In Defense of Plato's Intermediates

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ABSTRACT

Once we realize that the indivisible and infinitely repeatable One of the arithmetic lesson in *Republic7* is generated by διάνοια at *Parmenides* 143a6-9, it becomes possible to revisit the Divided Line's Second Part and see that Aristotle's error was not to claim that Plato placed Intermediates between the Ideas and sensible things but to restrict that class to the mathematical objects Socrates used to explain it. All of the One-Over-Many Forms of *Republic10* that Aristotle, following Plato, attacked with the Third Man, are equally dependent on Images and above all on the Hypothesis of the One (*Republic* 510b4-8).

Keywords: Intermediates, Problem of the One and the Many, διάνοια, Plato's Theory of Ideas, Plato's Philosophy of Mathematics.

https://doi.org/10.14195/2183-4105_20_11

In "The Forms, the Form of the Good, and the Desire for the Good, in Plato's *Republic*," Terry Penner breaks with his teachers Gilbert Ryle and G. E. L. Owen because unlike them, he is not "content to have Plato hold a view that was entirely absurd," i.e., what he calls "the 'Paradeigmatist, Self-Predicational' (PSP) View of the Forms."[1]

In accordance with PSP, the Idea of the Good is "itself perfectly good;" against it, he uses the standard example ("largeness perfectly large") to illustrate the absurdity of self-predication.[2] He responds to those who distinguish the Good, the Beautiful, and the Just as *legitimate* instances of PSP from "forms of artifacts" and "largeness, thickness, equality, and likeness" in a lengthy footnote, the last sentence of which is: "I am unclear what evidence normally deployed to show the presence of self-predication in Plato would allow an interpreter to just pick and choose which Forms he or she will call self-predicational and which not."[3] Although it may not be "normally deployed," the evidence that allows *this* interpreter to "pick and choose" is that Plato did not regard "the Good, the Beautiful, and the Just" as Intermediates.

The necessary first step in defending the Intermediates has now become the hardest: only if there are fully transcendent Platonic Ideas can there be anything between them and sensible objects, which is exactly what Aristotle tells that τὰ μεταξύ are.[4] Offsetting this difficulty is the current plausibility of a moderate realism that tends to construe the Platonic Ideas as abstracted concepts. As J. T. Barron put it:

> The best argument against extreme realism is the exposition of moderate realism. That theory accounts for the existence of concepts; it maintains that while our concepts are abstract and universal only individual things exist in the objective order.[5]

As proved by Penner's "largeness, thickness, equality, and likeness," the artifacts of "moderate realism" of which it would be absurd to predicate PSP can be used to discredit Plato's "extreme" version, if, that is, we deny him the capacity to distinguish them. While a critique like Barron's or Penner's withholds from Plato the ability to conceive of concepts in accordance with this "moderate realism," it was the inventor of the Intermediates, necessarily a Platonist, who could affirm that "our *concepts* are abstract and universal" without maintaining that "only individual things exist in the objective order." He did so in the Divided Line.

To prove that Plato distinguished the Ideas from the Intermediates is this paper's purpose, and the problem is an old one.[6] In defense of the Intermediates, the gymnastic exercise performed on a series of hypotheses about the One in the second half of *Parmenides* constitutes a new place to begin. As Father Parmenides says to Young Socrates: "before having been exercised, you are attempting to define something beautiful and just and good and each of the forms too soon."(*Parm.* 135c8-d1)[7] These exercises, and the Ideas to which they are merely propaedeutic, point to the dialogue's unifying purpose. This paper's central claim is that the One—the lowly monad of the arithmetic lesson in *Republic* 7 (*Rep.* 523a1-526b4), not the metaphysical ἀρχή of the *Prinzipienlehre*—is not a Form like Beauty, Justice, and the Good, but is an Intermediate instead. In the context of the crucial difference between the Ideas and the Intermediates in this enigmatic dialogue, the crucial passage is *Parmenides* 143a6-9:

> The one itself [αὐτὸ τὸ ἕν] which we have said partakes of being [οὐσίας μετέχειν], if we were to take it by διάνοια [i.e., to λαμβάνειν διάνοιᾳ] alone by itself [μόνον καθ' αὑτό] without that of which we've said it partakes [ἄνευ τούτου οὗ φαμεν μετέχειν, i.e., ἄνευ οὐσίας] would this very thing [αὐτό] show itself as One only [ἓν μόνον], or also Many?[8]

Three things, then, must be emphasized about the resulting τὸ ἕν: it would be ἓν μόνον and could not be Many, it is a product of διάνοια, and it is ἄνευ οὐσίας. I am claiming that it is also the paradigmatic and archaic Intermediate (in the sense of being the ἀρχή of all the rest) and also the bridge that connects Aristotle's testimony—that famously confines τὰ μεταξύ to τὰ μαθηματικά—with the kind of "one over many" (*Rep.* 596a5-11) "moderate realism" that I am claiming Plato was the first to discover, not in spite of his "extreme realism" with the respect to the Idea of the Good, but because of it.

