, particularly since the order in which they appear to the reader is the most natural to accept as the order in which they were proposed by Parmenides. Indeed, Mr. Sayre must be onto something, for closer inspection of his interpretation of the instructions reveals that he has, perhaps unbeknownst to himself and so in all naturalness, patched up and resolved what otherwise is a rather striking case of saying one thing and doing another on Parmenides' part.[2]

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[1] K. M. Sayre (1978). (Full references are given in the Bibliography at the end).

[2] Sayre (1978), p. 149, fn. 8. Sayre taxes Cornford with being "uncharacteristically superficial" in interpreting the instructions, and says that Cornford "concludes erroneously 'that there is an important discrepancy between the programme here outlined by Parmenides and the procedure actually followed. So far we are led to expect no more than four Hypotheses: there will actually be eight'." But Cornford is right about the discrepancy; he errs only in counting the number of hypotheses. The only other modern author to pause over the question of the instructions is Herman Sinaiko (1965). See fn. 15 *infra*.

Suppose this is the case. Aside from the unflattering light of the liar it sheds on Parmenides, of what other import is it? Nothing less than the intelligibility, the very seriousness of the entire dialogue, I say. For if Parmenides deliberately lies within the dialogue, what if anything that anyone says or does within the dialogue can or should be taken seriously, i.e., philosophically speaking?

R. E. Allen alludes to this problem when he characterises the dialogue as "aporetic."[3] Let us consider the situation in this manner: If Parmenides' trenchant criticisms of the ideas are to be accepted, taken to heart, then the ideas themselves must be denied existence and the discourse, within which the criticisms take place, is invalid. But, on the other hand, if Parmenides, in the dialogue, subscribes to the very theory he criticises (135b-c) and thus mirrors the inadequacy of the criticisms, then their rejection affirms both the possibility of the existence of the ideas, and the validity of discourse. But as the domain of the rejected criticisms revives, so too the rejected criticisms which pop back again, with a new lease on life.

Insofar as this characterisation of the dialogue is reminiscent of those nesting boxes in recursive Chinese puzzles, we do not much mind but we draw the line, as A. E. Taylor has noted in connexion with the dialogue, at certain kinds of metaphysical jokes, being of the fourth order, which "are carefully excluded from polite conversation."[4] And we certainly do not have great stomach for Chinese puzzles masquerading as serious metaphysical business.

The solution by most commentators is therefore either to deny that any such discrepancy has taken place or, what amounts to the same thing, that it has any significance. On the contrary, the thesis of this paper is that an important discrepancy, as Kenneth Sayre has perspicaciously noticed, takes place between the order of enunciation by Parmenides and the order of his execution and that Parmenides' lapse is simultaneous with his enunciation of the Third Hypothesis.

The task of this paper is restricted to demonstrating the nature of the discrepancy in order to develop the following hypothesis: if there is a discrepancy which comes to light at the same time as the enunciation of the Third Hypothesis, then it would suggest that the two disorders are not unrelated. Once established, a subsequent paper will employ the

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[3] R. E. Allen (1983), p. vii.

[4] A. E. Taylor (1916), p. 28.

consequent of this hypothesis to form, in turn, the further hypothesis that if the two disorders are related, then the proper understanding of the Third will constitute the clue to Parmenides' behaviour which is nothing less than an adequate interpretation of the dialogue and its parts. The first requirement of any such interpretation will be to attend to the refusal of the Third to be inserted neatly into the symmetry of the other hypotheses.

Only for Parmenides do the necessary and the voluntary collapse together (136e9; 137b1). Humbly, I must start with a look at the secondary literature that has grown up around the dialogue.

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In general, *Parmenides* commentators fall into two schools, depending upon their interpretation of the hypotheses of the last section which influences, in turn, their understanding of the beginning of the dialogue. Proclus, in his time, characterised the two schools of thought as logical and metaphysical (*In Platonis Parmenidum*, 630-648). Since then, commentary on the dialogue has proliferated enormously but the division, as a general distinction, remains constant. The survey that follows is by no means exhaustive but attempts a representative sample of both schools.

