

Colloquium 9
The God-Given Way

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My project this evening is a kind of interpretive mosaic. I want to consider together two passages. To judge by the way each is situated in its larger context, both are very important for our understanding of the later Plato's ontology and analytical method. But both are also exceedingly obscure. My hope is that seen together, they will yield and confirm in each other a significance that otherwise might escape us. The passages are, first, the description of a "god-given method" for addressing the one/many problem at *Philebus* 16bff., and, second, the final set of distinctions by which statesmanship is defined at *Statesman* 287bff.

With regard, first, to the *Philebus* passage: as Gosling,¹ by his challenge to earlier commentators, and Sayre,² by his challenge to Gosling, show, there is no agreement on just what the method is. A big part of the problem is that Socrates never makes an explicit, full-scale use of it.³ He first introduces the method with extravagant praise as a way to deal with the one/many problem, and at 17d he cites approvingly the counsel of the sages of old (presumably the Pythagoreans) that "we ought to examine every one and many in this way." But when Protarchus objects that he

1. Gosling 1975, pp. 153-181.

2. Sayre 1983, pp. 137-148, 268-271.

3. Does he in fact make implicit use of it? This is a fascinating question, not least for what further light finding such use might shed on the god-given method. Can Socrates' distinctions of kinds of pleasures and, again, of knowledge be shown to presuppose, or imply as its proper framework, the structure disclosed by the new mode of diairesis that, I shall argue, is thematized in *Philebus* 16c ff. and put into practice in the final part of the *Statesman*?

can't see how to apply the method to the question at hand, the unity of pleasure, Socrates obligingly sets it aside in favor of a different, more accessible argumentative strategy. As a result, we never get a full-bodied display of the method; instead, we are left to puzzle over Socrates' very schematic remarks at 16c^{ff.}, and his brief and incompletely sketched examples of musical notes and the alphabet.

In the second of our two passages, *Statesman* 287b^{ff.}, the Eleatic Stranger works through the final array of distinctions by which statesmanship is defined. Just before, the Stranger goes out of his way to get his interlocutor, Young Socrates, to see the universal value of what is to come. "Why," he asks rhetorically, "have we set out on this inquiry into the statesman? Is it for the sake of [understanding] the statesman in particular or, rather, in order that we become more capable in dialectic generally (περὶ πάντα διαλεκτικωτέροις)?" (285d) The implication is that we are about to get an *exemplary* display of dialectic, one that can guide us περὶ πάντα, in face of any and "all" subject matters. This makes it particularly surprising when, at the beginning of our passage, the Stranger declares "hard," then "impossible," the mode of dialectic by which he has proceeded in *all* of the definitional analyses he has undertaken up to this point in the *Sophist* and the *Statesman*. "...we cannot [cut] into two (δίχα ἀδυνατοῦμεν)," he says; instead, "we must divide limb by limb (κατὰ μέλη), as we would a sacrificial animal (κατὰ μέλην οἷον ἱερείον)." The reason, he says rather unhelpfully, "will become clear as we go along" (287b-c). That is his last word on the matter; the task of thematizing the new mode of dialectic is left to us.

The "mosaic" I want to attempt here is best introduced as the claim that, in their essentials, the *Philebus* and the *Statesman* passages dovetail. Properly interpreted, the final distinctions in the *Statesman* put into practice the god-given method described in the *Philebus*, and the latter passage, in turn, articulates the principles of the new mode of dialectic the *Statesman* practices. Once this is recognized, each passage illuminates the other.

I. διαίρεσις εἰδῶν and πέρας/ἄπειρία in the *Philebus*

(a) A first look at the god-given method: methodological and ontological questions

Here, first of all, is the puzzling passage at *Philebus* 16c-17a in which Socrates first presents the god-given method:

As I see it [says Socrates to Protarchus], it was a gift from the gods to men, thrown down in a blaze of light by some Prometheus. Our forefathers, superior beings to us since they lived closer to the gods, passed on this tradition, that those things that are always said to be (τῶν αἰεὶ λεγομένων εἶναι)⁴ consist, on the one hand,⁵ in one and many (ἓξ ἑνὸς μὲν καὶ πολλῶν) and, on the other, have limit and unlimitedness grown together within them (πέρας δὲ καὶ ἀπειρίαν ἐν αὐτοῖς σύμφυτον ἔχοντων). Since these things are ordered in this way, we should always, for everything, in each case assume and search for a single form (μίαν ἰδέαν)—for we shall find one therein (ἐνοῦσαν)—, and if we should lay hold of it, then after one (μετὰ μίαν), we should look for two, if there are two (εἴ πως εἰσί), or otherwise for three or some other number [of forms];⁶ and each one of those (τῶν ἐν ἐκείνων ἕκαστον), in turn, should be treated in the same way, until one can see of the original one (τὸ κατ' ἀρχῆς ἓν) not only that it is one and many, that is,⁷ unlimitedly many (ἓν καὶ πολλὰ καὶ ἄπειρα),

4. Note the interesting alternative translation discussed in Striker 1970 (pp. 18ff.): roughly, "the things said to be forever." This phrase is too ambiguous to be taken, right off, as decisive support for any one view about what the subject of the "god-given method" is. It *could* mean "the things" that either philosophers [or even Platonic protagonists] or ordinary thoughtful people either always presume to exist or presume to exist always, and such "things" could refer to forms or to the phenomena that, from a Platonic protagonist's point of view, partake of forms or to some other sort of permanent entity (principles, concepts...) or, as Gosling suggests, to "general phenomena."

5. The μέν... δέ... construction suggests that, *pace* Sayre, we ought not treat limit and one, unlimitedness and many, as equivalents. A good interpretation of the whole passage will reveal what the contrast and complementarity of the two pairs—one and many, limit and unlimited—are.

6. The gender of the preceding μίαν makes it refer back to μίαν ἰδέαν, and this makes it natural to assume that Socrates is speaking of forms throughout this clause.

7. 14e3-4 gives the precedent for this reading. Cf. also *Theaetetus* 159a9-10.

but also how many (ὅποσα); one should not attribute the form of the unlimited (τὴν... τοῦ ἀπείρου ιδέαν) to the plurality until one can see the complete number (τὸν ἀριθμὸν... πάντα) between the unlimited and the one (μεταξὺ τοῦ ἀπείρου τε καὶ τοῦ ἑνός); only then may one dismiss each of all these ones (τὸ ἐν ἕκαστον τῶν πάντων), letting them pass into the unlimited (εἰς τὸ ἄπειρον). As I said, this is the procedure for inquiring, learning, and teaching each other that the gods have handed on to us. But the wise men of the present day are both too quick and too slow in making any one they encounter a many, passing immediately from the one to the unlimited (μετὰ τὸ ἐν ἄπειρα εὐθύς); the intermediates (τὰ μέσα) elude them, yet it is noticing these that makes the difference between our arguments with each other being dialectical and being contentious.

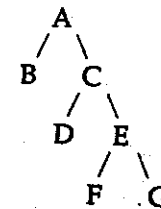
It is not incautious to begin with the heuristic assumption that the method Socrates is presenting is some mode or version of diairesis, that is, of the collection and division of forms.⁸ A few pages later Socrates refers to the method explicitly as "the diairesis of forms," τὴν διαίρεσιν εἰδῶν (20c4), and in two distinct passages just before that, 19b1-5 and 20a6ff., he confirms Protarchus' characterizations of it in this way.

But this starting-point sheds darkness as well as light. On the one hand, there are a number of apparent echoes of the method as it is practiced in the *Sophist* and the first two-thirds of the *Statesman* (up to 287b). To "assume and search for a single

8. Gosling 1975 objects to this starting-point primarily because he takes collection and division to be a technique for the "mapping out" of "genus/species relationships" (p. 160) and, as he correctly points out, Socrates' exemplary accounts of musical notes and of the letters of the alphabet "do not illustrate genus/species division" (p. 162, also 164-165). But the argument breaks down, for, as Sayre (1969, p. 223, also pp. 186-189) had already shown, collection and division do not presuppose or work within "the Aristotelian format of genus, subordinate difference, and *infima species*." On the other hand, the whole of this essay goes to show that Sayre's own starting assumption, that the god-given method in the *Philebus* just is collection and division as we know it from the *Sophist* and *Statesman* (see Sayre 1969, pp. 122-123, 125-126), also fails. Sayre has not paused to draw a distinction in kind between the bifurcatory and non-bifurcatory modes of diairesis.

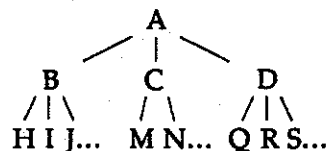
form" sounds like the inaugurative collection, the recognition of a kind that encompasses within itself all the cases of whatever it is that is to be studied; likewise, the subsequent "look[ing] for two [forms]..." and, again, "treat[ment of these] in the same way" sounds like a reference to the process of division and subdivision that leads, finally, to the isolation of the form of the matter under study.