The "Scope of the Forms" passage in the first part of *Parmenides* is therefore better understood as devoted to the complementary task of determining "the Scope of the Intermediates."[9] When Parmenides asks Socrates which of four classes contain the kind of objects that the youngster is "distinguishing, as you say, apart [χωρίς]" (*Parm.* 130b2), Socrates hesitates after the first two classes (*Parm.* 130c3-4, beginning with ἐν ἀπορίᾳ), and even more after the third (*Parm.* 130d3-8)—the first including one and many (*Parm.* 130b3-5), the second comprising "some kind of form itself of just, in itself, and beautiful, and good, and again of all such things" (*Parm.* 130b7-9), the third including man (*Parm.* 130c1-2), and the fourth, hair (*Parm.* 130c5-d2). Important for the fate of the Intermediates, Parmenides ascribes to inexperience Socrates' hesitation between the third and fourth of these classes. On the basis of this passage, David Sedley contrasts *Parmenides*—which he takes "to advocate a comprehensive widening of the range of Forms"—with the middle books of the *Republic*,[10] advancing forward from the classic "one-over-many" passage in *Republic* 10 (on which see more below), and reaches an appropriate conclusion in his article's last word:

> One may then feel that Plato's theory of Forms did in the end [sc. in *Parm.*] metamorphose into a general theory of universals, but only at the price of leaving to one side the Forms' metaphysical transcendence. That outcome, if it is indeed Plato's eventual preference, is better understood when we have examined its background in the *Republic* with due attention, and established that the classical theory of Forms exhibited there, with its emphasis on transcendence, was very careful *not to allow the Forms this unrestricted range*.[11]

Sedley is right: If *Parmenides* does "advocate a comprehensive widening of the range of Forms" (which is exactly what I am claiming it doesn't) the result—i.e., "leaving to one side the Forms' metaphysical transcendence"—would indeed result in "a general theory of universals," i.e., the metamorphosis or transformation of the no longer transcendent Ideas into Intermediates, each in accordance with "the One-Over-Many Principle," and each susceptible to the Third Man Argument as a direct result.

Instead of building too much on Father Parmenides' avuncular insinuation that Socrates would be more sympathetic to applying his breakthrough to general concepts like

man and mud if he were more experienced (*Parm.* 130e1-4), the real problem is not the youngster's hesitation about such things, but rather his *lack* of hesitation with respect to the difference between the first class (*Parm.* 130b6) and the second. In other words, if he had grasped that the Good, the Just, and the Beautiful were χωρίς in a way that, e.g., "one" (*Parm.* 130b5) is not, if he had been able to distinguish the second class from the three others—and from the first in particular (*Parm.* 130b3-5)—there would have been no need for exercising on the One *before* turning to the triad of transcendent and therefore properly Platonic and "self-predicating" Ideas. Although general concepts like "man" and "hair" are clearly necessary for *discussing* such things (cf. *Parm.* 135b5-c5, especially ἡ τοῦ διαλέγεσθαι δύναμις at 135c1-2), they are no more χωρίς than Penner's "the large,"[12] and at the root of all such "one over many" abstractions is necessarily the One, identified in *Parmenides* as a product of διάνοια. And the expression λαμβάνειν διάνοιᾳ reappears in the Third and Seventh Hypotheses,[13] where "taking in thought" will result in the ἄπειρον πλήθει, i.e., that which is "indefinite in multitude."

By tying both the One and the ἄπειρον πλήθει (which I take to be a semi-textual version of "the Indefinite Dyad")[14] to διάνοια in *Parmenides*, Plato has given us another reason to distinguish the Good from the One: the first is "beyond" (*Rep.* 509b8) the second "without" οὐσία (*Parm.* 143a8).[15] But what makes the role of διάνοια in *Parmenides* even more important than its application to both elements of the *Prinzipienlehre* is that διάνοια appears even more prominently in *Republic* 6, where it is identified with the Second Part of the Divided Line (*Rep.* 511d6-e2). But even though this famous passage identifies διάνοια as its basis, Socrates does not *specifically* mention the One among the various hypotheses on which the dianoetic method depends. Nevertheless, its presence among them could have been divined: just as there can't be three kinds of angles without the concept of "angularity,"[16] so too there cannot be "the Odd and the Even," i.e., number,[17] without the One, the utterly simple, infinitely repeatable product of διάνοια—identified as such at *Parmenides* 143a6-9—discussed at length in the arithmetic lesson of *Republic* 7. This One is the ἀρχή of Plato's Intermediates: the *fons et origo* of them all. On the basis of "the One-Over-Many Principle," the One is the logical basis of every product of "moderate realism."

The proof-text for the claim that Plato did not employ a technical vocabulary is Socrates' diffidence about the word διάνοια in *Republic* 7 (*Rep.* 533d6-9), a characteristically Platonic joke because διάνοια—not ἰδέα, εἶδος, or οὐσία—is the most important example of Plato's use of "technical vocabulary" in the dialogues. It is because διάνοια is a special case that Plato made it conspicuous by having Socrates deny its importance: in the present context, it is the word that connects the Divided Line to the One thanks to *Parmenides*.[18] And once that connection has been made, we begin to see why arithmetic and geometry are merely the *examples* Socrates uses to illustrate the dependence on Images and Hypotheses that characterizes the Second Part of the Line:[19] it is just as impossible to imagine "the square itself . . . and diagonal itself" (*Rep.* 510d7-8) without a mental or diagrammed image as it is to imagine the "Platonic Idea" of a man, the shuttle, or the couch,[20] of the triad, equality, or bigness, without a mental image of a man or a shuttle, or without the unifying hypothesis that there is one "bigness" from which "the big in us" derives.[21]

There are four common errors that short-circuit the proper understanding of διάνοια and the Second Part of the Divided Line. Given the influence of Anglo-American analytic philosophy, "first for us" is the twentieth-century claim that we are hypothesizing propositions or definitions in this part of the Line.[22] Against this view, it is rather that we are hypothesizing the *existence* of Intermediates,[23] especially the unnamed One that makes all the rest of them possible. It is important to emphasize that it is the One's existence that we are hypothesizing and indeed *need* to hypothesisize: it is only by abstracting its οὐσία (hence ἄνευ τούτου οὗ φαμεν μετέχειν, i.e. its οὐσίας) from αὐτὸ τὸ ἕν that we obtain ἓν μόνον (*Parm.* 143a6-8). To be sure, the passage in *Parmenides* that follows these words will open a can of worms,[24] but the initial creation of the One is the crucial thing, and this text has been overlooked in previous discussions of the status of Intermediates in Plato. What makes this especially unfortunate is that without the hypothetical One—intelligible image of the abstracted individuality of each and every sensible thing—there can be no other Intermediates. First came the One, then the "two" of "the Odd and the Even," then the "three kinds of angles" and then the ten thousand shapes or σχήματα that follow in their wake.[25]