The logical school comprises, of course, all those who understand the entire dialogue primarily in terms of the hypotheses. Naturally enough, therefore, what is most significant for them is the formal symmetry of the exercise; the subject matter of the hypotheses, and its meaning, is secondary to and derived from the form. That form is seen as two or four hypotheses, with a total of eight deductions (or hypotheses) grouped in four or two antinomies. The Third is understood variously as corollary, coda or addendum to the Second Hypothesis.[5] The Third thus represents

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[5] Allen (1983, p. 261) asserts the Third is neither a separate hypothesis nor a corollary-addendum but "simply a third Deduction, combining results derived from the previous two. This is legitimate, since the previous Deductions, incompatible as they are, derive from one and the same hypothesis that Unity is. Therefore, any consequence so far adduced may be applied." Allen is defying the text. Parmenides says he begins with himself and his hypothesis concerning the one itself, whether it is one or not one, what must occur (137b2). At the end of that deduction, he begins again because Aristotle does not like the results. The second beginning clarifies the first because it begins with the conclusion of the First Hypothesis, namely that one and being are not the same and that one does not need being for its one-ness (142b5-c2).

a formidable problem for the logicians. Being struck by the very obvious contradictions among the hypotheses, it is quite understandable that they are disinclined to go looking for yet other contradictions hidden in the disguise of whether Parmenides does what he says. Logic is based upon the law of non-contradiction; to say one thing and do another is lying, and it is very difficult to do logic with a liar.[6]

The premium placed by the logical school, as a whole, however, upon formal structure makes it a cutting edge that effects a further sub-division within the group, depending upon the extent to which any content is attributed to the hypotheses. Those who take Parmenides at his word believe the last part is essentially a piece of logical gymnastic, not wholly worthwhile for its own sake but for its value as a learning in-strument, a teacher's tool: "What Parmenides promises Socrates from the study of the hypotheses is not direct development or emendation of his theory, but a gain in dialectical skill which may ultimately produce that result."[7] Joining Ross in his opinion here quoted are R. Robinson, R. E. Allen and Mitchell Miller. Allen views the hypotheses as a "massive reticulated *aporia*" that nevertheless suggests metaphysical perplexities such as the difficulty of applying the unrestricted term being, unity and difference to the ideas. Miller, while paying more attention to what he calls the dialogue's "mimetic irony," also sees the gymnastic functioning as an exercise in rethinking the theory of forms.[8]

On the other hand, there are those who, badgered by the dialogue's teasing quality mentioned earlier, deny that the last part conveys any positive teaching. Along with J. Burnet, in this logical subgroup are to be found H. F. Cherniss and A. E. Taylor, and it is the latter whose behaviour most clearly demonstrates the result of being riddled to death. In 1916, writing on the dialogue, he was tickled enough by the exercise to find it a "sufficient discipline in hard logic," intended to wean the

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Therefore, Hypothesis II says, Hypothesis I concerned the one as one, while II concerns the one which has being and is two (142c8-143a2). Further, were it possible to deduce true but contradictory consequences from the same hypothesis, logic would be pointless-- although amusing.

[6] *Parmenides*, 137a6-8. The importance of truth-telling for the exercise shows up here. Parmenides deliberately chooses Aristotle because he says what he believes. We may also note that the Liar is one of the most insoluble paradoxes in logic.

[7] D. Ross (1952), pp. 99-100.

[8] R. Robinson (1953), pp. 222, 264-8; R. E. Allen (1983), pp. viii, 289; M. Miller (1986), pp. 4-9.

young Socrates away from his "exclusively ethical interests." He also remarked that the rarified metaphysical joke had so little appeal to the general run of mankind that one should forbear to repeat it, lest the joke-teller be considered rude or foolish for babbling on about things that, by virtue of being understood by so few, must be insignificant.[9] But ten years later, apparently worn and wearied by the dialogue's infernal riddling quality, or perhaps humiliated by the cool reception when attempting to tell the "*Parmenides* joke" even in polite, well-bred company, he gives up, declaring, "...the *Parmenides* is, all through, an elaborate *jeu d'esprit*, and... all interpretations based on taking it for anything else (including an earlier one by the present writer) are mistaken in principle."[10] Mr. Taylor has succumbed to the dialogue's severest test: he is unable to keep together the the playful and the serious, the two parts of Parmenides' "game that looks like work" (πραγματειώδης παιδία).

Dubbed by Hardie the "eristic" view, its proponents find in the dialogue only an elaborate game of fallacies whose aim, in keeping with Zeno's book, is to combat those who made the one contradict and defeat itself. The eristic school's resemblance to Zeno does much to reveal the playfulness of the Platonic Parmenides' game which consists as much in its challenge to keep together two things which seem to want to go their separate ways as in its humourous allusion to the chariot ride of two perfectly yoked and obedient mares, described by that other Parmenides in the proem to his poem.