On the other hand, in at least two major respects the god-given method departs from the familiar practice of collection and division. First, in the *Sophist* and the bulk of the *Statesman* division is bifurcatory, splitting a kind (or, more cautiously, the class of things a kind includes as its members) into a pair of subkinds that are mutually exclusive and together exhaustive of the original kind. Each cut aims to "halve" (μεσοτέμνειν, *Statesman* 265a4) the kind at hand. Second, in the Stranger's practice of diairesis in the *Sophist* and the *Statesman* (again, up to 287b) the goal of the method is to distinguish the thing under study from everything else. For this reason, after each cut the Stranger seizes on the half, the subkind, that includes the thing under study and simply abandons the other half. Both of these features of diairesis in its familiar mode are easily seen in a simple diagram; to begin with, assume that all cases of X, the thing under study, are collected within kind A.



As the diagram indicates, diairesis in its standard mode is a series of bifurcations; by the series it gathers C, E, and G—or, more precisely, the differentiating features of each of these kinds—as marks of X and leaves B, D, and F behind as irrelevant to it.

If we now look back to Socrates' presentation of the god-given method, we see, first, that it sets no particular value on cutting into two; "we should look for two, if there are two, or otherwise for three or some other number" (16d3-4). Secondly, in the god-given method we pursue *all* the lines of division; "each one of these should be treated in the same way" (16d5). To put this in exemplary, diagrammatic contrast with the familiar mode of diairesis:



Now, it seems, we aim not to isolate some one subkind within A but, rather, to trace the internal structure of A and to identify all of its subkinds.

These prefatory reflections should make clear that Socrates is offering us diairesis in a new mode. And since this new mode eschews the guidance of any *a priori* and essentially logical principle like "halving," taking its bearings, instead, from the number of forms "there are," the questions we need to raise are ontological as well as methodological. We might distinguish them under three headings. (i) *Principles of division*. Socrates has said nothing so far about what sorts of distinctions, governed by what sorts of criteria, we should try to draw with respect to the "single form" and to the "ones" we distinguish as its subkinds. How are the forms we disclose related, on the one hand the "single form" to those we distinguish as its subkinds, on the other hand these latter to one another? Further, how far should we try to carry the process of division? Socrates does address this—but in a way that focuses rather than answers the questions. We must proceed until we can see not just that "the original one" is "one" and "unlimitedly many" but, also, "how many." (ii) *One and many*. This language points back to Socrates' initial remarks about the subject matter and diairesis. "The things that are always said to be," he said, "consist, on the one hand, in one and many (ἐξ ἑνὸς μὲν καὶ πολλῶν) and, on the other, have limit and unlimitedness grown together within themselves (πέρας δὲ καὶ

ἀπειρίαν ἐν αὐτοῖς σύμφυτον ἔχόντων)." How, first of all, can "the original one" be both "one" and "many," retaining its unity even while "consist[ing] in many"? This question must be complicated, moreover, with a second question: how can "the original one" "consist in many" in both the senses that Socrates asserts, being "unlimitedly many," on the one hand, and a "complete"—hence fixed and definite—"number," on the other? In exploring these paradoxes, we need to ask just what each of these pluralities—the unlimited many and the definite many—is a plurality of. (iii) *Unlimited and limit*. Oddly, Socrates does not use the term for "limit," πέρασ, again until the later passage on the four kinds, 23c-27c; by contrast, he makes abundant reference to "unlimitedness," using the term both attributively to speak of the unlimited plurality of "the original one" and substantively to speak directly of "the unlimited." How is "unlimitedness" to be understood in these appearances, and how, correlatively, is "limit" to be understood? How is that they are "grown together," and how is this connected to the ways in which "the original one" is both one and many?

(b) *Socrates' examples: notes⁵ and letters*

It is not hard to sympathize with Protarchus when, at 17a, he tells Socrates that only some of what he has said is clear. Socrates' response is to offer two examples of the god-given method, the analyses which yield intervals, notes, and modes, and, distinctly,⁹ rhythms and meters in music, and the letters of the alphabet in grammar. In both, he reiterates the central point of his initial account, that what makes the difference between superficial and genuine understanding is getting beyond the undifferentiated unity and indeterminate plurality of something to its definite "number" (ἀριθμόν, 17c12, 17e5, 18c6), to its "how many and of what sorts" (πόσα τ'... καὶ ὅποια, 17b9, ὅποια... καὶ ὅποια 17c12-13). In one important point, however, he goes

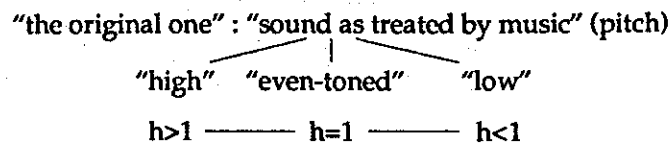
9. The sorting out of musical pitches and the sorting out of rhythms and meters are, I think, distinct processes of diairesis. Pitches and rhythms are not on the same continuum; rather, each of these is separated off as a one/many unto itself. When Socrates goes from his discussion of pitch to his mention of rhythms, he is moving from one one/many to another and setting up his general point that one must treat all such one/many analogously.

beyond what he has said at 16bff. Whereas there he described the method as beginning with a "single form," at 18a he indicates that one may also start from an unlimited plurality and work back to a single form. The music example illustrates the first movement, the grammar example the second.

Now, how do Socrates' examples help us with the questions we have raised about the god-given method?

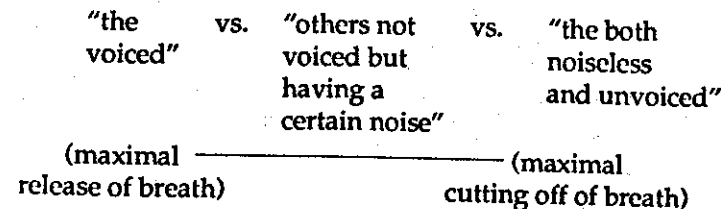
1. *The principles of division.* To begin with, Socrates' examples bring out two new principles by which diairesis in the new mode proceeds.

Consider first the initial set of distinctions in each example. What becomes clear is that even while the new mode *may* begin by "look[ing] for two" forms, its basic aim in doing so differs from that of the old bifurcatory process. Now the point is not to split "the original one" into mutually exclusive subkinds but, rather, to disclose its field of possible instantiations as a continuous range or series. Socrates makes this evident in the music example when, distinguishing "sound as treated by that art" into "high" and "low," he immediately adds "even-toned," *ἰσότητον*, as a "third" (17c4-5). What is "even-toned" falls between "high" and "low" by having a sameness or equality—this would be the sense of *ἰσότη-*, "even"—in its balance of "high" and "low"; but if this is so, then tones that are "high" and tones that are "low" differ only in degree, as items that, while each shares in both "high" and "low," have these in different proportions or balances from one another. One way to diagram this is as follows:



In the alphabet example, Socrates credits Theuth with making the same kind of initial distinction in a different way. Beginning with the recognition that uttered sound is "unlimited" (*ἄπειρον*), Theuth proceeds in two steps: first he sets over against "the voiced [letter-sounds]" "others that are not voiced but do have a

certain noise"; then, as a "third form," he sets the "stops" into contrast with both of these, characterizing them as "the both noiseless and unvoiced" (18b9-c4). This contrast puts the second group, which first appeared as the opposite to the first, into a new light. Now it appears as "the middle" (*τὰ μέσα*, 18c5-6) between the first and third: on the one hand, it stands together with "the voiced" in that both involve, by contrast with the "stops," some release of breath; but it also stands together with the "stops" in that its "noise[s]," by contrast with the "voiced" sounds, are made by closing the mouth in various ways and cutting off, to different degrees, the release of breath. This, in turn, sets the whole threesome into a new light; they now emerge as three regions on a gradient of uttered sounds leading from those which involve the most open-mouthed, least fricative release of breath in being uttered to those which involve the most closure and stopping of the release of breath.¹⁰ We can represent this as follows:



If we turn now to the final sets of distinctions in each example, a second new principle of division emerges as well. We have

10. This way of describing the continuum is analogous to Waterfield 1982, p. 63, n. 2. Gosling 1975, pp. 171-172, 178ff., makes similar suggestions. Do we go too far in taking Plato to think that vocal sound forms a continuum? Some commentators would say so—see, e.g., Sayre's remark that "...vocal sound... can scarcely be conceived as a linear continuum" (1969, p. 149). But weigh against this not only Socrates' language, as discussed, but also his remark that "the men of former times" who gave us our science of music with its continuum of pitch "say that we ought to understand that every one and many (*περὶ παντός ἑνός καὶ πολλῶν*) should be studied in this way" (17d7-8). Finally, though citing this begs the question of the relation between modern and ancient phonetic theory, note Smythe's assignment of the major sub-groups of classical Greek letters to places on continua determined, first, by the "degree of tension or slackness of the vocal chords in sounding them" and, second, by the "degree of noise" made in sounding them (Smythe 1920, pp. 10ff.).

already noted how the new mode of diairesis is concerned not to isolate some one particular kind, as bifurcatory diairesis was, but, rather, to identify all the subkinds of the "single form." But what guides the dialectician in his identification of these subkinds? Both of Socrates' examples make clear that the new goal of differentiation is to disclose possibilities of connection and combination. In the music example, the discovery of the number and sorts of the various "intervals"—the octave, fifth, fourth, and so on—yields up, as their "boundaries" (τοὺς ὄρους, 17c13),¹¹ the particular sets of notes that are fit to comprise each of the various musical "modes" (ἁρμονίας, 17d4). It is an essential mark of the sort of "one" the dialectician seeks that it be fit to belong to a mode.¹² The point is even more explicit in the alphabet example.