This mode of expression brings us to the second and oldest error about the Intermediates, particularly important because Aristotle, whose testimony in support of the Intermediates is obviously crucial, confined their scope to mathematical objects, presumably borrowing from the kind of examples Plato used in the Divided Line but without Plato's own use of the Second Part's methodological dependence on Images and Hypotheses (*Rep.* 510b4-8) to define them. Precisely because the First Part of the Line will access the Idea of the Good (cf. *Rep.* 511b5-6 and *R.* 532a5-b2) and the Third Part consists of visible/sensible objects, the Second Part of the Line is obviously *between* them (μεταξύ), thus confirming Aristotle's claims. But since Aristotle rejected the Idea of the Good, and refuted the other "Forms" by means of "the Third Man," he fails to realize that the Scope of the Intermediates extends beyond τὰ μαθηματικά and includes all of those conceptual or merely dianoetic objects that are based on the One-Over-Many Principle. It cannot be overemphasized that Socrates uses geometry and arithmetic (beginning at *Rep.* 510c1) to illustrate a perfectly general account based on only the use of Hypotheses and Images (*Rep.* 510b4-8) that Glaucon fails to understand (*Rep.* 510b9); so far the text of the Line.

My further claim is that, e.g., the "the Form of Couch" (cf. *Rep.* 597a1-2), while belonging among what is intelligible rather than the visible (*Rep.* 509d1-8), nevertheless cannot be conceived (and more specifically, that means to conceive or "to take it by διάνοια") without an intelligible Image of a couch that captures its σχῆμα—understood both as the "form, shape, figure" of a couch and the "characteristic property"[26] of all such couches—a process that depends on the Hypothesis of the One, in this case, the one σχῆμα that all couches must share if they are rightly to be called "couches."[27] In reply, then, to Aristotle's question: "How then are the Ideas the substances no things [πῶς ἂν αἱ ἰδέαι οὐσίαι τῶν πραγμάτων] while being separate [οὖσαι χωρὶς εἶεν]?"[28] Answer: αἱ ἰδέαι aren't the οὐσίαι τῶν πραγμάτων and that's why they're χωρίς; the Intermediates are, and that's why they aren't.

The third error is less fundamental but far more sophisticated, which in this context means something like "modern," albeit older than the first error. In order to refute Aristotle's testimony, it became common to

argue that the First and Second Parts of the Line do not consider two different kinds of objects but rather the same objects by two different methods.[29] Given the exalted ontological status of the Ideas in Platonism, and the implications of ἄνευ οὐσίας in the passage from *Parmenides* I am emphasizing, this is a particularly unfortunate error. To begin with, assuming from the start that τὰ μαθηματικά are Forms is—with respect to the *debate* about Intermediates—begging the question.[30] Nevertheless, the Line has led some to dream of a purified mathematics,[31] where "the square itself" would need neither its diagrammed Image nor the initial Hypothesis that creates the four points at its corners. It may be difficult to sort out what it means that the objects of the Second stand to those of the First—starting with the Idea of the Good[32]—as shadows do to the things between them and the sun,[33] but there is no way that shadows and things are the same objects considered in two different aspects.[34]Finally, there is the top-down error of using "the image-original hierarchies in Plato's metaphysics," configuring sensible objects as equally the images of Forms, and thus making the puppets and fire "the same sorts of objects as the shadows and reflections outside the cave."[35] The reason that the Intermediates require the use of Images is because διάνοια abstracts intelligible εἴδη from visible things; this is why Plato has Socrates insist so emphatically that the First Part of the Divided Line makes no use whatsoever of anything sensible (*Rep.* 511c1). But instead of allowing Plato to embrace a moderate realism in the case of Intermediates, those who wish to refute Platonism prefer a lush and over-populated "two-world" conception of "the Forms." As exemplified by arithmetic, however, the purpose of the Intermediates is to lead us up to the Ideas (*R.* 525d5-8), not to mediate their descent into the shadows as the οὐσίαι τῶν πραγμάτων or the causes of coming-to-be or passing away (*Phd.* 95e8-96a1): it the philosopher who returns to the Cave in Plato's *Republic*, not "the Theory of Forms."[36]

It is because we need to know where to draw the line that Plato asks us to recognize that the Second Sailing in Plato's *Phaedo* implements the Second, not the highest part of the Divided Line. When Socrates talks there about looking at things in *images*,[37] and about *hypothesizing* "there to be something beautiful in and of itself and good and big,"[38] not only is our knowledge of both the Line and *Parmenides* being tested, but the methods that create the Intermediates are being applied to more than τὰ μαθηματικά. I therefore reject the hermeneutic principle that prevents us from reading *Phaedo* in the light of *Republic*,[39] *Phaedrus*,[40] *Parmenides*,[41] and all the rest of Plato's dialogues.[42] By the time we are ready to say a last farewell to Socrates,[43] we must know that "the Triad" is not one thing.[44] And since the famous "Third Man" is based on "the big" in *Parmenides* (*Parm.* 132a1-b2), the "big in us"[45] is not the shadow of "the big"; the "big itself" is a one-over-many abstraction from the various things we call "big." There has been a long-standing debate about "the equals themselves" in *Phaedo*,[46] but it is not the problem but rather the Platonic solution: without plurality, there is no legitimate way to describe "equality" or "the equal itself,"[47] which, as Aristotle knew, cannot be one,[48] erring only in assuming that by knowing this he was refuting Plato.[49] The crucial point, then, is that the Intermediates (like αὐτὰ τὰ ἴσα) are not Ideas: *Ideas are not hypothesized images of sensible things gathered into unitary concepts.*[50] When "the big" is considered as a separate Platonic Idea, "the Third Man" can explode it because such a "big" would neces-

sarily resemble "the big in us" (i.e., the various instances of it) conceived in accordance with the top-down "image-original hierarchies in Plato's metaphysics." But the motion in the Divided Line is pedagogical and (as it were) "bottom-up," with its First Part culminating with an ascent (cf. ἡ ἄνω ἀνάβασις at *R.* 517b4) to the un-hypothetical (*Rep.* 511b5).