The metaphysical school differs from the logical in at least three respects. First, it stresses content over form. Hence, the teachings of the dialogue are not just positive but also profound. Second, the metaphysicians understand the subject of the hypotheses as ambiguous: One is more than one: a premiss the logical school cannot admit, for if the hypotheses are to be grouped as antinomies, the subject and predicate terms, at least within each antimony, must have one and only one meaning. If there is more than one meaning, there may be equivocation and the illusion of opposition but no real contradiction. Thus the last difference is, since it is not commited to strict symmetry, the metaphysical school can allow the Third to appear as a separate hypothesis; they

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9 Taylor (1916), p. 43.

10 A. E. Taylor (1926), p. 351; J. Burnet (1964), pp. 203, 213; H .F. Cherniss (1932), pp. 122-38.

count nine rather than eight hypotheses. This school houses the Neo-Platonists, the Hegelians, Transcendentalists, such as W. F. Lynch, Francis Cornford, Jean Wahl, W. F. R. Hardie.[11]

In general, the metaphysical school appeals to a higher principle in order to reconcile any apparent contradictions. The difficulty is, however, that the higher interpreters push the principle, the greater its unintelligibility in proportion to its distance from us. The student is still left bemused by the significance of the rather mundane events of the dialogue's first two parts and their connexion with the rarified atmosphere of high-powered intellect in the last part. For example, because one of the analogies Proclus offers to explain the gossipy coming-together of Socrates, Parmenides, Zeno, Pythodorus, Antiphon and the Claezomeneans is in terms of divine order and secondary powers, with Glaucon and Adeimantus as "guardians of mortal men" and the Dyad which issues from the One, the encounter is rendered even more opague than at first reading.[12] In similar fashion, Hardie, who classifies himself as Transcendentalist, insists that the First Hypothesis which is beyond all predicates is the same as the Good, described by Socrates in *Republic*. Apart from the dubious policy of explaining one dialogue in terms of another, if the One of the First Hypothesis resists all predication, save the One, on what grounds can it be called good?[13]

Why does Proclus' distinction, made fifteen centuries ago, remain valid? The reason is not terribly complicated. The degree of attention accorded the difference between Parmenides' description of the exercise and his execution of it determines the number of hypotheses counted, which, in turn, determines interpretation and school of thought. While many commentators have noted the discrepancy, and all have noted the problem of 155e4-157b5, the Third, few have thought as Sayre to arrange the hypotheses according to Parmenides' instructions rather than his enunciation and none have insisted that the Third manifests itself most appropriately in the gap opened by Parmenides' saying one thing and doing another.[14]

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[11] W. F. Lynch (1959); Francis Cornford (1939); Jean Wahl (1951); W. F. R. Hardie, (1936).