11. There are two possible readings of τοὺς ὄρους. Burkert 1972 argues that it is a technical term referring to the ratios or proportions that define each interval, e.g. 1:2 for the octave, 2:3 for the fifth, 3:4 for the fourth, etc. Socrates says that the musically knowledgeable person grasps (1) τὰ διαστήματα ὅποια ἐστὶ τῶν ἀριθμῶν τῆς φωνῆς ὀξύτητος τε πέρι καὶ βαρύτητος (2) καὶ ὁποῖα (3) καὶ τοὺς ὄρους τῶν διαστημάτων (4) καὶ τὰ ἐκ τούτων ὅσα συστήματα γέγονεν.... (17c11-d2). On Burkert's reading, as I understand it, the knowledge of music involves recognizing (1) how many (kinds of) intervals there are, (2) what kinds they are (presumably Burkert would identify these kinds as the octave, fourth, and fifth and, to conjecture in his behalf, the full tone and the leimma that remains in a tetrachord after two full tones are marked off), (3) the ratios that define each of these (e.g. 2:1, 3:2, 4:3, 9:8, etc.), and (4) the combinations for these intervals that, comprising tetrachords and conjunctions of tetrachords, figure in and distinguish different "modes" (see note 12 below). On the alternative reading, found in the widely read translations by Hackforth, Gosling, and Waterfield, τοὺς ὄρους refers to "the notes that limit the intervals" (Gosling 1975). On this reading, knowledge of the Pythagorean ratios would presumably come under (2), the recognition of the kinds of the intervals; given this, the most natural way to understand τὰ ἐκ τούτων... συστήματα in (4) would be as "the systems of notes" (Hackforth 1972). (But see Waterfield 1982, who cites Aristoxenus and, writing "the systems they form," seems to make "they" refer back to "intervals.") I have accepted the second reading on internal and external grounds, but I think the matter is impossible to resolve with certainty. The internal ground is that knowing the kinds of the intervals would seem itself to involve knowing the Pythagorean ratios, in which case there would be redundancy between (2) and (3); but the reply might be that the καὶ that joins them may be explicative more than additive. The external ground is that Socrates sets up the alphabet case as, in its power to illustrate the "god-given method," an analogue to the music case, and notes would seem to be better analogues to letters than intervals.

12. For modern readers, a good part of the obscurity of the *Philebus*' description of the "god-given method" derives from the indeterminateness and uncertainty

As Theuth "differentiates [each of the three kinds of uttered sound]... down to the level of distinct ones" (διήρει μέχρι ἐνὸς ἐκάστου, 18c4-5), he recognizes that "it would be impossible to get to know a one by itself, in isolation from all of them" (οὐδ' ἂν ἔν αὐτὸ καθ' αὐτὸ ἄνευ πάντων αὐτῶν μάθοι, 18c8-9); the only way to parse sounds is, of course, to hear them, and most of the sounds to be parsed cannot be heard at all except when spoken together with various others. Thus Theuth discovers that each "one" has definite powers of combination with others, and when, at the end of his diairesis, he counts out the total "number of them" (ἀριθμῶν αὐτῶν, 18c6), he expresses this discovery by identifying the "single form" they share by the name στοιχεῖον, "element" or, in its specific grammatical sense, "letter" (18c7).¹³

2. *One and Many.* These reflections on the principles of division in the new mode of diairesis provide starting-points for responses to the questions we raised about the unity and plurality of "the original one." First of all, we can now begin to see how "the original one" can "consist in many" in both the senses that Socrates asserts, being an "unlimitedly many" and a "complete"—hence fixed and definite—"number." The initial distinctions reveal

of most of what we know about ancient music and harmonic theory. (The same holds for our knowledge of the ancient understanding of the alphabet—see n. 10). A particularly difficult term is ἁρμονία. Aristoxenus polemicizes against those of his predecessors who mistook the mathematical constructions typical in harmonic theory for the real structures of performed and heard music. A paradigm case of this "mistake" was the use of the term ἁρμονία to refer to a species of the octave, that is, an eight-note scale. The latter was a theoretical construction whereas ἁρμονία means, as Henderson 1957, p. 347, puts it: "a musical idiom together with the tuning which it postulates." Two reflections seem relevant to our present discussion. First, Socrates claims, in his discussion of music, to be reporting the insights of "men of old" (17d)—presumably Pythagorean harmonic theorists. Weren't these just the mathematicizing predecessors Aristoxenus objected to? If we say yes, then shouldn't we interpret ἁρμονία at *Philebus* 17d4 to refer to scales? (Note that this is how Hackforth, Gosling, and Waterfield all translate ἁρμονία at 17d4.) But perhaps, secondly, the issue is not of great consequence for us. Whichever of the two ways we interpret Plato's usage, we will credit the new mode of diairesis with the work of recognizing which notes go with which, analogously as Theuth recognizes the distinctive powers of combination that characterize the various letters.

13. That the term στοιχεῖον has both of these senses expresses Socrates' point: the very concept of "letter" implies that each is fit, as an "element," for combination with others. For a fascinating background account, see Koller 1955.

Mitchell Miller, ^{the unlimited plurality of "the one," and the final distinctions reveal its} definite number. To take these in turn: the initial distinctions lay out, as a continuum between opposite forms, *the full range of possible instantiations* "the one" can have. From this it follows that such possible instantiations will be unlimitedly many, for a continuum is divisible εἰς ἄπειρον, without limit;¹⁴ or, to put this less mathematically, since any two places on a continuum stand in contrast as more and less, in principle it will always be possible for us to refine our contrast and locate other places between them. The final distinctions, in turn, grant privileged status to a *limited number* of these possible instantiations. As Socrates' examples bring home, the "single form"—musical pitch, letter—requires, if it is to be instantiated *well*, a select *few* to instantiate it. A single tone, for example, will not suffice, for musicality requires the interplay of several; and all the possible tones, unrestrictedly, will be far too many, for not every tone can "harmonize" (that is, fit together within a mode, a ἁρμονία) with every other. A dialectical understanding of musical pitch or, analogously, of letters involves the recognition of just which tones, or letter-sounds, fit together with just which others.

With these two types of plurality before us, we can also begin to respond to the question of how "the original one" can be *both* "one" and "many." There appear to be three senses of unity in play. At one extreme, there is what we might call the pure unity of "the original one" as it stands prior to the introduction of the opposite forms and the continuum these frame; here "the one" is a simple intensional content, undifferentiated and unique. This would be the self-same nature or, as Socrates refers to it, the "single form" that the dialectician discovers to pervade (cf. ἐνοῦσαν, 16d2) an apparently heterogeneous many, the form by reference to which he first "collects" this many. At the other extreme, there is the infinitely differentiated unity of the continuum of possible instantiations. Here the self-sameness of the "single form" is countered by the mutual opposition between the two forms that frame the continuum, and unity takes the form of the continuity and serial order of the unlimitedly many

14. In turning, here and in what follows, to the mathematical sense of ἄπειρον, I am indebted to Gosling, who makes it central to his interpretation of the god-given method (1975, pp. xx ff.).

possibilities arrayed between the opposites. Between these extremes, finally, there is the sense of unity as wholeness of parts; the dialectician brings this out with his culminating recognition of the "complete number" of "the one." The key is Socrates' stress, in both examples, on the way the elements diairesis reveals are essentially fit for interplay. It is by virtue of their power to combine that various tones comprise modes and, so, *together* constitute good instantiations of musical pitch. For spoken sounds, analogously, it is only by virtue of the ways in which they combine that they enable each other to be "letters" in the first place. Notes and letters thus emerge as *parts* or *members* fit for a certain collaborative work, and "the original one," in turn, emerges as the dynamic *whole* they comprise.

3. *Unlimitedness and Limit.* If we turn now to our questions about the notions of unlimitedness and limit, one sense in which they are "grown together" and closely connected to the unity and plurality of "the original one" seems obvious. In its possible instantiations, we have seen, "the one" is "unlimited" *in number*. And though he does not explicitly use the word πέρας to express it, a correlative sense of limit is clearly in play in the notion of the "complete number" of "the one," for this number bounds or delimits the otherwise unlimited number of "the one."