The Final Argument in *Phaedo* therefore proves to be Plato's final exam, and we will only pass it if we have learned to distinguish the transcendent Platonic Ideas from his Intermediates. Although he does not make it easy, it is an exam for which he has carefully prepared us. When Socrates refers to the two and the four in the plural and the three and the five as singular,[51] we are being prompted to recall that every number is necessarily a plurality, and that's why One is not a number, odd or otherwise (*Hipp. mai.* 202a4-5). After all, the arithmetic lesson in *Republic* 7 is devoted to driving home this important if apparently pedestrian truth,[52] and thus we have been given ample training for seeing why "the triad" along with "the equal itself" is not an Idea. "A one out of many" is not one—there are two of these along the Shorter Way (*Rep.* 435d2-3 and *R.* 504b2), first a Man (*Rep.* 443e1-2), then a City (*Rep.* 462b1-2)—and that whenever someone tries to divide the one, Plato's students, as experts in this utterly simple subject, multiply intead (*R.* 525d8-e3).[53] We learn there about "the one itself" (αὐτο τὸ ἕν at *Rep.* 525d9) and thus that "itself" is not the marker of a Form,[54] for every number is necessarily composed of a plurality of such ones.[55] But thanks to λαμβάνειν διάνοιᾳ in *Parmenides*, each of these infinitely repeatable and always self-same Ones will necessarily be ἓν μόνον, and they will reappear as the philosopher's monads in *Philebus* (*Phil.* 56d1-e6)—for philosophers don't count cows (hence βοῦς at *Phil.* 56d11)—each one of them equal to all the rest of them (*Phil.* 56e2-3).

But when "one cow" (ἓν βοῦς) makes its first appearance in *Philebus* in the company of other things we have posited (τίθεσθαι at *Phil.* 15a5)—the one man, the one beautiful, and the one good (*Phil.* 15a5-6)—Socrates begins one of the most controversial passages in the dialogue,[56] itself about the controversy that arises about such unities (ἕναδες at *Phil.* 15a6-7), with this: "First whether one ought to suppose that there are any such unities [μονάδες] truly in existence" (*Phil.* 15b1-2). The hotly debated question of whether there are two questions or only one in the passage that follows (*Phil.* 15b2-c3) can be sidestepped by answering this first, unanswered,[57] question in the negative:[58] as the later appearance of βοῦς will prove (cf. *Phil.* 15a5 and 56d11), none of the four are μονάδες: two of them are transcendent Ideas—one introduced in *Symposium*, the other in *Republic* 6-7—and two of them are hypothesis-based, image-dependent, and one-over-many Intermediates, i.e., ἕναδες.[59]

Among the many similar lists in *Phaedo*—the first of them includes only the Good, the Just, and the Beautiful (*Phaid.* 65c5-d10)—the funniest is when Socrates proposes the consideration of health, size, and strength without reference to bodies (*Phaid.* 65d11-6).[60] Here we are being asked to draw the line, and Plato has helped us to see where to do so in the classic one-over-many passage from *Republic* 10 (*Rep.* 596a5-b3):[61] "We customarily posit [τίθεσθαι] a single εἶδος in connection with each of the many things to which we apply the same name" (*Rep.* 596a6-8). Here the sensible things come first, then comes the general name we give them when we learn to talk, and finally comes the εἶδος that must stand behind our ability to name these things. When Socrates then gives an example of "our usual procedure"

(*Rep.* 596a5-6) by using the word "to posit" (τίθεσθαι at *Rep.* 596a7) a second time—"then let's posit [θῶμεν] now any of the manys you like" (*Rep.* 596a10)—he uses couches and tables as his examples, well chosen since neither can be imagined without a visual εἶδος.[62] And in *Phaedrus* (249b5-c6),[63] Socrates will supply the back-story for the intrinsically human capacity that makes one-over-many Intermediates like "the one cow" or "the couch itself" possible:

> *Socrates*: For the soul which has never seen the truth can never pass into human form. For it is necessary for human being to understand what is said in accordance with a form [κατ' εἶδος], going from many [ἐκ πολλῶν] perceptions into one [εἰς ἕν] collected by reasoning [λογισμός].[64]

This passage perfectly illustrates the crucial role that Plato's Intermediates play in human thought and discourse.

At this point, another application of λογισμός is appropriate. There are three classes of Intermediates in the dialogues, only one of which is Aristotle's τὰ μαθηματικά. Despite the inadequacy of this restriction, Aristotle's emphasis on this class is nevertheless crucial for defending τὰ μεταξύ,[65] and it is by connecting the arithmetic lesson of *Republic* 7 and the philosopher's monads of *Philebus* to the Second Part of the Divided Line by the use of λαμβάνειν διάνοιᾳ in *Parmenides* that we can prove, beginning with the One, that διάνοια posits intelligible objects that are neither the un-hypothetical Ideas of the Line's highest Part "having no connection whatsoever with visible things" (*R.* 511c1) nor the sensible things, the existence of which we take on faith in the Third Part (πίστις at *Rep.* 511e1). The reason that the Second and Third Parts of the Line are equal in length is because its objects *are* connected to "visible things":[66] there is an intelligible image, dependent on an act of dianoetic abstraction, and based on a posited unity, for a class of sensible objects collected by λογισμός, and thus by "going from many perceptions into one collected by reasoning" (*Phaidr.* 249b7-c1). These, then, constitute the second class: the one-over-many Intermediates that allow us "to understand what is said" (cf. *Parm.* 135b5-c5 and *Phil.* 16c9)—and that means what is said about the objects of the Third Part of the Line—"in accordance with a form [κατ' εἶδος]" (*Phaidr.* 249b7). Consider, then, the passage that follows:

> *Socrates*: And this is a recollection [ἀνάμνησις] of those things which our soul once beheld, when it journeyed with God and, lifting its vision above the things which we now say exist [ἃ νῦν εἶναί φαμεν], rose up into real being [τὸ ὂν ὄντως]. And therefore it is right that the thought of the philosopher [ἡ τοῦ φιλοσόφου διάνοια] only has wings, for he is always, so far as he is able, in communion through memory [μνήμη] with those things the communion with which causes God to be divine (*Phaidr.* 249c1-6).[67]

The philosopher's διάνοια takes wing only because our μνήμη of the Ideas (*Phaidr.* 249c4-5) makes "the moderate realism" of the Second Part of the Divided Line possible. This is why the relationship between the Second and the First Parts of the Line really is the same as that between the Fourth and the sensible objects of the Third (*Rep.* 509e8-510a3): what makes the objects of διάνοια merely the shadows of τὸ ὂν ὄντως is that *the capacity to posit them* depends on our ἀνάμνησις of the Ideas. "The moderate realism" of διάνοια is the shadow-

-image of our noetic access to "the extreme realism" that allowed Plato to discover the Intermediates, or rather—since human thought and language had always already depended on the one-over-many products of "moderate realism"—to discover that such concepts *are* Intermediates.[68]

Before naming and discussing the third class of Intermediates it is necessary to bring John Cook Wilson (1849-1915) out of the notes and into the text. In his 1904 article "On the Platonist Doctrine of the ἀσύμβλητοι ἀριθμοί," Cook Wilson used Glaucon's use of the word νοητόν (*Rep*. 511d2) as proof that the objects of the Second Part of the Divided Line were not Intermediates but Ideas:

> It follows of course that an object of διάνοια when its full nature is apprehended, when, that is, its connection with the true ἀρχή is seen, is νοητόν in the higher sense, i.e. object of νοῦς; and this is exactly what Plato says:—καίτοι νοητῶν ὄντων μετ' ἀρχῆς. This is a confirmation of the view that the objects of διάνοια are ἰδέαι, for nothing but an ἰδέα can be object of νοῦς.[69]

Leaving aside the problematic textual basis of Cook Wilson's claim,[70] the important thing is what numbers become when they are not Intermediates, i.e., no longer merely congeries of dianoetic Ones. His article's title points to Cook Wilson's answer: they are Aristotle's "uncombinable" or "inassociable numbers" (ἀσύμβλητοι ἀριθμοί), and each of them is therefore a unified plurality. Unlike "dianoetic" or "monadic" ἀριθμοί, Ideal Numbers as ἀσύμβλητοι cannot be combined. In accordance with what Cook Wilson, channeling Aristotle, considers to be "Platonist doctrine," each is a unitary and unique Platonic Idea, and therefore badly suited for the operations of arithmetic, which require numbers to be both combinable and divisible. These ἀσύμβλητοι ἀριθμοί introduce the last class of the Intermediates, but before elucidating, it is important to grasp the importance of Cook Wilson's attack on the Intermediates, and with respect to its U. S. reception, the towering figure is Harold Cherniss.[71] Through Cherniss's student R. E. Allen, Cook Wilson's views guide the fullest discussion of the critical passage in *Parmenides*,[72] and his influence reaches further.[73]

Although not specifically related to the Second Part of the Divided Line, the view that Ideal Numbers are part of "Platonist Doctrine" constitutes a fifth error related to the four others about the Intermediates listed above. Previous attempts to defend the Intermediates have been based on the view that Plato's "Theory of Numbers" included at least two classes of them: the monadic Intermediates and the ἀσύμβλητοι ἀριθμοί,[74] i.e., that the latter are part of Platonist *doctrine*. This explains why the Intermediates have never been properly defended: as Cook Wilson saw, if Plato's numbers are ἀσύμβλητοι ἀριθμοί, they are not Intermediates, and thus Intermediates do not exist. No doubt guided by the juxtaposition or compresence of τὰ τρία and ἡ τριάς in *Phaedo*,[75] Aristotle maintained that Plato had two distinct conceptions of number of which only one was intrinsically plural or μοναδικός (i.e., composed of a plurality of μονάδες) and the other where unitary numbers are ἀσύμβλητοι, or what he called τὸ εἰδητικὸν ἀριθμόν. Many interpreters have excluded only the first.[76]

A proper defense of the Intermediates maintains the opposite: numbers are intrinsically "combinable" and the notion that a plurality can meaningfully be a unity is

exactly the notion that the arithmetic lesson in *Republic* 7 is designed to eradicate. Plato tests whether we have learned that lesson in *Phaedo*, for if we think its Final Argument "works," we have not learned how to distinguish the transcendent Ideas from the merely propaedeutic Intermediates. Without denying, then, that we can find a unitary "equality" and "the equal," as well as "the triad" and even "the idea of three" in the Final Argument,[77] their appearance there is Plato's "last word" on the subject only to the extent that such expressions constitute a Final Exam for which the Divided Line of *Republic* 6, the arithmetic lesson of *Republic* 7, the generation of the One in *Parmenides,* and the philosopher's monads in *Philebus* have prepared us. No matter how useful "the triad" may be for explaining how what look very much like Ideas can occupy sensible things and thus explain the causes of coming-to-be and passing-away, i.e., of Becoming, it does not exist, for three is necessarily plural, and only the One is meaningfully unitary, although scarcely unique (*Rep.* 526a3-4 and *Phil.* 56e2-3).