[12] Glenn R. Morrow and John M. Dillon (1987), p. 50 (663).
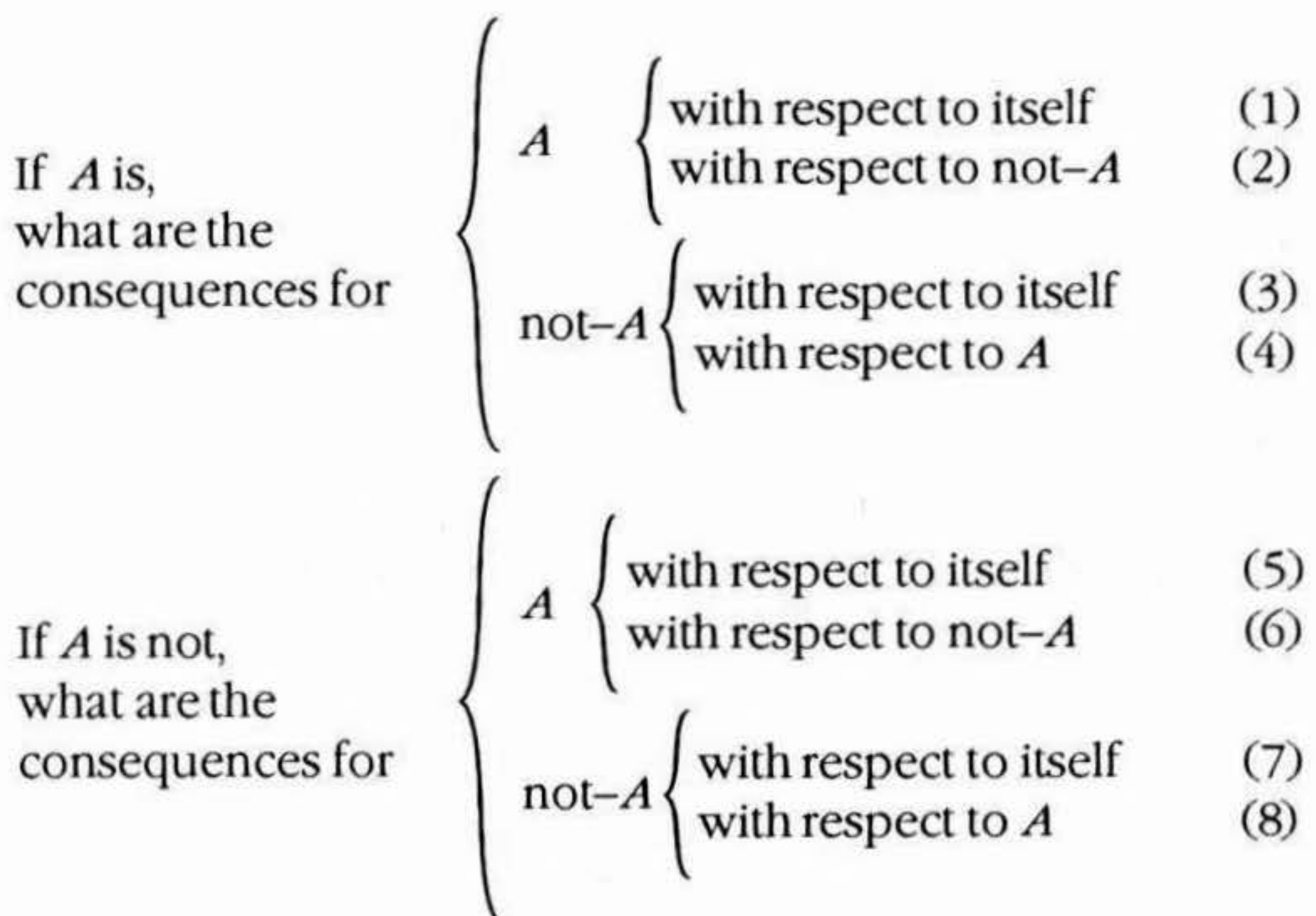
[13] Hardie, (1936), pp. 115-122.

[14] This paper was written before the publication of Meinwald (1991) which takes note of Sayre's organisation of the hypotheses. Further discussion of the book must wait for a subsequent paper.

Perhaps the clearest way to see Mr. Sayre's most pleasant resolution of the problem is to compare his understanding of the exercise with Parmenides' instructions, both in text and in diagram:

In the case of the supposition that plurality exists, for example, one must consider the consequences for these many things both with respect (1) to each other and (2) to Unity, and again for Unity with respect (3) to itself and (4) to the many. But further, 'Parmenides' insists at 136A, consequences in the same four respects must also be drawn from the opposite supposition that the plurality in question does not exist... Clearly, eight distinct stages are involved in this exercise: with reference to the character A, one is to consider the consequences of A's existing for A with respect (1) to itself and (2) not-A, and for not-A with respect (3) to itself and (4) to A, and further the consequences of A's not existing for A with respect (5) to itself and (6) to not-A, as well as for not-A with respect (7) to itself and (8) to A.[15]

One might diagram Sayre's understanding in the following manner:

FIG. 1

If A is, what are the consequences for	A	with respect to itself	(1)
		with respect to not-A	(2)
	not-A	with respect to itself	(3)
		with respect to A	(4)
If A is not, what are the consequences for	A	with respect to itself	(5)
		with respect to not-A	(6)
	not-A	with respect to itself	(7)
		with respect to A	(8)

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[15] Sayre (1978), p. 136.