But these comments clarify only the attributive use of the term ἄπειρον, not the substantive use ("the unlimited," τὸ ἄπειρον). Moreover, they do not yet indicate how, if at all, the notion of "limit," πέρας, that Socrates *does* make explicit in the later passage of the four kinds at 23c-27c is in play in his exposition of the god-given method. That is the notion of a balance or ratio that, "not admit[ting] the violent and weak or, again, the excessive" (25a), "sets [the opposites] into proportion and harmony" (25e).¹⁵ Yet there is an important connection between the first

15. Should Socrates, when he says that the "right combination" (ὀρθὴ κοινωνία, 25e9-10) of limit and unlimited gives rise to good things, be taken to imply the possibility that limit and unlimited may also combine in a way that, not "right," will give rise to things that are not good? There is a choice to be made between two possible interpretations. (1) "Right" picks out a special set of possible combinations of limit and unlimited and opposes them to all others as, respectively, right and wrong. (2) "Right" is merely emphatic, bringing out and stressing

and the second set of senses of unlimitedness and limit, and the second set is importantly in play in the god-given method.¹⁶ The

what is already implied in the notion a "combination" of limit and unlimited; for whatever limit combines with the unlimited, good things result. I am inclined to accept the second interpretation for several reasons. (i) As I read the key passages, Socrates marks two essential elements of the idea of limit—ratio and striking a mean; the first is stressed at both 25a-b and 25e, while the second is expressed when Socrates says that the limit "does not admit these" (ταῦτα, 25a8), referring back to "the violent and slight or, again, excessive" (τὸ σφόδρα καὶ ἡμέρα δεχόμενα καὶ τὸ λίαν, 24e10-25a1). Given this reading, the difficulty with (1) is that it implies that striking a mean is not essential to the idea of limit—for when something strikes a mean, it is good, and (1) permits there to be things that have limit as a factor and yet are not good. (ii) As we would expect if we regard striking a mean as essential to limit, all of the numerous items that Socrates goes on to cite as examples of the mixture of limit and the unlimited are good things.

16. Gosling 1975, p. 186, sets as a criterion for successful interpretation of 16bff. and 23-27 that the readings we give these passages in each case take the key concepts that are common to them, *πέρας* and *ὑπερὸν*, in the same sense. In the reading we have worked out for 16bff., we have met this criterion, with a twist. In 16bff., I have argued, there are two sets of senses of *πέρας* and *ὑπερὸν* in play, one conspicuous and the other implicit, introduced indirectly through the music and alphabet examples; the implicit set grounds the conspicuous set: it is because it is a *continuum* that the unlimitedly many is *unlimited* in number, and it is because of the imposition, on the continuum, of the *set of ratios*, each of which *establishes a mean*, that the "single form" has a *definite*, or *limited*, number of forms between itself and the unlimitedly many. On my reading, Plato does not have Socrates introduce new senses for *πέρας* and *ὑπερὸν* when he reintroduces these terms at 23-27; rather, he has Socrates make the implicit set explicit and emphatic. A key to recognizing this is to see how, when at 26a Socrates cites music as an example of the imposition of *πέρας* upon *ὑπερὸν*, limit upon the unlimited, he thematizes what the new mode of *diáresis* has already presupposed and disclosed in its exemplary analysis of music at 17b-d.

Nor, we might go on to add, is it just a matter if the first senses of unlimited and limit having, as their ground, the second senses. It can also be argued that the first sense exemplifies the second. One of the continua Socrates includes in his list of examples at 25c-d is *πλέον καὶ ἑλάττω*, "more and fewer" (25c9). The boundary cases, to speak paradoxically, of "more" and "fewer" would be unlimitedly many and one, respectively. A definite or limited number, in turn, will fall between these and, so, set them into, *in principle*, a balance or ratio. Needless to say, this is a strange case of imposing limit on the unlimited because it is not at all clear that or how we could express this ratio as a relation of two finite numbers; nor, should we want to represent the ratio as the relation of the segments of the continuum-line that the definite number, by falling somewhere on the continuum, sections off from one another, is there any non-arbitrary way of deciding where the definite number falls. By having Socrates include *πλέον καὶ ἑλάττω* in his list, however, Plato invites us to see the dyad of one and unlimitedly many as, in principle, a divisible continuum and the triad one/limitedly many/unlim-

best way to see how is to begin with the notion of unlimitedness and ask: *what is "the unlimited"?* That is, *what is it* that is "unlimitedly many"? Later we can seek the correlative sense of "limit," *πέρας*, by asking the same question about the "complete number."

By "the unlimited," we have seen, Socrates has in mind the continuum of possible instantiations of the "single form"; the "unlimitedly many," then, are the places on the continuum. If, now, we try to specify just what these are within the theory of forms, we come to something surprising: the places on the continuum can be *neither forms nor sensibles*.¹⁷ To see why, consider each possibility in turn. (i) Treating them as forms yields two damaging consequences. First, since the places on any continuum are in principle infinite in number, there would be, for each "single form," an infinite number of further forms. Second, the normative status of the forms as the standards by which we can discriminate between good and bad sensibles would be undermined. If the places on the continuum were forms, then, since every sensible must perfectly instantiate some one of these places, every sensible must be the perfect realization of a form. (ii) On the other hand, the places on the continuum are a different kind of entity than sensibles. Each place on a continuum is unique, marking out a distinctive balance of opposites, while there can be indefinitely many sensibles that have the same balance. These latter will differ from one another only in the worldly circumstances of their occurrence—their times and places, etc.; by contrast, places on a continuum are not, as such, subject to place and time at all. To draw on the music example to make this more concrete, there can be only one place on the continuum of high and low that sets these into the exact proportion we know as, for instance, D flat, and *as a place on the con-*

tinuum indefinitely many, as, again in principle, a case of the imposition of limit on the unlimited. See n. 18 below.

17. It appears to be a universal assumption among commentators that the "unlimitedly many" are sensibles; the references to it at 16bff. seem to echo and resume the reference to sensible particulars as *τοῖς γινόμενοις... καὶ ἀπείροις*, "the infinite number of things that come into being" (Hackforth's translation), at 15b6. But, of course, that there are infinitely many sensibles neither precludes nor implies that there may be another infinite plurality of items intermediate between sensibles and forms.

tinuum, that is, *as* one possible balance of high and low, it is simply not subject to the categories of when and where; by contrast, there can be many sung or performed—that is, sense-perceptible—D flats, and it is of course essential to them, as physical-sensible things, that each be determinately located in some place at some time.

What then *are* the unlimitedly many places on the continuum? In fact, we have already recognized the crucial point. Thinking through the implications of Socrates' musical term *ὁμότονον*, "even-toned," we have seen that every point on the continuum of musical pitch has as its nature some definite balance or ratio of high and low. The notions of continuum and of ratio are mathematical in character. If we bring this together with what we have just said about sensibles, we can see that each place on a continuum is a mathematical model or schema for the unlimitedly many sensibles that may embody it; thus each place exemplifies abstractly, as a pure timeless structure, the precise balance of opposites that each of these sensible embodiments must have.¹⁸ The continuum as a whole, in turn, would be the complete series of possible schemata for sensibles.

There is, of course, nothing normative about such schemata; since, considering them just by themselves, there is no reason to prefer any subset of them to the rest, and since, as we have just noted, every sensible must perfectly realize *some* one of them, such schemata provide no basis for judging between good and bad sensibles. The normative first enters the picture when we turn from these reflections on "the unlimited" to the correlative sense of "limit." If we ask, now, *what is* the "complete number," that is, *what is it* such that it bounds or delimits the "unlimitedly

18. In order to keep in focus the claims Plato has Socrates articulate in the *Philebus*, it is important to keep the scope and character of these claims in perspective. In particular, we can, on the one hand, recognize the general point that forms—in so far as they require of their sensible instances that these balance opposites in certain ways—pick out ratios on the relevant continua without, on the other hand, yet figuring out just how to assign particular numbers to these ratios. The latter work would seem to be partly a matter of convention and technical procedure. Plato's concern in the *Philebus* appears to be much more radical; he seeks to disclose the framework assumptions within which, as a secondary matter, we might choose this or that way of enumeration.

many" places on the continuum, we find, first, that the "complete number" is, as worked out by the god-given *διαίρεσις εἰδῶν*, a "number" of forms. This number—or set—of forms, by picking out a correlative number of particular places (or ranges of places) on the continuum, picks out a set of schemata, and this set of schemata functions as a set of standards or "means" for sensibles.

To spell this out more slowly, we need to distinguish between the normative function of *each* schema (or range of schemata) that is picked out by some one of the "complete number" of forms and the normative function of the *full set* of schemata, taken together, that are picked out by the full set of these forms. Consider first the function of each schema that is picked out by some one of the forms, looking, again, to Socrates' remarks about music. To play on pitch, a musician must choose a mode and restrict himself to notes that belong to it. For example, should he choose the Dorian mode, and should its interval range require a precise B as one of the "boundary notes" (recall τὸς ὄρον, 17c13), he must aim for a precise B; B sharp would be too high, and B flat would be too low, for what the Dorian mode requires. That is to say, however, that the form for that member of the Dorian mode picks out, as a "mean" for sensibles to aim at, that schema, that ratio of high and low, which we designate as B. Actual musical tones which precisely embody that ratio will be in tune, or *good*, while tones which exceed it in either direction will be out of tune, or *bad*.¹⁹

This is the way that *each* schema picked out by a form constitutes what Socrates, at 25a and e, defines as "limit." As the example should remind us, however, the "complete number" of forms come as the interplaying parts or members of a whole, and so, accordingly, do the "mean"-schemata they pick out. We

19. If all this seems more difficult to work out in the case of letters than in the musical case, this is largely because the norms of pronunciation are so habitual and familiar that we take them for granted; but the point becomes clear if we think of the situation of the language learner. The child or foreigner who utters his omegas too openly, verging on alpha, or too closedly, verging on omicron, misses what is appropriate or due, and we correct him, trying to teach him to strike, as best he can, the right balance between extremes. And likewise for all the letter-sounds.