What makes the third class of Intermediates tricky is not only that they don't exist—in comparison with the Ideas, the other two classes of Intermediates don't either—but that they are pedagogical constructions that were designed to be self-contradictory, and therefore *could not possibly exist*. They are components of Platonic *pedagogy*, not "Platonist Doctrine." The Problem of the One and the Many is not solved by showing how the Many can be unified or how, e.g., Aristotle's οὐσία can still remain "one" while having many parts and attributes, and being a composite of both form and matter.[78] Unlike Aristotle, Plato did not discard the Problem of the One and the Many; it remained an intractable fact that he solved by means of a necessarily immaterial One that could not possibly be Many, but which purchased its unity at the expense of its sensible or worldly existence. Since purpose of geometry, like arithmetic, is to draw the student's διάνοια away from Becoming to Being *(Rep.* 527b6-10), this was a perfectly Platonic project. But while unquestionably *beyond* οὐσία in Aristotle's sense of the word, the One's origin in διάνοια distinguishes it from the Idea of the Good. In Plato's pedagogical economy, then, the equation of the Idea of the Good with the One is the kind of deliberate self-contradiction of which the third class of Intermediates—"uncombinable" numbers[79] and "indivisible lines"[80]—are mere avatars. If we fail to distinguish the One from the Many, we might well imagine that a number is one, that one is a number (most likely an odd one), that the point is really a line, and that any line could possibly be indivisible. More importantly, if we fail to distinguish the One from the Many, we might imagine that the archaic principle of the Second Part of the Divided Line was identical with the culminating τέλος of its First Part, for only then could we possibly believe that the Idea of the Good is the One.

It is important to understand why Plato did not make it easy for someone to prove that τὰ μαθηματικά are not Ideas. In educating the youth, the abstractions of mathematics are useful and indeed necessary for breaking down a natural attachment to "the things we now have said to be" (ἃ νῦν εἶναί φαμεν at *Phaidr.* 249c3). In leading students up to "the extreme realism" of the Idea of the Good that is ἐπέκεινα τῆς οὐσίας (*Rep.* 509b8), it was inadvisable to state openly that the objects of "moderate realism," starting with the One, are ἄνευ οὐσίας, so Plato doesn't.[81] He rather made us discover the truth by creating some deliberate self-contradictions that would teach

us where to draw the line for ourselves.[82] These would simultaneously resemble τὰ μαθηματικά *and* the Ideas, thereby negating the distinction between them, and thus the Intermediates. One such self-contradiction is "the boundlessly many one" that immediately precedes the first appearance of λαμβάνειν διάνοιᾳ in *Parmenides*: the "one that is" of the Second Hypothesis has just been shown to be "boundless in multitude [ἄπειρον τὸ πλῆθος]."[83] And matching the singular "the triad" and "equality itself" of *Phaedo* are the "indivisible lines" and the ἀσύμβλητοι ἀριθμοί of which Aristotle speaks: negating the logical essence of the Intermediates, these "anti-Intermediate Intermediates" treat mathematical manys as ones, challenging Plato's students to deny their existence, as indeed Aristotle did,[84] albeit while imagining that he was refuting Plato rather than passing one of his many tests.[85]

The path that leads to Tübingen regards Ideal Numbers as the first offspring of the marriage of the One and Indefinite Dyad,[86] the former no longer the pedagogically invaluable One of *Republic* 7, *Parmenides*, and *Philebus*, but the Unifying Principle of the *Prinzipienlehre* whose derivations,[87] shadows, echoes, or emanations,[88] allowed so many of Plato's followers to turn the greatest follower of Socrates[89] into a neo-Presocratic cosmologist,[90] for qua uni-verse, the κόσμος is the ultimate One out of Many, i.e., the antithesis of the One as Intermediate. No text in Plato bears witness to this cosmological One: it truly is "unwritten." So too is Aristotle's claim that Plato had two distinct conceptions of number. In defense of the Intermediates, I am claiming, on the basis of what Plato did write, that all numbers are necessarily both plural and monadic, i.e., composed of nonexistent but pedagogically emancipatory monads. As for Aristotle's further claims about Plato's "philosophy of mathematics," the unwritten ones among them functioned as dialectical tests that Aristotle passed, albeit without realizing why it was so easy for him to refute the view that a point is an atomic line, or why "the equal" is necessarily plural.

It isn't surprising that the most forceful critiques of Plato originate with Aristotle. Despite preserving the crucial evidence about τὰ μεταξύ, he also preserved as Platonic some "doctrines" that were not so. This curious mix is characteristic: although he was certain that Plato separated the Idea of the Good, his testimony about Socrates has proved countervailing. It was Aristotle who told us that Socrates did not regard the Good as χωρίς;[91] this tended to divide Plato from himself. To return to Penner, Aristotle's testimony is likewise decisive for reconfiguring Plato's Idea of the Good as εὐδαιμονία,[92] and since a good defense requires some offense as well, I will conclude by observing that it cannot be an accident that just as Penner's teacher was Owen, and Owen's was Ryle, so too was Ryle's teacher John Cook Wilson.[93] There is logic behind this connection: with the distinction between Ideas and Intermediates eliminated, it is easy to refute the Ideas as if they were no more transcendent than Plato's dianoetically abstracted Intermediates, and thus to configure Plato himself as rejecting them in *Parmenides*, where he is really furnishing his students with the ability to defend them. There is nothing Platonic to choose between Tübingen's *Prinzipienhre* and the Socratism of Anglo-American analysts: both Happiness and the One are immanent deformations of the transcendent Idea of the Good. It is therefore necessary to fight against both, for defending the Intermediates is the same thing as defending Platonism,[94] and that means defending Plato.

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Endnotes

1 Penner 2003, 194; see 226n10 for his teachers. Ryle is identified as Owen's teacher in Cooper 1998, 177.

2 See Penner 2003, 192-93.

3 Penner 2003, 225-26n6.

4 See especially Arist. Metaph., A6 (987b14-18); for relevant comment, see Ross 1924, 1.liii-lvii and 1.166-68 (on ἔτι δὲ παρὰ τὰ αἰσθητά κτλ.). My citations are based on Ross's text.

5 Barron 1936, 92.

6 Shiner 1983, 173n5.

7 Prm. 135c8-d1. All citations of the dialogues will be based on Burnet 1901-1907, Duke, et al. 1995), and Slings 2003.

8 Unless otherwise noted, all translations are my own.

9 For "Scope of the Forms," see Gill 1996, 2; see also Gill 2006, 186-189.

10 Sedley 2013, 132-34. For reference to this passage, see 137n36.

11 Sedley 2013, 137 (emphasis mine).

12 ἓν τὸ μέγα (Parm. 132a3) and αὐτὸ τὸ μέγεθος (Parm. 132a10-11) are the examples of μία τις . . . ἰδέα (Parm. 132a2-3) exploded by "the Third Man Argument" at Parm. 132a1-b2.

13 See Parm. 165a8 and 165b5-6; cf. τῇ διανοίᾳ . . . ἀφελεῖν at Parm. 158c2

14 Cf. Sayre 2005, 124-133.

15 For their conflation, see Krämer 1966.

16 See γωνιῶν τριττὰ εἴδη at Rep. 510c4-5.

17 Rep. 510c4; see Denyer 2008, 192 (on Prot. 356e6-357a1).

18 Cf. Cornford 1932.

19 Cf. Rep. 510b4-8 and 510c1-511b1.

20 For "man" as conceivably χωρίς, see Parm. 130c2; for "the shuttle," see Crat. 389b5, and for the couch, Rep. 597a1-2, 597b4-5, and 597c2-3.

21 For "the triad" (beginning at Phaid. 104a4-7), "the equal itself" (beginning at Phaid. 74a12), and "the big in us," see Phaid. 102d7-8. For "bigness," cf. Phaid. 100b6, 100e5, 101a3-4, and 102d6 with Parm. 131a1, 131c12, 132a3, and 132a10-11.

22 See Hare 1965 and Taylor 1967; Cornford 1932 anticipates Hare on 178-79 (cf. n. 52 above on "odd and even"); with Taylor's position, cf. Robinson 1953, 100-105. For some later developments, see Mittelstrass 1985, 401-402 (with useful bibliography on 402n5), and for a defense of Hypotheses as Sätze that—while building on Taylor (201n43) and Mittelstraß (201n39)—does the cause more harm than good, see Stemmer 1992, 201-202.

23 For a succinct statement of the object side in the proposition vs. object debate (see previous note), see Gerson 2005, 237: "These hypotheses [sc. as described in the Divided Line] would seem to be primarily, if not exclusively, existential." The attached note adds: "See, e.g., Phaid. 100b3, where the

hypothesizing of Forms is explicitly existential." In addition to linking the Final Argument in Phaid. to the Divided Line, this apt formulation offers a Platonic basis for distinguishing (dianoetic) Forms from (noetic) Ideas: the existence of the latter is not hypothetical (R. 511b5). See also Stahl 1960, especially 438 and 446.

24 The reason that Parm. 143a6-9 has attracted so little attention in the context of the Line is because it appears to be nothing more than the first phase of a passage that has attracted a great deal of attention beginning with τὰ πρῶτα at Arist. Metaph., A6 (987b34). On the question of whether or not "the generation of numbers" (Prm. 143a6-144a9) that begins with separating the One from its οὐσία is capable of generating primes, the literature is extensive: see Cornford 1939), 140-141n2, Sayre 2005, 57-61 (note 280n50 on primes) and Curd 1990, 26-29. For the fullest consideration of the passage, see Allen 1997, 260-71.

25 Cf. Lao Tzu, Tao Te Ching, chapter 42.

26 In addition to the already general "form, shape, figure" (LSJ), τὸ σχῆμα can also mean: "6. character, characteristic property of a thing."

27 See Nettleship 1922, 250-51.

28 Arist. Metaph., A9 (991b1-2).

29 Beginning with Jackson 1882. Cf. Gallop 1965, 121, Stemmer 1992, 201-202, Smith 1981, Wieland 1982, 208-216, Mittelstrass 1985, 415, Smith 1999, 35n24, and the ne plus ultra in Ebert 1974, 181.

30 See Smith 1999, 38-39.

31 See Jackson 1882, 144. This view runs from Cook Wilson 1904 through Cornford 1932, 177-79 and 183-85 and Robinson 1953, 155-56 and 176, to Burnyeat 2000.

32 Following Adam 1905, 2.67 (on ἀρχὴν ἀνυπόθετον at 510c6-7): "The only ἀρχὴ ἀνυπόθετος is the Idea of the Good: cf. 532a f." The reference is to R. 532a5-b2; see also R. 511a5-6 and 511b4-6.

33 Cf. Smith 1999, 36-37.

34 As claimed by Ebert 1974, 177.

35 For "image-original hierarchies," see Smith 1999, 38; for sensible objects as images of Forms, see 39 and 43.

36 See Karasmanis 1987, 219.

37 Phaid. 99e1 and 100a2; cf. εἰκάζειν at 99e6 and διανοεῖσθαι at 99e2.

38 Phaid. 100b5-7; cf. ὑποθέμενος at 100a3-4 and τιθέναι 100a5.

39 See Clay 1985.

40 Cf. Rep. 611d3-4 with Phaidr. 250c6, and Phaid. 109d2-3 with Phaidr. 249c3, connections discussed in Clay 1985.

41 The Order of Composition paradigm would prevent us from applying "the Third Man" to "the big itself"; cf. αὐτὸ τὸ μέγεθος at Parm. 131c12 and Phaid. 102d6.

42 E.g., cf. Phaid. 105c2-4 and Alc.2 140a7-9.

43 For a terminal Phaid., see Zuckert 2009.

44 A unitary triad as opposed to a plural three (note the redoubled juxtaposition of τὰ τρία and ἡ τριάς at Phaid. 104e1-9) triggers the Problem of the One and the Many, on which see Klein 1992, 51.

45 For a useful discussion of "the occupiers" see Bae 1996.

46 The plural αὐτὰ τὰ ἴσα of Phaid. 74c1 has been called "unusual" in Gallop 1975, "puzzling" in Bostock 1986, 82-83; "notorious" in both Sedley 2007, 82 and Frede 1999, 194, and "troublesome" in Smith 1980, 2; cf. Wedin 1977, 202n23, and Lee 2012, 33.

47 See Geach 1956, 76.

48 See the fragment 3 of Arist. Περὶ ἰδέων in Ross 1955, 125.

49 Cf. ἀντιλέγειν in Fragment 1 in Ross 1955, 121.

50 Cf. Silverman 2002, 75.

51 On Phaid. 104a7-b4, see Stone 2014.

52 Rep. 525a1-526b3, prefaced by 522c1-525a1, and concluded with 526b4-c7.

53 With Rep. 525e3, cf. Soph. 251b8-9.

54 See Moon-Heum, 1999 and Narcy 1978.

55 See Adam 1905, 2.160 (on αὐτὸ τὸ ἕν at Rep. 525d9): "Are we then to suppose that there are many Ideas of 'one'?"

56 See Löhr 1990, 72-94.

57 Cf. Frede 1993, xxin2: "answered only indirectly."

58 Cf. Striker 19708, 10.

59 On the relationship between μονάδες and ἕναδες, see Frede 1997, 119n12, and Rist 1962, 395.

60 For the impossibility involved, see Frede 1999, 197.

61 Beginning with ὁ δημιουργός, the Timaeus-related vocabulary at R. 596b4-597d2 suggests why a version of "Plato's Theory of Forms" based on cosmogony (Tim. 28a6-b1) proves inhospitable to the Intermediates.

62 The κλῖναι and τράπεζαι of Rep. 596a11, cf. βοῦς in Plb.; Rep. 372d8-e1 also proves that they cannot be φύσει.

63 See Baum 2019.

64 Phaidr. 249b5-c1 (the translation of the first sentence is Fowler's).

65 Hence the emphasis on R. 526a1 and Plb. 56d4-e3 as the best evidence for Intermediates in Ross 1951, 59-67.

66 See Moors 1984, 153-54, and Foley 2008.

67 Fowler's translation, following Burnet's text.

68 Cf. Smith 1999, 35-36: "It is not as if it is just obvious that the relevant images are mathematical intermediates [i.e., τὰ μαθηματικά, as per Aristotle], or λόγοι [as in 'the Second Sailing' at Phaid. 99e5], or 'thought-images' [what I am calling 'the one-over-many' Intermediates] or at least all those finding intelligible intermediates could agree on what they were!" They are all of the above.

69 Cook Wilson 1904, 259. See also §4, 251-53 ("Meaning and origin of the doctrine of τὰ μεταξύ") and §9, 257-60 ("Is the doctrine of τὰ μεταξύ to be found in Plato's Republic?"). Naturally Cook Wilson answers in the negative.

70 See Slings 2005, 113-119.
71 Cherniss 1944, 513-524. Cf. Shorey 1903, 83: "The theory of ideas, the hypostatization of all concepts, once granted, numbers do not differ from other ideas."
72 In addition to Allen 1997, 270-271, see Allen 1970, 32n13 and 33-34n18, and Allen 1974, 708-714, especially 712n43.
73 See Ross 1924, 2.427 (Ross was Cook Wilson's student), Klein 1992, 62, Schofield 1972, 105n12, Annas 1975, 147n2, Tarán 1978, 83n3, Mohr 1981, 621n2, and Blyth 2000, 40n24. For criticism see Hardie 1936 and Dancy 1984.
74 As in Wedberg, 1955.
75 Annas 1976, 13.
76 See Prichard 1996, 156 (cf. 94-6).
77 See Rist 1964; cf. Löhr 1992, 42-47.
78 See Halper 2005, xxv-xxxiv; see xxix for the Problem of the One and the Many as a discard-able "ladder" and xxxiv as "a dead issue."
79 In addition to Ross, Aristotle's Metaphysics, 1.li-lii and 2.425-460, see Annas 1976, 13: "Plato shows no awareness that these are very different ways of regarding numbers." Owen was Annas's supervisor (v).
80 See Arist. Ph., 3.6 (206a17-18): οὐ γὰρ χαλεπὸν ἀνελεῖν τὰς ἀτόμους γραμμάς.
81 Hence the circumlocution of Prm. 143a8: ἄνευ τούτου οὗ φαμεν μετέχειν.
82 Cf. the First Hypothesis (Prm. 137c4-142a8): Parmenides concludes not only that this One cannot be named, etc. (Prm. 142a4-6).
83 Prm. 143a2: "the One that is [τὸ ἓν ὄν] would therefore be ἄπειρον τὸ πλῆθος."
84 See Owen 1957, 110.
85 Cf. Prt. 311b1, Grg. 486d2-e6, R. 413c7-414a6, Ap., 27a1-4, and Lg. 649d4-650b5.
86 See Arist. Metaph. M7 (1081a14).
87 See Merlan 1934 and Merlan 1953.
88 See O'Meara 2010, 310n13.
89 Cf. Arist. Metaph. A6 (987b2).
90 In addition to Arist. Metaph., A6, see Phaid. 209b11-12.
91 Arist. Metaph., M4 (1078b17-32).
92 Penner 2003, 195.
93 See Marion 2015: "through figures such as H. A. Prichard, Gilbert Ryle, or J. L. Austin, his ideas were also to some extent at the origin of 'moral intuitionism' and 'ordinary language philosophy.'"
94 Cf. Ryle 1966, 9-10: "If Plato was anything of a philosopher, then he cannot have been merely a lifelong Platonist."