Consider now the instructions Parmenides gives; he is both emphatic and explicit in setting out the exercise: he repeats it four times (135e8-136a2; 136a4-b1; 136b7-c5). Parmenides, acceding to Socrates' wishes, says the search (πλάνη) will deal not with visible things but with those things that speech and reason grasp most properly, and for which one might believe there are εἴδη. Parmenides continues, "But it is also necessary, in addition to that, to do this: to examine not only the consequences that follow from the hypothesis, supposing that each thing is but also if it is hypothesized that the same thing is not, if you want to be more thoroughly trained" (135e8-136a2). When Parmenides gives his most explicit description of the exercise, he uses Zeno's hypothesis as the example: "If many is, what must happen for the many themselves with respect to themselves and with respect to the one, and [what must happen] for the one, both with respect to itself and to the many. And again, if many is not, returning (πάλιν) to examine what will happen to the one and the many, both with respect to themselves and with respect to each other" (136a5-b1).[16]
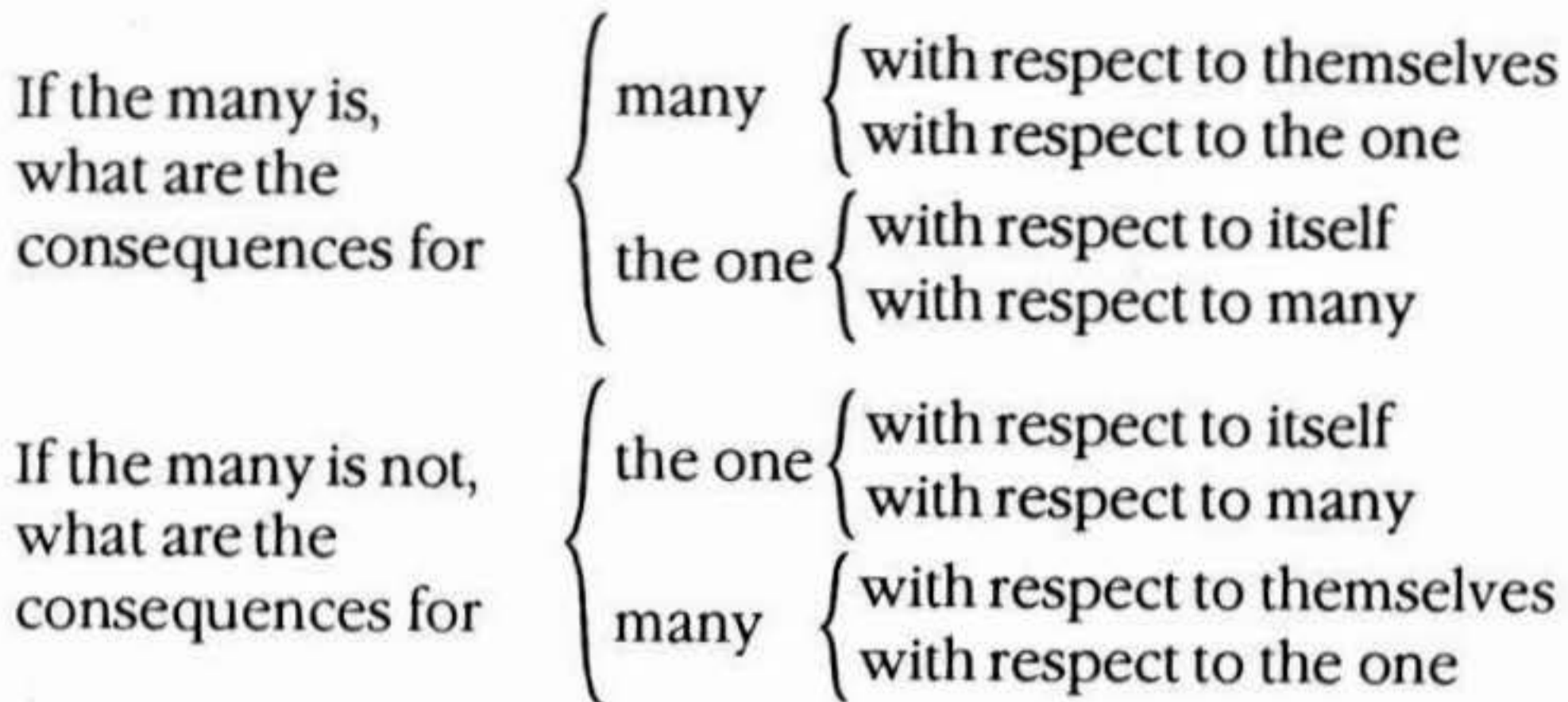
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[16] Cf. 142b1; 159b2; 163b7; 165e2. Sinaiko (1965), thinking perhaps some sly trick is afoot, is positively hawkeyed as he examines the instructions. He asserts that Parmenides gives three examples of the exercise, and that none are exactly the same in form (228). But they are, differing only as to the subject of hypothesis, whether many, same, non-same, motion, rest, being or non-being. Nor do the examples "disagree concerning the second term for which the consequences are to be examined" (229). The second term is always the other (ἄλλο) of the hypothetical term (136a4 ff), and in all three examples, the formal order of procedure is the same (see pp. 11-12 supra). Sinaiko disagrees, objecting that "the actual eight hypotheses which deal with 'the one,' draw consequences for 'the one' and 'the others,' but not for 'the one' and 'the many'" (229). But the others (τἄλλα) of the one are logically equivalent to the many, understood as non-one.

A diagram shows the exercise most clearly:

FIG. 2

If the many is, what are the consequences for	many	{ with respect to themselves / with respect to the one
	the one	{ with respect to itself / with respect to many
If the many is not, what are the consequences for	the one	{ with respect to itself / with respect to many
	many	{ with respect to themselves / with respect to the one

What contemporary commentators, including Sayre, fail to note is Parmenides' order of procedure: the negative hypotheses constitute a *return*.[17] That is, if we suppose that something is, that supposition is a beginning in which we examine what happens for it with respect to itself and with respect to things that are other than or opposed to it (ἄλλο, 136b3; 136c1). When, however, we return to the beginning, via the negative hypotheses, we examine *first* what was *last* in the positive hypotheses, viz., the consequences for the things that are other than the hypothetical subject, and *then*. for the hypothetical subject itself. Parmenides indicates this in the hypothesis of "the many is not" when he instructs that the consequences for the one be examined before the consequences for the many (136a7-b1). Moreover, the reflexive relationship itself to itself *always* comes first (136a5-b3; 136b7-c5).[18]

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[17] πάλιν is an adverb of place meaning back or backwards, from which its logical use is derived, meaning 'contradictory'; see Liddell & Scott, *s.v.* Moreover, if we consider the exercise in terms of matrix algebra, we see that the idea of a return or inversion depends upon the presupposition of an identity element. The use of πάλιν in Parmenides' instructions presupposes just such an element, viz., the hypothetical subject. Not everywhere there is identity is there necessarily inversion but everywhere there is inversion, there is always first identity. Parmenides gives an example of πάλιν in action in Hypothesis VI, when he discusses the δεσμοί that keep τὸ ὄν and τὸ μὴ ὄν chained in speech: τὸ ὄν has the οὐσία τοῦ εἶναι ὄν and the μὴ οὐσία τοῦ εἶναι μὴ ὄν while τὸ μὴ ὄν has the μὴ οὐσία τοῦ μὴ εἶναι μὴ ὄν and the οὐσία τοῦ εἶναι μὴ ὄν (162a-b). This reading does not follow Shorey.

[18] It is the priority of the relationship of the same to itself, even when same refers to its complement, i.e. the non-same or other. But someone might object to this em-

Before proceeding to the application of Parmenides' instructions to his actual demonstration, we must pause to draw attention to the matter of numbering the hypotheses. Mr. Sayre remarks that the Second Hypothesis is an exception to the rule that "each hypothesis yields consequences pertaining directly or indirectly" to a "set of characters," because it has an "addendum" which deals with "becoming in time."[19] In the dialogue, when Parmenides introduces this "addition," he says, "Further, let us say the Third," (τὸ τρίτον, 155e4), an exhortation that would appear to assign it a most deliberate number and place in the order of the hypotheses. In pronouncing the Third, Parmenides would seem to do more than simply report his action. Rather, the speech *is* the action. More than simply an "addition," it would seem to qualify as a separate hypothesis precisely for the reason that it is the only one designated by an ordinal number.[20] And so, persuaded by Parmenides "performative utterance,"[21] I propose to number the "addendum" Hypothesis III, but to leave it out of its place for the instant.

But how is it possible to assert the importance of the Third and then leave it out when discussing the exercise? Does not such behaviour signal a curious accord with the school of all those who deny τὸ τρίτον is the Third? The symmetry of the exercise will be preserved, or more precisely, the insignificance of the missing Third will be confirmed by the minor clerical annoyance of having to move Mr. Sayre's numbers up by

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phasis on πάλιν and the priority of the reflexive relationship, saying that it is possible to read "one and the many both with respect to themselves and with respect to each other" to mean the one in relation to itself, the many in relation to itself, the one in relation to the many and the many in relation to the one, in that order. It is a suggestion that must be rejected since it renders pointless Parmenides' instructions and destroys even the slightest pretence of symmetry that Parmenides sets up in the positive hypotheses which proceed *first* by the many with respect to themselves and with respect to the one and *then* the one with respect to itself and the many.

[19] Sayre (1978), p. 135. The set of ten characters is reminiscent of the Pythagorean list that Aristotle mentions in Book I of *Metaphysics,* 986a22 ff.

[20] This observation does not imply that the other hypotheses have nothing unique or proper to them; it says only that what is idiosyncratic of 155e4-157b5 is that it is "The Third."

[21] Copi (1986), p. 75.

one integer after the Second Hypothesis. Slender pickings indeed for such loud trumpeting of the Third!

And yet, in the absence of the Third, is the symmetry of the remaining eight preserved? Moreoever, insisting on the importance of the Third and leaving it out of the analysis of the formal structure of the exercise is not the same as assigning its number and place to another hypothesis. Absent, the Third calls attention to itself by disturbing the numbering of the hypotheses without obscuring the other eight.

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If we allow that ἕν = the one and πολλά = the many, the relationship between the three aspects of each hypothesis, as set forth in Parmenides' instructions can be schematized in the following manner:

FIG. 3

Positive Hypotheses				*Negative Hypotheses*	
I	πολλὰ πολλὰ πολλά		IX	~ πολλὰ πολλὰ ἕν	
II	πολλὰ πολλὰ ἕν		VIII	~ πολλὰ πολλὰ πολλά	
IV	πολλὰ ἕν ἕν		VII	~ πολλὰ ἕν πολλά	
V	πολλὰ ἕν πολλά		VI	~ πολλὰ ἕν ἕν	

Translating into ordinary speech, the First Hypothesis would read: If the many is, what are the consequences for the many with respect to itself? The Sixth Hypothesis would read: If the many is not, what are the consequences for the one with respect to itself? The same schema holds if the one is the hypothetical subject:

FIG. 4

Positive Hypotheses		*Negative Hypotheses*	
I	ἓν ἓν ἕν	IX	~ ἓν ἓν πολλά
II	ἓν ἓν πολλά	VIII	~ ἓν ἓν ἕν
IV	ἓν πολλὰ πολλά	VII	~ ἓν πολλὰ ἕν
V	ἓν πολλὰ ἕν	VI	~ ἓν πολλὰ πολλά

This is what Parmenides says to do but as Sayre's analysis shows, what Parmenides actually does is quite different (numbers in parentheses are Sayre's):

FIG. 5

Positive Hypotheses			*Negative Hypotheses*[22]		
I	ἓν ἓν ἕν	(1)	VI	~ ἓν ἓν πολλά	(5)
II	ἓν ἓν πολλά	(2)	VII	~ ἓν ἓν ἕν	(6)
V	ἓν πολλὰ ἕν	(3)	VIII	~ ἓν πολλὰ ἕν	(7)
IV	ἓν πολλὰ πολλά	(4)	IX	~ ἓν πολλὰ πολλά	(8)

It is interesting to note that although Parmenides' action produces a change of direction for the negative hypotheses, as indicated by the change in their numbering, they remain in the same places and hence, ordered to each other in the same respect. The real difficulty lies in what Parmenides has done to the exercise as a whole: there is literally no turn around to begin the return trip and hence no return because the Fourth Hypothesis is out of place; it is in the place of the Fifth.[23] Mr. Sayre also notices a problem in his pairing of the hypotheses but there the discrepancy, displaced from the Fourth and Fifth, is now reflected in his prob-

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[22] Sayre (1978), p. 140. Mr. Sayre too seems infected by Parmenides' contrariness: he does not follow his own order. Compare the difference in Fig. 1, Hypotheses (3) and (4) and Fig. 5, (3) and (4). Sinaiko observes that it is not accidental that the "consistently abstract and paradoxical" language of the exercise borders on "nonsense": "discourse itself comes perilously close to the breaking point when it is employed to articulate its own unavoidable presuppositions," and that in consequence, "the paradoxes and difficulties of the philosophical 'gymnastic' do not diminish, they increase as one comes to understand Parmenides better" (op. cit., p. 240).

[23] Cf. Parmenides, Fragment V.

lem with the Sixth and Seventh. He remarks that the apparent reversal of VI and VII remains a puzzle. He sees that it suggests the necessity to reverse I and II, in order to preserve the symmetry between the two sets of pairs, but he does not see that the small disorder, now forcing all the rest to accomodate themselves to its pattern, has crept in with the Fourth. And so he solves the problem by saying, "there is no reason why Plato could not have changed the order if he had thought it important."[24] Mr. Sayre would like the hypotheses to look like this (again, numbers in parentheses are Sayre's):

FIG. 6

Positive Hypotheses			*Negative Hypotheses*		
I	ἓν ἓν ἕν	(1)	VII	~ ἓν ἓν ἕν	(6)
II	ἓν ἓν πολλά	(2)	VI	~ ἓν ἓν πολλά	(5)
V	ἓν πολλὰ ἕν	(3)	VIII	~ ἓν πολλὰ ἕν	(7)
IV	ἓν πολλὰ πολλά	(4)	IX	~ ἓν πολλὰ πολλά	(8)

or this:

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[24] Sayre (1978), p. 141. In *Plato's Late Ontology*, Sayre says, "If the order of Hypotheses [(5) and (6)] had been reversed, the symmetry would be complete. There is no reason apparent in the dialogue why their order could not be reversed" (1983, p. 277, fn. 33). The difference between the earlier and the later quotations from Sayre is that what was a puzzle in 1978 is no longer in 1983. For Mr. Sayre, the tickle of the laborious game is apparently wearing thin. Miller (1986, p. 226, fn. 8) criticizes Sayre's reading of the exercise because he says it is not borne out by the text: "For instance, in Hypothesis I, which Sayre takes as considering the One only with reference to itself, the One is also, and explicitly, considered with reference to 'the other.'" Mr. Miller does not understand the logic of the exercise. Just because the others are explicitly referred to in the hypothesis does not mean that the hypothesis is not about the one with respect to itself. Since there are only two terms in each hypothesis, and the minimum number of terms for contact in a proposition is two (149a7), it will be impossible to speak of one term without reference to the other, but the reference is accidental. In Hypothesis I, the mention of the others, the better to deny that they have any relation to the one, is a denial and not an assertion, except *per accidens.* Hypothesis I does indeed consider the one with respect to itself, despite the mention of the others.

FIG. 7

Positive Hypotheses			*Negative Hypotheses*		
II	ἓν ἓν πολλά	(2)	VI	~ ἓν ἓν πολλά	(5)
I	ἓν ἓν ἕν	(1)	VII	~ ἓν ἓν ἕν	(6)
V	ἓν πολλὰ ἕν	(3)	VIII	~ ἓν πολλὰ ἕν	(7)
IV	ἓν πολλὰ πολλά	(4)	IX	~ ἓν πολλὰ πολλά	(8)

If either Fig. 6 or 7 is the case, the gap between what Parmenides says he will do and what he does yawns ever wider, for, logically speaking, the relations between negative and positive hypotheses become parallel rather than reflected images of each other, as Parmenides had promised. Reflected images, involving as they do left to right reversals, would seem more appropriate to a thoroughgoing examination between negative and positive hypotheses than parallel images in sequence.

Nevertheless, Kenneth Sayre's pairing of the hypotheses is insightful. There is no doubt that the first set I-VII and II-VI pairs well in terms of subject matter. The difficulty is, however, that his insight is bought at the price of ignoring what stares him in the face: the wrinkle that threatens the neat symmetry of the two sets of pairs.

The reason for Parmenides' apparent duplicity is not easily forthcoming without a thorough discussion of the hypotheses and their meaning, especially the Third. Such a discussion belongs most properly to a subsequent paper which would begin with the following question: Is the Third the only hypothesis whose subject matter, being neither the one itself nor the not-one itself but both, is therefore never itself?

For the present what can be said is that the venerable Parmenides, hoary with age, yet still beautiful and good to look at (127b1-3) seems a dreadful liar: after allowing himself to be petitioned and cajoled by the assembled company and promising to satisfy those petitions (136c6-e9), he sets out an exercise that he does not follow. He not only changes the order of hypotheses, he either makes an exception of the Second by an addition or he adds an extra hypothesis, and he does this, as the dialogue shows us, immediately upon announcing the Third.

The way to the solution of the pairing of the hypotheses would seem to be inextricably linked to an adequate interpretation of the Third; any-

thing else seems bound to follow the road of Miss Mary Quite-Contrary.[25]

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[25] But of all those concerned to unravel the puzzle, perhaps none has been so paradigmatic of the problem of the dialogue, as it is reflected in its commentators, as Luc Brisson (1977). Brisson employs linguistic statistics to see whether the Third Hypothesis distinguishes itself stylistically enough to warrant allowing it to disturb the symmetry by its independent status. He discovers several anomalies, the most striking of which is a sample of thirty-two words that appear in every hypothesis *except* the Third (24), yet he chooses to view the results as not attesting to the independent status of 155e4-157b5. Such a denial that a demonstration is a demonstration is contrariety itself.

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