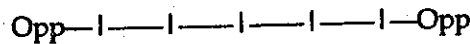
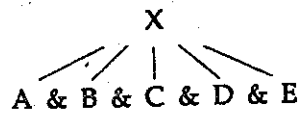
must therefore compound the sense of "limit" by taking the term in a collective sense—as, strikingly, Socrates does in referring to music at 26a4. In addition, we might say, to the "vertical" regulation of sensibles by each form with its attendant schema (or range of schemata), there is also the "horizontal" regulation of the forms, and correspondingly of the attendant schemata, by one another. And this latter order, in turn, has its source in the "single form." It is not just that each of the notes that the musician plays must perfectly embody one or another of the array of "mean"-schemata picked out by the "complete number" of forms. More deeply, by realizing the "mean"-schemata, the notes realize the collaborative order that the "single form"—musical pitch, in the case at hand—implies. That is why, to repeat and complicate our earlier recognition, "the single form" emerges on each of these levels as the differentiated whole of a definite plurality of parts or members; it is only by all of the "complete number" of forms together, in their capacities for interplay—and, derivatively, by the full set of the "mean"-schemata these forms pick out and by the embodiment of this full set by a host of sensibles—that the "single form" is well instantiated.

The new mode of diairesis, the god-given method, aims to bring to light this complex ontological order. We can now put these reflections into one last synoptic diagram:

the "single form"

the "complete number" of forms:
(a whole of members)

the "unlimitedly many," i.e. the continuum between opposites, and the set of normative balances (that is, of limits) that the forms A & B & C & D & E pick out:



the sensible particulars that, to instantiate well the "single form," must embody the various normative balances picked out by A & B & C & D & E

II. Distinguishing "limb by limb" in the Statesman

We turn now to *Statesman* 287bff. This is the point in the dialogue when the Stranger from Elea, having concluded his myth of the ages and his digressions on the use of paradigms, the weaver's art, and due measure, is ready to resume the diairetic search for the definition of statesmanship. Unexpectedly, however, the Stranger announces that he must now give up the mode of diairesis, "cutting into two," that he has practiced throughout the whole of the *Sophist* and, up to this point, the *Statesman*. Just as surprisingly, he gives no explanation, saying only that "the reason will become clear as we proceed" (287b10-c1).²⁰ In the following pages we are given a display of diairesis in a new, non-bifurcatory mode.

The goal of this phase of our reflections is to bring to view the principles of this new mode. Throughout, we shall keep in mind our account of the god-given method in the *Philebus*. With intentional double vision, we shall ask, on the one hand, what the structure of the new mode is and, on the other, whether and how fully the Stranger's concrete practice exemplifies the method Socrates describes in the *Philebus*.

To prepare for these reflections, we should first recall the Stranger's diairesis. In all, he distinguishes fifteen types of art. If we allow ourselves to be guided by his major rhetorical turns, we can divide this process into three major phases. (1) At 287c-289c, he literally counts out²¹ seven types of art that, following his earlier diairesis of weaving, he calls "contributive" (287c8, also 287d2-3, 289c8) rather than "directly responsible." When he first made this distinction in his earlier diairesis of weaving, he explained that he meant to separate the arts that "produce the thing itself" from those that "provide the tools for these arts" (281e). Now, by contrast, he characterizes the art that makes "tools" (ὄργανον, 287d2, d8) as providing the city but one of the

20. In fact, the Stranger's language is oddly obscure. He says, τὸ δ' αὐτὸν, ὡς οἶμαι, προϊδοσιν οὐχ ἥττον ἔσται καταφανές, literally rendered, "The reason, I think, will be no less clear to us as we proceed."

21. See τρίτον, 288a3; τέταρτον, 288b1; πέμπτον, 288c1; ἕκτον, 288d5; ἑβδομον, 289a1.

various kinds of κτήματα, "things" or "possessions" (287e1), that it needs in order to exist, and taking this more general idea, the providing of "things," as the feature common to the contributive arts, he adds to the arts that make tools six further types as well. To list all "seven" (ἑπτὰ, 289a8) in the revised order the Stranger proposes when he sums up at 289a-b, we have the arts that produce "raw materials" (τὸ πρωτογενές κτήμα, 288e5), "tools," "containers" (ἀγγεῖον, 287e9), "vehicles" (ὄχημα, 288a8), "defenses" (πρόβλημα, 288b6), "things for amusement" (παίγιόν τι, 288c6), and "nourishment" (τροφόν, 289a2). (2) This leaves over, as the analogues to the "directly responsible" arts of e.g. spinning and carding in the case of weaving (289c7-8, recalling 282a), "the [class] of slaves and all those who serve," and in the next phase the stranger works through four types of these arts of service, those proper to slaves (289d-e), to merchants and traders (289e-290a), to the literate heralds and clerks who "do all manner of administrative work for the elected officials" (290b),²² and to diviners and priests (290c-e).²³ (3) At 303d, after his long digression on statesmanship and law, the Stranger resumes and completes the diairesis, turning to a set of arts of service that, because they are indispensable to statesmanship, stand apart from the first four analogously as copper, silver, and adamantine exceed earth and stone in value, yet fall short of statesmanship itself as these fall short of gold (303d-e): "generalship (στρατηγία) and the art of rendering justice (δικαστική) and that rhetoric (ῥητορεία) which, sharing in the kingly art, persuades toward the just" (304a). Taking these up one by one—but now, note, in the order of rhetoric (304c-e), generalship (304e-305a),

22. J.B. Skemp's translation, as it appears in Hamilton and Cairns 1961.

23. At this point the Stranger interrupts himself, claiming to be distracted by the bizarre spectacle of a "motley tribe [of men, some of whom] resemble lions and centaurs and the like [and others of whom resemble] satyrs and weak and wily beasts" (291a-b); these are the "faction-makers" (στρασιαστικοί, 303c2), that is, the partisan citizens who in fact govern everywhere, and the Stranger breaks off from his diairesis to make a long reflection (291a-303d) on the relation between ordinary polity, true statesmanship, and the role of law. This is a crucial passage for the interpretation of the *Statesman* as a whole, but it falls outside the scope of our present discussion; because the factional politicians practice no art and, far from having a role in the well-ordered city, usurp and deform true statesmanship, they have no place in the list of "arts concerned with the city itself."

and justice (305b-c)—the Stranger sets them apart from statesmanship as, in each case, the *directed* from the *directing* art.

Thus we have fifteen types, in the following order and groupings:

- "contributive arts":
- (1) arts which produce raw materials
 - (2) arts which produce tools
 - (3) arts which produce containers
 - (4) arts which produce vehicles
 - (5) arts which produce defenses
 - (6) arts which produce amusements
 - (7) arts which produce nourishment

"directly responsible arts":

arts of service,
ordinary...:

- (8) the art proper to slavery
- (9) the arts of merchants and ~~clerks~~ traders
- (10) the arts of heralds and clerks
- (11) the arts of priests and diviners

...and precious:

- (12) rhetoric
- (13) generalship
- (14) the art of justice

directing all these: (15) statesmanship

(a) *The impossibility of "cutting into two"*

The Stranger is not utterly silent about the principles of his diairesis. He offers two clues in a sentence at 287c3-4. The first is his comparison of his procedure to the dismembering, "limb by limb," of "a sacrificial animal" (κατὰ μέλη... οἷον ἱερείου, 287c3); we shall come back to this shortly. The second clue is his declaration that "we are unable [to cut into] two" (δίχα ἀδυνατούμεν, 287c4).

At first look, the Stranger's actual practice seems to give the lie to this declaration. When he applies his earlier bifurcation of "contributive" and "directly responsible" to the arts concerned with the city, the implication would seem to be that the arts con-

cerned with the city *can* be cut into two halves.²⁴ But in fact the situation is more complex. We can begin to see how if we concentrate on *the exact mid-point* of the Stranger's list, the eighth member, the arts proper to slavery (289c). On the one hand, slaves do belong among those directly responsible for the well-being of the city. Unlike the contributive arts, they do not merely produce "things" or "possessions," κτήματα, that others can use as instruments; rather, like the "carders and spinners" the Stranger recalls at 289c, they serve the city by their own deeds. On the other hand, as the Stranger also observes, they are "bought and in this way possessed (κτητούς)" (289d10)²⁵; hence they *are themselves* "things" or "possessions," κτήματα.²⁶ To bring these two sides together, we might say that slaves are in one sense agents and yet, in another sense, the kind of "thing" whose very agency is for others to possess and use. Thus they constitute a middle or intermediate term, continuous with the first seven types of art in that they are themselves "things" or "possessions" and continuous with the next seven in that they are the kinds of "things" that provide deeds of service.

Recognizing this is a first step in connecting the Stranger's diairesis with Socrates' account of the god-given method in the *Philebus*. It is tempting to find in the two-sidedness of the slave's character an analogue to the two-sidedness of Socrates' notion of "even-toned" (δμότονον) pitch as intermediate between, and balancing equally within itself, high and low. And when the Stranger *both* separates slaves from contributive arts and describes them as "the opposite" to the claimants to the title

24. Indeed Goldschmidt 1947 has argued that "la méthode philosophique de vision... est toujours bipartite" (pp. 266-267) and that the Stranger's set of fifteen distinctions is in fact the fruit of a bifurcatory procedure (pp. 270-271, discussed in Miller, 1980, pp. 75-76). As we shall see (and for reasons I did not recognize in 1980), Goldschmidt's approach veils the ontological structure revealed by the Stranger's distinctions.

25. See too 289bff., where the Stranger, even as he sets the holding of slaves apart from the art of herding, refers to it as a kind of ζῴων κτήσιν τῶν ἡμέρων, "possession of tame animals."

26. Two important Aristotelian conceptions seem inexactly foreshadowed by Plato in this part of the *Statesman*—the distinction between ποιήσις and πράξις and the interpretation of the slave as a kind of living tool.

of statesman he finds among the arts of service (289d6-8), we are reminded of the "middle" (recall τὰ μέσα, 18c5-6) status of the "[sounds] that are not voiced but do have a certain noise" in Socrates' account of the alphabet. To go beyond this first step, however, and really spell out and focus the connection, we need to pursue at least three distinct lines of inquiry. First, we saw earlier that the unlimited pluralities of musical tones and linguistic sounds are the fields of possible instantiations of, in each case, a "single form" (μία ἰδέα); is there, in the *Statesman*, a "single form" of which the arts concerned with the city would be the "unlimitedly many" possible instantiations? Second, for a set of items to form a continuum requires, of course, more than that there be a middle term at the interface of two distinct kinds; as the music example illustrated best, the items within the two kinds must, taken all together as one plurality, range as a series between a pair of opposites, with each item marking out a balance that is "more" the one opposite, "less" the other, than the balances marked out by each other item. Do the types of art collected within "contributive" and "directly responsible" comprise such a series? Finally, we have also recognized two related senses of "limit"; the new mode of diairesis aims to disclose that *limited number* of forms that, comprising a differentiated whole of essentially co-operative members, pick out that *set of balances or ratios* of the opposites that are schemata for good instantiations of the "single form." Do we find these senses of "limit" in play in the Stranger's selection of the fifteen kinds?

(b) *The "single form" and its "countless" possible instantiations*

If we look back to the earlier parts of the *Statesman*, in particular to the Stranger's initial definition at 266e-267c and his subsequent objections to and revisions of it, we see that there is indeed a single form that picks out, as its unlimitedly many instantiations, the arts concerned with the city. Looking back to find it, moreover, pays important dividends; to mention only the most obvious ones, it turns out that the logical deficiency of the initial definition and the Stranger's first step to correct it nicely exemplify what Socrates characterizes in the *Philebus* as "contentious" thinking and the first step of the god-given method, respectively.

Recall, first, Socrates' characterization of "contentious" thinking: "...the wise men of the present day," he says, "are both too quick and too slow in making any one they encounter a many, passing immediately from the one to the unlimited; the intermediates elude them, yet it is noticing these that makes the difference between our arguments with each other being dialectical and being contentious" (16e). The situation at the close of the initial phase of diairesis in the *Statesman* provides a good illustration of this. The Stranger and Young Socrates have defined the statesman as the herdsman in charge of the human flock; an essential part of tending to flocks, however, is providing food and nourishment, so the herdsman's art, νομευτική, is also understood as herd-nurture, ἀγελαιοτροφική. The difficulty with this is that there are "countless others" (μυρίων ἄλλων, 268c2) who "contest" the statesman's claim to be the nurturer of men; indeed, food merchants and farmers and millers, since they feed even the rulers (267eff.), can plausibly hold that the definition "fits them before and more (πρότερον καὶ μᾶλλον) than it fits any king" (276b4-5). To bring out the logical structure of the problem: the Stranger has put forth a "one," herd-nurture, that, having "countless" possible instantiations, is "unlimitedly many,"²⁷ and he has let "the intermediates" between the "one" and the "unlimitedly many," the limited number of kinds of herd-nurture, "elude" him. The consequence is unchecked contentiousness: since he has offered no specification of the different ways various of the "many" instantiate the "one," each is perfectly well entitled to claim the statesman's status for itself.

The Stranger mediates the conflict in two steps. First, he names a new "one," revising the characterization of statesmanship from "nurture" (τροφήν, 276d2) to "care" (ἐπιμέλεια, d1). At first sight, this seems *unhelpful*; since the notion of "care" is broader, ^{that} of "nurture," he has actually increased the number of potential contestants. The virtue of this broadening, however, is that it brings back into legitimate contention many arts concerned with the city that "nurture" had left out—including, pos-

27. For *prima facie* textual evidence that it is reasonable to consider that μύρια in the *Statesman* is equivalent to ἄπειρα πλήθει in the *Philebus*, note the appearances of ἄπειρα at *Statesman* 262d3 and of μύρια at *Philebus* 56e4.

sibly, the ruling art itself, if we are to believe the food merchants and farmers and millers. With this revision, the Stranger completes the inaugurative collection, the "search for a single form," in Socrates' words in the *Philebus* (16d1-2), that encompasses within itself all the cases of what it is that is to be studied.²⁸

Collection, of course, prepares the way for division. The Stranger's revision, even while it restores the rulers to center stage, only refocuses the contentiousness of the situation. While "no other art would be willing to declare itself to be care for the whole human community more than and before (μᾶλλον καὶ πρότερα) kingship" (276b8-c1), the others will (as he puts it later on, in an analogous context) "claim great parts (μεγάλα [μερῆ]) for themselves as well" (281b10). The Stranger must therefore now take the second step of differentiating the "one"—or, thinking back to Socrates' account of Theuth's discovery of the alphabet, he must collect the countless "many" arts—into a definite number of kinds, disclosing the quite different "parts" they play in caring for the human community.

(c) *The continuum of "the arts concerned with the city."*

This brings us to our second line of inquiry: does the Stranger's differentiation of the arts at 287bff. trace a continuum between opposites?

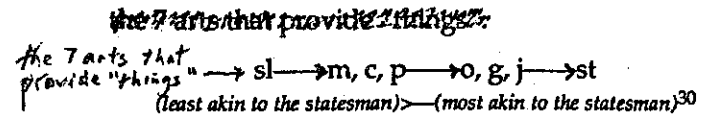
Several of the most obvious features of the passage are encouraging. Clearly, when the Stranger turns from the "contributive" arts to the "directly responsible" ones, and when, within the latter, he works his way from those "opposite" to rulers, namely, from slaves, through the lesser servants—merchants, clerks, and priests—to the statesman's closest aides—orators, generals, and judges—to the statesman himself, the Stranger is moving gradu-

28. One of Sayre's (1969) striking suggestions in his study of the *Theaetetus* and the *Sophist* is that the first six diaireses in the *Sophist* together constitute the work of collection that, in revealing "production" rather "acquisition" as the encompassing kind, sets the stage for the complementary work of division in the seventh diairesis. I am suggesting something analogous in the case of the *Statesman*; the initial diairesis, together with the objections and revisions to which it gives rise, constitutes the work of discovering the encompassing kind (that is, the work of collection) within which, by the diairesis at 287bff. (that is, by division), statesmanship is to be disclosed.

ally from those arts that are least through those that are most akin to statesmanship.²⁹ This surface structure suggests we should redesign our list of fifteen as follows:

29. This gradation of subgroups is confirmed by a pointed feature of the Stranger's rhetoric as he proceeds. As he identifies each kind of art, he pauses to deny that it is the same as statesmanship; there is a clear gradation from the most emphatic negations, given for the first few contributive arts, to the subtle qualifications reserved for the "valuable and kindred" arts of rhetoric, generalship, and justice (303e). The one brief exception seems intended to underscore the overall pattern: the kind the Stranger distinguishes from statesmanship most emphatically of all ("it is in no way [οὐδαμῶς] the work of the kingly science," 288e5-6), the production of raw materials, he first comes to relatively late in his list, as the "sixth" (288d5) of the contributive arts; but as we noted earlier, once he completes his enumeration of the contributive arts, he revises this, declaring that "it would have been more just to have put raw materials at the beginning" (289a), that is, at the farthest remove from statesmanship. Next—now to review the Stranger's grades of negation—come the production of tools, vessels, and supports, all of which are unhesitatingly and unqualifiedly set apart from statesmanship (note οὐδέν μου, 287d4, οὐδέν ἀτεχνῶς, 288a1, and οὐ πᾶν, 288a8, respectively). Then follow the production of defenses, things for amusement, and nourishments, each of which the Stranger sets apart in noticeably more qualified ways: the first of these it would be "by far more correct" (πολλῶ μᾶλλον ὀρθότερον, 288b6-8) to assign to the builder's and weaver's arts than to statesmanship; the second, says the Stranger, for the first time not mentioning statesmanship explicitly, has "no serious purpose but is only for play" (288c), and the third would be "more correctly [ὀρθότερον] assigned" (289a4) to a host of other arts than to statesmanship. When, next, the Stranger turns to the directly responsible arts, he indicates, on the one hand, that Young Socrates and he have now reached "those which will dispute the king over the web of state" (289c5), and he begins, on the other, with the particular kind, slaves, that "least of all [ἥκιστα] lays claim to the king's art" (289e1-2). From here he renews his approach to statesmanship. There can at least be a question about whether merchants and traders—that is, the city's businessmen—can dispute the statesman (290a2). Even though he rejects any claim by heralds and clerks, the city's bureaucrats, he comments that "it was no dream" that led him to expect the statesman's challengers to show up "somewhere in this vicinity" (290b7-8). And when he comes to diviners and priests, the leaders of the city's public religious life, he notes their official political status both in theocratic Egypt and in relatively secular Athens (290d-e). It is, however, the rhetor, general, and judge whom the Stranger declares most "akin and like" (303d5) the statesman; each is a direct agent of the statesman, and for the first time in the series—if we continue to set aside the party politicians, since they practice no art—the act of distinction requires extended argument. Once these three are set aside, the Stranger finally reaches the first term that orients the whole series, statesmanship itself (305eff.). Given the gradation and relative groupings we have noted, the list of fifteen might be diagrammed as follows:

(cont.)



But recognizing this much is just a start. The continua Socrates traced in the *Philebus* were bipolar, stretching between positive and complementary opposites, and the dialectician, Socrates told us in the alphabet example, "differentiates [groups]... down to the level of single ones" (διήρει μέχρι ἐνδὸς ἐκάστου, 18c4-5). Can we recognize positive and complementary opposites underlying the Stranger's one-directional series? And if we look at the series more closely, moving from the groups just noted to each "one" of the fifteen kinds, do we find each to imply a different balance of such opposites, thereby picking out its own proper place on the continuum between them?

In fact, the basic structural moments of such a continuum, polar opposites and the mid-point between them, are not hard to see. One pole emerges if we ask: in what respect is the statesman's the most "directly responsible" of "the arts concerned with the city?" His core activity, as the Stranger describes it in the final pages of the dialogue, is *the formation of character* in the citizens, curbing excessive spirit and gentleness alike and securing a good balance of courage and moderation within and between the citizens; and in this work, though he attends to the levels of body and honor, binding spirited and gentle natures by marriage and by a sharing of offices and awards, his primary focus is the generation of a shared "true opinion" about what is beautiful, just, and good through education and lawgiving. Thus the statesman's work is that most concerned with the *spiritual* life of the city. The polar opposite to this emerges when we look back to the arts to which the Stranger pointedly grants the

(1)	(2-4)	(5-7)	(8)	(9-11)	(12-14)	(15)
rm;	t,c,v;	d,a,n;	s;	m&t, h&c, d&p;	r,g,j;	st.
(least like statesmanship)					(most like statesmanship)	

30. This much, but this much only, I saw in 1980, pp. 77-79.

first place in his list (cf. κατ' ἀρχάς, 289a10),³¹ the arts that provide raw materials, "gold and silver and everything that is gotten by mining" and timber and bark and animal hides and, in general, everything that, "not synthetic," serves as "stuff" for the synthesizing and ordering work of the other "contributive" arts (288d-e). In the most literal and extreme sense, these arts are those most concerned with the *material* life of the city.³² Finally, we can see afresh the appropriateness of placing the slave's service midway between these poles: putting their persons at the disposal of others, the slaves make of themselves a kind of raw material or *matter* for their masters to form; but precisely as persons, slaves are agents, and as such they assist in the activities of all the other arts, those focused on the production of things and those devoted to service alike; in these several ways slaves represent an even balance between material and spiritual.

If, now, we go back through the Stranger's list with the continuum formed by these three moments in mind, all of the other arts appear properly placed. To see this, consider each of the major groups in turn.

(i) *The "contributive" arts:* The seven kinds of "contributive" art all produce material things of one sort or another. By his sequencing, however, the Stranger traces grades of immersion in the material, moving from more to less. Note, moreover, that the seven kinds are not, so to speak, equidistant each from the next; rather, they are ordered in just the pattern—1/3/3—that we have already noted in the surface structure of the Stranger's distinctions of the servant arts. Thus, the first kind, the production of raw materials, provides *stuff* for all the other thing-making arts (288d-e). The next three kinds produce *things for the*

31. When, at 289a, he comes to sum up his diairesis of the "contributive" arts, the Stranger makes a point of moving the production of raw materials from the sixth place, where he had first disclosed it, back to the first place in his list.

32. But, to be very explicit, for these arts to be "most" concerned with the material life of the city does not mean either that they are concerned *solely* with the material (for they produce raw materials for further formation by other arts and in this indirect way are guided by the eventual social use of these) or that the pole itself of material life is unrelated to its opposite (for Plato, the physical is for the spiritual, just as, in the other direction, the right order of the soul presupposes and preserves the health of the body).

sake, so to speak, of other things—to "produce" (287e) and to "preserve" (287e) and to bear and transport (288a) them.³³ The last three, in turn, produce *things for the sake not (or not primarily)*³⁴ of things as such but of persons in their physical being, providing them with "defenses" like clothing and weapons and walls (288b), with merely diverting³⁵ entertainment (that would, it therefore appears, play to the desires associated with body) (288c), and with the food that "is blended with parts of the body" and the exercise that keeps the body in good health (288c-289a).³⁶

(ii) *The lesser arts of service:* The class of merchants and traders is properly placed next to slaves. As the city's economic agents they are directly involved in its social life, serving and transacting with other persons; their specific task, however, is the distribution of material goods and slaves (289e). The class of heralds and clerks, in turn, helps to manage both these and other, non-economic activities; as administrative in character and wider-ranging, their work is less closely tied to the material life of the city. By contrast, the class of priests and diviners has an obvious

33. But see τινος and τινα at 288a6-7. These may refer to persons—but, note, as *physical objects*—as well as to other things. With this ambiguity, the Stranger indicates how this class borders on the next.

34. There is, however, the same sort of ambiguity that we noted in n. 33 with regard to the arts of vehicle-making. "Defenses" can protect things as well as persons, and so this kind, even while the emphasis is on persons (note, for instance, clothes-making), borders closely on vehicle-making.

35. "None of the[se arts] are practiced for the sake of anything serious (σπουδῆς... χάριν); rather, all are practiced for the sake of play (παίδως ἕνεκα)" (288c). The Stranger includes "ornamentation," "painting," and "music."

36. The nourishment-providing arts are doubly transitional. It is a short step from providing "whatever things, the parts of which are blended with the parts of the body," to producing the body itself; the Stranger seems to allude to this when, in his synoptic list of the seven kinds of contributive art at 289a-b, he names the product of the nourishment-providing arts as θρέμμα, which means "nursling" and can refer both to animals and to human beings and, among the latter, especially to domestic slaves. Thus it prepares the way for the art of the slave, in which the "artisan" provides his very person for use. Moreover, by including among the nourishment-providing arts both medicine, which can provide a regimen as well as medicaments, and gymnastics, which provides not things but instructions for exercise, the Stranger also already begins to point beyond thing-production to deeds of service.

In two obvious respects, we have already begun to answer this question: the Stranger has, of course, distinguished a limited number of forms, and these forms, just by picking out places on the continuum between the material and the spiritual life of the city, pick out various balances or ratios of these opposites. What we still need to see, however, is the way the "single form" requires just *these* forms and, in turn, the balances they imply in order that it be well instantiated. Why does "care" for the whole human community require *these* fifteen kinds of art?

Much earlier we noted that the Stranger offers two clues to the principles of his new mode of diairesis. Now it is time to recall the first clue, his comparison of his procedure to the dismembering, "limb by limb," of "a sacrificial animal," (*κατὰ μέλη... οἷον ἑρεῖον*), for with it, the Stranger both encourages and orients our question. The notion of the "sacrificial animal," the *ἑρεῖον*, first of all, suggests that what the diairesis aims to reveal transcends the actual as the sacred transcends the mundane. This is confirmed when the Stranger later speaks of the "divine bond" (*θεῖον*, 309c2-3, also c7) with which the statesman unites the citizens and calls a people thus united "daimonic" (*δαίμονις*, 309c8). The divine and daimonic stand to the human as the highest and best possible to the actual. Thus, just as in the diairesis of musical pitch and letters in the *Philebus*, the diairesis in the *Statesman* aims to disclose a sense of "care" for the whole human community that is *normative* for actual cities.

But again: why specifically *these* kinds? Seen each by itself, many of the fifteen seem almost trivial. Is the making of "containers" really a significant kind of "care" for the whole human community? Or of "vehicles"? Do "clerks" really warrant special mention? And so on. But here the Stranger's phrase, "limb by limb," becomes a key. It suggests that diairesis aims not only to cut at the real joints but also, in doing so, to disclose a set of organs, of co-operative members essentially suited to function together. This was also the strong implication, as we saw, of Socrates' choice of examples in the *Philebus*: specific notes are good instantiations of pitch only insofar as they belong together in comprising definite musical "modes"; in the case of the alpha-

bet, it is only by virtue of their distinctive powers of combination with one another that most of the letter-sounds can first be heard and discerned *as* letter sounds in the first place. Likewise in the *Statesman*, "care" for the whole human community surely requires not just good rulers but, as the very precondition for the distinctive work of ruling, the possibility of co-operative interplay between a number of kinds of art that minister to our quite various genuine needs. If we turn back to the Stranger's continuum with this in mind, the particular distinctions he draws now make fresh good sense.³⁹

Appropriately, we can start anywhere. Suppose, for the sake of just one possible rethinking, we grant the obvious point that "care" for the whole human community requires providing shelter and clothing—that is, the production of "defenses" (arts #5 in the Stranger's series); but surely we need not only functional things that preserve us but also beautiful things that entertain and amuse us (arts #6), and the real value of either of these sorts of goods depends on our being in good health in the first place—that is, on the arts of "nourishment," by which we supply and structure our diet and maintain our vigor (arts #7). Now, all three sorts of goods, taken together, also require, on the one hand, various raw materials (arts #1) and the tools to turn them into useful objects (arts #2) and, on the other, merchants and traders to distribute them (arts #9). Merchants and traders, in turn, require means of storing (arts #3) and transporting (arts #4) the goods they distribute, and their selling and trading require record-keeping and administration (arts #10) and, wherever

39. This is not to say that they can't be challenged, and in different kinds of ways. (1) The Stranger himself points out, for example, that someone might object that no one of the kinds is concerned to produce the "coins, seals, and stamps" that the city's economy requires, and he answers that with a certain "violence" (*βία*, 289b7) the production of these may be fit partly into tool-making (arts #2) and partly into the making of things for ornamentation (arts #5). This is interesting, for it suggests that his concern is less with the integrity of any one art or set of arts than with the disclosure of the various mutually integrable and interplaying functions that the arts perform and display. (2) The most compelling challenge is also the most obvious: is the inclusion of slaves really justifiable? To put this in a polemical formulation that flows from our modern commitment to the liberty and equality of human beings, is "care" for the *whole human community* best instantiated by a collaboration of arts that requires denying the full humanity of the largest part of the community?

teachings"⁴⁰ that Aristotle reports Plato offered in the Academy. Is it possible that the *Philebus* and the *Statesman* passages are indirect and largely inexplicit presentations of these "unwritten teachings"? Indeed, might they even be initiating enticements towards these teachings? To explore these possibilities, we need to ask whether the ontology presupposed by the god-given method prefigures or converges with the ontology those "teachings" reportedly contained.⁴¹ This requires examining at least four elements of the god-given method for their possible connections with elements in Aristotle's reports. (1) How is the "single form" or "one" related to what Aristotle calls "the One"? (2) What might be the relation of the opposites that frame the continuum and what Aristotle calls the "indeterminate dyad" of the great and the small? (3) Do the balances or ratios and the continuum, with their status as intermediate between forms and sensibles, belong to what Aristotle reports as the "intermediate" class of "mathematicals"? (4) Finally, how does the sourcing of normative order in the "single form," in the *Philebus* and the *Statesman*, relate to the status of the One itself as the cause of what is good (τὸ εὖ), in the "unwritten teachings"?

We might begin with these questions tomorrow.

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40. Aristotle, *Physics* 209b14-15.

41. I want to acknowledge my debt to the fascinating recent work of Sayre, especially 1983. By finding elements of the "unwritten teachings" in the *Philebus*, he has given new life and argument to the effort to break free from the equally problematic alternatives of Tübingen esotericism and Cherniss' rejection of Aristotle's report. Nonetheless, there are some large difficulties with his account, as he has shaped it so far, and it has been partly in thinking into these against the background of my own earlier work that I have come to see the need, and the possibility, for beginning again. Two such difficulties: (1) As I do, Sayre comes to the *Philebus* from the *Parmenides*. But, as I have tried to show at length and in detail in the notes to Miller 1986, his reading of that dialogue, above all of the hypotheses, is strained and problematic. He argues that Plato is in the process of rejecting the separateness of the forms and that the hypotheses constitute a *reductio* against this old idea. But on my reading, the first two hypotheses challenge the misunderstanding of separateness that results from thinking forms on the model of sensible things; rather than rejecting it, they *reinterpret* separateness

by showing how forms transcend the categories proper to sensibles. The new conception of separateness this yields is then presupposed in the account of participation offered in the third hypothesis. (2) Aristotle seems nowhere to notice that Plato has given up the notion of the separateness of the forms. Yet he is our main source for the "unwritten teachings." If in these teachings Plato overcomes and rejects this central tenet of the middle dialogues, the tenet that, in Aristotle's view, most of all made the Platonic assertion of forms both original and untenable, wouldn't we expect Aristotle, the thinker who gives us the clearest grasp we possess of Plato's teachings in the Academy, to report this?

Colloquium 9

Commentary on Miller

Deborah De Chiara-Quenzer

In my commentary on Mitchell Miller's paper, I am going to discuss three issues which he raises. All three issues are significant, although I disagree with the positions that Miller takes.

The first issue is Miller's interpretation of ἄπειρον in the description of the method at 16-18 of the *Philebus*. According to Miller, in the description of the method there are two types of many. One type of many is a fixed and definite many. Socrates' references to number throughout 16-18 are a reference to this fixed and definite many. Thus, for example, when Socrates speaks of ὅποσα (of how many) at 16d7, this refers to the fixed and definite many. Miller's view is that the fixed and definite many refers to a set of transcendent forms; that is, to a set of forms which are separate from sensible things. According to Miller, there is another type of many discussed in the description of the method (16-18). This is an unlimitedly many which is Miller's translation of the expression πολλά καὶ ἄπειρα at 16d6. This unlimitedly many is a continuum, that is, a continuous range or series framed by two opposite forms. Miller and I disagree in our views of the nature of the ἄπειρον in the description of the method (16-18). Miller views the ἄπειρον as a continuum whereas I view the ἄπειρον as countless particulars which are instances of forms or types.

One of the reasons Miller views ἄπειρον in the description of the method as a continuum is because of the example of music presented at 17b11-d3. In that example, the ἄπειρον is referred to in the following way: "heavy and sharp and even-toned" (βαρὺ καὶ ὀξύ καὶ ὁμότονον, 17c4). Miller interprets this reference to heavy and sharp and even-toned as a reference to a con-

tinuum of musical sound. He finds that at 26a2-4 of the passage on the four kinds (23-27) musical sound is referred to in this way. It is a continuum of sound bounded by the heavy and the sharp. It is my view that in the passage on the four kinds (23-27) ἄπειρον refers to the general class of continuum. The general class of continuum is divided into different forms or types, and one of those forms is the sharp and heavy (see 26a2). That is, one of those forms of ἄπειρον in the passage on the four kinds is the continuum of musical sound. Thus Miller and I both agree that at 26a2-4 the sharp and heavy refers to a continuum of musical sound. However Miller's view is that the heavy and sharp and more generally the ἄπειρον has the same meaning in the example of the method at 17c4 as it does at 26a2-4 of the passage of the four kinds. I would argue that ἄπειρον means two different things in those two passages. In the description and examples of the method (16-18) ἄπειρον refers to an unlimited number of instances of the many of a general class, whereas in the passage on the four kinds (23-27) ἄπειρον refers to a continuum.

Let me demonstrate my view of the meaning of ἄπειρον at 16-18 with the example of pleasure. Pleasure, a one, that is a general form, is divided into different forms (many). One of those forms of pleasure is the mixed pleasure of the body and soul. It is the presence of pain and the anticipation of pleasure. An example is the presence of hunger (pain) in a person, and the anticipation of eating (pleasure). ἄπειρον in the passage on the method (16-18) refers to the countless times persons or beings experience such pleasure. Those experiences are so numerous that they are uncountable and thus ἄπειρον, that is, virtually infinite. Put another way, those experiences are tokens of the mixed pleasure of the body and soul.

If ἄπειρον in the description and examples of the method (16-18) is viewed as referring to countless instances or tokens of forms, then many more of the references to ἄπειρον will make sense in that passage than if ἄπειρον is viewed as a continuum. Let us take Socrates' first illustration of the method at 17a8-b10. There he says the following: