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THE ONE AND THE MANY
GARETH B. MATTHEWS AND S. MARC COHEN

THE PLATONIC ARGUMENT that Aristotle calls “The One Over Many” (990^b13; 1079^a9)¹ doubtless had something like this as its key premiss:

Whenever two or more things can be properly said to be *F*, it is by virtue of some one thing, *F*-ness, that they are properly called *F*.

The following sentence from Plato’s *Republic* suggests such a premiss:

We are in the habit of assuming one Form for each set of many things to which we give the same name.²

The pattern of reasoning is familiar. *x* and *y* are round. It must be in virtue of roundness (or in virtue of their participating in roundness) that they are properly said to be round. Exactly what is established by the reasoning—for that matter, what is supposed to be established—is not obvious. Taken in one way, Plato’s Theory of Forms presents us with nothing more than a manner of speaking. Instead of saying that Socrates is wise, Pericles is wise and Thucycides is wise we can now say, backed by the One-Over-Many Argument, that each partakes of wisdom. Instead of saying that Callias is a man, Coriscus is a man, and Callicles is a man, we can say that all participate in manhood.

But if we take Plato’s theory this way, we ignore the perplexities that give rise to it. There are at least two distinguishable perplexities that lead to a doctrine like Plato’s.³ One perplexity is

¹ Line references, unless otherwise identified, are to the works of Aristotle.

² *Republic* 596A. Translations of passages from Plato and Aristotle are our own.

³ Cf. David Pears’s two questions, “Why are things as they are?” and “Why are we able to name things as we do?” in his article, “Universals,” in *Logic and Language* (2nd series), ed. by A. Flew (Oxford, 1953), pp. 51-64.

ontological: Why is it that things naturally fall into kinds? The other—and it is this perplexity especially that gives life to the One-Over-Many Argument—is linguistic.⁴ The puzzle is this: How can it be that many things are properly called by one name? To take this puzzle seriously we must indulge (1) the inclination to take the case of one name for each thing named (i.e., the case of an ideal proper name) as the paradigm case of a name, and also (2) the inclination to suppose that ‘wise’ in ‘Pericles is wise’ and ‘a man’ in ‘Callias is a man’ are names. If we go along with these inclinations,⁵ then the puzzle, How can it be that many things are properly called by one name?, becomes real.

And now the One-Over-Many Argument offers, not just a prolix and circuitous manner of speaking, but a resolution of the puzzle. It abets inclinations (1) and (2) above and (apparently) resolves the puzzle in harmony with them. For Plato is now seen to be saying that ‘wise’ and ‘a man’ are names all right; furthermore they are names in a way not too different from the way in which ‘Socrates’ and ‘Callias’ are names. What ‘wise’ names (or refers to) is something all wise things participate in, by virtue of which participation they are properly called “wise.” And what ‘a man’ names (or refers to) is something all men participate in, by virtue of which each is properly said to be a man.⁶

Although as a manner of speaking Plato’s Theory of Forms causes no trouble, as a way of coming to understand and deal with worries over the One and the Many, the difficulties it gives rise to are notorious. Plato himself identified and discussed many of these difficulties with candor and perspicuity. It is not, however, Plato’s candor or his perspicuity that we want to assess here. Instead we shall concern ourselves with Aristotle’s answer to the One-Over-Many Argument. Specifically we shall discuss Aristotle’s *Cate-*

⁴ Though Plato sometimes makes use of a form of the One-Over-Many Argument that is not expressly linguistic, most notably, perhaps, in the Third Man passage from the *Parmenides*, 132A-B.

⁵ We have identified these inclinations rather aseptically without attempting to activate or intensify them in the reader. But this does not mean we consider them either jejune or inconsequential.

⁶ “. . . it is by virtue of participating in these [Forms] that other things have their names,” *Parmenides*, 130E and *Phaedo*, 102B.

gories as an answer to Plato. We want to try to show that the *Categories*, on at least one plausible interpretation, offers a more general answer to Plato than has usually been thought to be the case. We shall then make some comments toward assessing the philosophical strengths and weaknesses of this Aristotelian answer.

I

The theme of Aristotle's *Categories*, one might say, is that predication is not such a simple affair as Plato, with his One-Over-Many Argument, would have us think. Aristotle takes it as his major task in the *Categories* to sort out and clarify the variety of ways in which something may be properly said to be so-and-so.

The first kind of case Aristotle marks off is the case in which we say of Fenimore that he is a cat, or of Nellie that she is a cow. In Aristotle's jargon, Fenimore and Nellie are primary substances; cat and cow are secondary substances. What Aristotle seems to want to bring out with his terminology is this. There being the secondary substance cat is a matter of there being individual cats—Fenimore, Felix, Felicia, and the rest. There would not be cat without there being some individual cat or other. But neither could there be individuals that are not individual somethings-or-other, e.g., individual cats, individual cows, individual men, etc. Every individual is an individual such-and-such.⁷ And so the such-and-such of an individual is also the being or substance (*οὐσία*) of the individual; it is what the individual is.

In a way the notions of primary and secondary substance are correlative, for there is no individual that is not an individual such-and-such, and no such-and-such without there being an individual such-and-such. Yet Aristotle contrasts individuals with their

⁷ Cf. G. E. M. Anscombe and P. T. Geach, *Three Philosophers* (Oxford, 1961), pp. 7-8. Miss Anscombe makes this an epistemological point about identifying, rather than a metaphysical point about identity. Thus she denies that "one can identify a *thing* without identifying it as a *such-and-such*" (p. 10). Cf. A. C. Lloyd, "Aristotle's *Categories* Today," *The Philosophical Quarterly*, 16 (July 1966), pp. 258-267, espec. p. 264.

species and genera by calling the first *primary* and the rest *secondary substances*. Why so?

Here we have our first clue to the importance Aristotle attaches to classification. When I say that Nellie is a cow I am, so to speak, locating Nellie on a classification chart.⁸ The chart is built up from the individuals that it classifies. The fact that, ultimately, it is individuals that the chart classifies is brought out by calling the individuals *primary* substances. The correlative character of the distinction between individuals and their species or genera is emphasized by calling them all *substances*.

Already we have the beginning of an answer to Plato's One-Over-Many Argument. Plato wants us to suppose that it is by virtue of cathood that both Fenimore and Felix are properly called cats. But if cathood is something "over against" Felix and Fenimore, Felix and Fenimore must be something apart from cathood. And what would either Felix or Fenimore be apart from cathood?

There is a natural Platonic rejoinder to this rhetorical question. It is to reject the principle required to make the question legitimate. The principle is this: For x to be able to bear any relation, R , to something else, y , x must be something in its own right, independent of its bearing R to y . The Platonic rejoinder is to reject this principle and to justify its rejection by pointing to things like reflections and shadows that are *essentially* or *constitutively relational*. Schubert's shadow, e.g., would certainly not be what it is (viz., Schubert's shadow)—indeed Schubert's shadow could not be said to exist—apart from its bearing the shadowing relation it bears to Schubert. Schubert's shadow's being what it is, in fact its very existence, is essentially tied to its bearing the relation it bears to Schubert.

We might stop to notice that making the need for this rejoinder clear does a great deal to undermine the force of the One-Over-Many Argument. That argument, let us recall, is supposed to be an argument for the existence of Forms. It allegedly establishes the existence of Forms by an extrapolation from proper names to general terms. In particular, it generalizes on the relation between

⁸ See, e.g., 2^b7-22 and 2^b29-3^a7.

a proper name and what it names in such a way as to be able to embrace the relation between a general term and what it “names” (i.e., its meaning). If this argument is to be a non-circular argument for the existence of Forms, then we must be able to understand the relation between a proper name and what it names without antecedent commitment to the Theory of Forms.

But can we do this? It begins to look very dubious indeed. To understand the relation between a proper name and what it names clearly includes understanding what the correct application of a proper name consists in. And that surely involves understanding something about the (according to Plato) essentially relational character of the bearers of proper names. A dark spot on the ground that stays put after Schubert has gone home is not Schubert’s shadow. Nor, perhaps, is the hulk lying lifeless on the pallet Socrates. If the bearer of a proper name is nothing independent of bearing a certain relation to a certain Form, then it seems unreasonable to suppose that we can understand the relation between a proper name and what it names without the antecedent assumption that there are Forms. And if this is so, then the One-Over-Many Argument fails to provide a non-circular argument for the existence of Forms.

We have just argued that a certain Platonic rejoinder to Aristotle itself has the effect of weakening the force of the One-Over-Many Argument. But we do not mean to suggest that Aristotle employed this dialectical strategy against Plato. Rather Aristotle took the much more direct line of denying that primary substances such as Felix and Fenimore are relational entities (8^a16). To adapt from the *Categories* an Aristotelian way of arguing, we might say that Felix is not said to be Felix (or the Felix) of anything; therefore Felix and Fenimore are not “relatives” (τὰ πρὸς τι). Aristotle certainly worried about whether some secondary substances might be “relatives” (8^a13f.). But it seemed to him quite clear that primary substances are not.⁹

⁹ We might add that Plato did very little to make good his suggestion that (what Aristotle called) primary substances are relational entities. In particular he never explained how (say) the Felix of cathood could be marked off from (say) the Fenimore of cathood.

If Felix and Fenimore and Felicia are not relational entities, then the perplexity remains as before. Felix must be what he is independent of any relations he may stand in. But how can he be, if his being a cat is supposed to consist in his bearing a certain relation to cathood?

In place of Plato's relational account Aristotle's doctrine of primary and secondary substance offers a non-relational way of understanding what it is for Felix to be a cat. Every individual is an individual so-and-so. For Felix to be an individual is already for him to be a cat. And for Socrates to be an individual is already for him to be a man. To be sure, being an individual and being a cat are not, in general, the same thing. But what that means is not that there is a way of being an individual without being an individual something or other. What it means is that, for any given secondary substance, one can be an individual without being an individual *that*. But for Felix to be an individual is for him to be an individual cat. And for Socrates to be an individual is for him to be an individual man.¹⁰

So far we have talked about x's being F, where x is a primary substance and F a secondary substance. Let us now say a word about the case in which F is the differentia of some species (as, e.g., in 'Callias is rational'). Aristotle says very firmly that differentiae, like substances, but unlike qualities, are not in a subject (3^a21-2). And he classes differentiae with substances in another way, too. He says that the definition of a differentia, like the definition of a secondary substance, but unlike the definition of a quality, is predicated of that of which the differentia is said (3^a25-6).

Classing differentiae with secondary substances, rather than with qualities, makes problems for Aristotle's categorial scheme. We shall not try to discuss these problems here. But it is worth commenting on how understanding differentiae this way fits in with what has already been said about Aristotle's answer to Plato. *Rational* is the differentia of man. So Callias is rational and Cori-

¹⁰ The significance of these ideas can perhaps be better appreciated in the light of recent discussions of "sortal" predicates. Cf. especially John R. Wallace, "Sortal Predicates and Quantification," *The Journal of Philosophy*, LXII (1965), pp. 8-13.

scus is rational. But we must not think of rationality as something “over against” Callias and Coriscus,¹¹ something in which they could both be thought to participate. For rationality is essential to a man’s being a man. To be Callias is to be rational, and to be rational is to be some man or other—Callias or Coriscus or someone.

So where F is either a secondary substance or the differentia of some species, what it is for x to be F and for y to be F is not explained by saying that x and y bear some relation to F-ness. Rather it is to be explained by reference to the idea of a completely fundamental classification. The fundamental character of this classification is brought out by saying that, instead of simply ordering individuals that have been somehow previously marked off as individuals, this classification provides the terms in which individuals are said and seen to be individuals.

II

Of the ten categories that Aristotle lists in his *Categories*, it is what he calls secondary substance and what he calls quality that are perhaps most important in the application of the One-Over-Many Argument. So, having said something about secondary substances, let us turn now to qualities. We shall devote most of the rest of the discussion to that topic.

We have already seen that, where F is a secondary substance, Aristotle conceives saying of x that it is F as making a basic classification. But suppose F is not a secondary substance. When I say that Fenimore is grey, for example, am I again classifying Fenimore? It may seem so. After all, cats can be classified according to their color. But classification is here rather different from what it was in the case of our saying that Fenimore is a cat. For in that

¹¹ One might, of course, expect that a single differentia would appear in two entirely different classification schemes and thereby achieve a certain independence of any individual classified by only one of these schemes. Aristotle, however, explicitly denies this possibility when he says, “Differentiae of genera that are different and not subordinate one to another are also different in kind” (1^o16-7).

case to say of x that it is F is, so to speak, to pick out two items in a classification chart such that x is something in a direct line under F . Now of course grey, perhaps even Fenimore's exact shade of grey, may appear in a classification chart. But a chart of colors in which Fenimore's shade of grey appears would not be a chart in which Fenimore himself (or any other cat) appears. So saying of Fenimore that he is grey is not classifying Fenimore in the way that saying of him that he is a cat is classifying him.

A natural response to this sort of consideration would be to say that 'Fenimore is grey' is elliptical for 'Fenimore is a grey cat'. This will preserve the symmetry, one might suppose; for in a classification table in which 'grey cat' appeared as a species, it would be appropriate for the name of an individual grey cat, like Fenimore, to appear as well.

Aristotle does not consider this move explicitly.¹² But it is easy enough to figure out an appropriate reply on his behalf. If we could really classify Fenimore as a grey cat (in much the way we classify him as a cat), then for cat a and cat b both to be Fenimore would be for them to be the same *grey cat*.¹³ But, of course, Fenimore might have his hair bleached. Then cat a (Fenimore with grey hair) and cat b (Fenimore with bleached hair) would both be Fenimore, without being the same *grey cat*.

So when I say that Fenimore is grey, it is not Fenimore I am classifying. What then? His color. Fenimore's color, according to Aristotle, is one of the things that is *in* Fenimore, though it is not *said of* Fenimore as subject.

That brings us to Aristotle's notion of being in a subject, as opposed to not being in a subject, and the associated distinction between being said, and not being said, of a subject. Before proceeding any further we must try to say something about these two distinctions.

Aristotle warns us immediately that he is assigning a technical meaning to 'in a subject.' He says, "I call 'in a subject' what is in something, belonging to it not as a part, and which cannot exist

¹² At least not in the *Categories*. Discussions of unity of definition in later works are, of course, relevant. (Cf. *Metaphysics* Z4-5.)

¹³ Cf. *Three Philosophers*, p. 8; P. T. Geach, *Mental Acts* (London, 1957), p. 69.

apart from what it is in" (1^a24-5). But he offers us no such help in understanding the notion of being said of a subject. It is natural to conclude that what Aristotle has in mind with this idea is not a technical notion. More specifically, it is natural to assume that, where x is a subject, φ is said of x if and only if, x is said to be φ . But this will not do. For at 2^a32 Aristotle agrees that a body is said to be white (λευκὸν γὰρ σῶμα λέγεται).¹⁴ And what he goes on to say entails that white is not said of a body as subject. What he goes on to say is that the definition of white will never be predicated of the body (2^a32-4). And he has said earlier that if something is said of a subject both its name and its definition are necessarily predicated of the subject (2^a19-21).

So what is it to say something of a subject? At 2^a19 we learn two necessary and perhaps jointly sufficient conditions. If φ is said of a subject, x , then both the name of φ and the definition of φ will be predicated (i.e., predicable) of x . Aristotle makes clear that the part about the name being predicable is the weaker of the two conditions. The name of (the color) white, viz., 'white', is predicable of a swan (as when I say, "The swan is white"), though the name of beauty, say, (viz., 'beauty') is not predicable of the swan (for I cannot say, "The swan is beauty"). But not even in the case of the color, white, is the definition predicable.

Aristotle's notion seems to be this.¹⁵ φ is said of a subject, x , if and only if, x is said to be a φ (or a kind of φ). That is, φ is said of a subject, x , if and only if, x is classified¹⁶ as a φ . Thus, man is said of the individual man as subject when one says of him that he is a man. And knowledge is said of grammar as subject when one says that grammar is a kind of knowledge. But white is not said of a body as subject even though the body is said to be white; for a body is not a white (or a kind of white either).

If x is classified as a φ , then the definition of φ will be predicable of x , because the definition gives species and differentiae and they are always predicable of inferiors (1^b10-25). But since no body

¹⁴ Or perhaps "light in color" (λευκόν). Cf. G. E. L. Owen, "Inherence," *Proneis*, X (1965), p. 98.

¹⁵ In the *Categories*. Contrast *Physics* 185^a32.

¹⁶ "Classified," of course, in an absolutely fundamental way.

is classified as a white, we cannot expect the definition of 'white' to be predicable of any body.

Equipped with these distinctions Aristotle marks off the following four classes: (1) things said of a subject but not in any subject; (2) things in a subject but not said of any subject; (3) things both said of a subject and in a subject; (4) things neither said of a subject nor in a subject.

The following will serve as examples to illustrate what Aristotle may have had in mind with this classification scheme. (1) *Cat* is said of a subject (as when I say that Fenimore is a cat), but *cat* is not in any subject. (2) *This bit of grey* is in a subject (Fenimore), but it is not said of any subject, for I do not say of Fenimore (or anything else) that he is a this-bit-of-grey. (3) *Grey* is said of a subject and is also in a subject; *grey* is said of a subject when I say that charcoal is a grey, and grey is in Fenimore if Fenimore is grey.¹⁷ (4) *Fenimore* is himself neither in a subject nor said of a subject. The first part is obvious. The second depends upon the fact that nothing is said to be a Fenimore,¹⁸ or a kind of Fenimore.¹⁹

On the interpretation embodied in these examples, secondary substances belong to class (1), unit qualities to class (2), universal qualities to class (3) and primary substances to class (4). In order to justify our use of this rather traditional interpretation we need to say something more about classes (2) and (3).

First, a remark about class (3). Aristotle's only immediate example of something in this class is knowledge. Knowledge, he says, is both in a subject, the soul, and said of a subject, grammar (1^b1-3). Presumably the subject which an item in this class is said of, will always be different from the subject or subjects it is in. Grey, for example, will be said of the subject, charcoal grey, but it

¹⁷ In general there is a paronymous relation between what is in a subject and what the thing is said to be by virtue of having that in it: e.g., a man is said to be *brave* by virtue of having *bravery* in him (10^a27-9).

¹⁸ This is not, of course, strictly true. I can say of my cat that he is a Fenimore and mean that he is among the cats called "Fenimore." Aristotle is not interested in this sort of case.

¹⁹ This is very different from G. E. L. Owen's claim that "Aristotle will not allow the designation of a primary substance to occur in the predicate-position." *op. cit.*, p. 97.

is in, say, Fenimore. More generally, grey will be said of a color, but will be in a body. It may be said of the color of a body, but it will not be said of the body (for to do so would be to classify the body as a color).

We should now like to comment on class (2) and on the relation between classes (2) and (3). We can do this by way of discussing the already cited paper, "Inherence," by G. E. L. Owen. In his paper Owen sets out to "nail" a "fashionable dogma" about Aristotle according to which "the only item from any category that can be present in an individual subject, in the requisite sense of 'in', is one that is not only quite determinate but non-recurrent; a unit property in Russell's sense" (p. 99). Owen's case against this "dogma" is completely convincing. When Aristotle says that "color is in body, and therefore in an individual body" (2^b1-2) he surely means to be saying just what he says.

However, in rejecting the "dogma" that, according to Aristotle, *only* unit properties may be in primary substances, Owen seems also to be rejecting the idea of individual properties altogether. Or at least, his notion of what Aristotle means by an individual in the category of quality is such that a particular shade of color would illustrate what Aristotle has in mind rather than, say, this bit of blue in this blue brooch. Owen supports his case this way:

Compare the predicate 'animal' with the predicate 'colour'. 'Animal' is predicable of man, and 'animal' and 'man' are in turn predicable of Socrates the individual. His individuality is just that he, or his name, is not predicable of anything less general; and further, since he is an individual *substance*, that he is not found *in* any individual in the way that colours and shapes and sizes are found in their possessors. 'Colour' on the other hand, is predicable of pink, and 'colour' and 'pink' are in turn predicable of any particular shade of pink—any of those shades of which Aristotle is ready to prove that only a finite number is discriminated by sight (*Sens.* 445^b20-446^a20). Call the specimen shade 'vink'. Then vink is an individual in the category of quality, analogous to Socrates in the category of substance.²⁰

As an account of what goes in class (2) this line of reasoning is not convincing. For Aristotle speaks of things in class (2)²¹ as

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 98.

²¹ Or perhaps only some of them. But although Aristotle's language does not commit him to the view that all members of class (2) are individual

being "individual and one in number" (*τὰ ἄτομα καὶ ἐν ἀριθμῷ*).²² A given shade of color, such as Professor Owen's vink, is something universal and therefore not something that is one in number. And therefore not vink, but this bit of vink, would seem to be an example of something in a subject that is not said of any subject.

Of course one might suppose that, for Aristotle, "one in number" is here simply another way of referring to that which is not said of any subject. Then a specific shade of color like vink might be called one in number simply because no (shade of) color is said to be (i.e., none is classified as) a vink. The following passage from the *Metaphysics* might seem to support this reading of 'one in number':

... there is no difference between saying 'one in number' and 'individual'. For by 'individual' we mean what is one in number, and by 'universal' what is [said or predicated] of individuals. (999^b33-1000^a1)

It would be a consequence of this interpretation that, according to Aristotle, the color in this ribbon and the color in that ribbon, provided they were qualitatively indistinguishable, would also have to be numerically identical. But nowhere does Aristotle seem to agree to any such doctrine, even implicitly.

In fact, just before the passage cited above, Aristotle says something that seems to run counter to this interpretation of 'one in number'. He is discussing letters and syllables; and he says that being one in kind (*τῷ εἶδει*) is a necessary, but not a sufficient condition for numerical identity among syllables and their constituent letters. He is thus using the contrast between what is one in number and what is one only in kind to mark what philosophers today refer to as the token-type distinction.

Presumably a letter in a token of a given word is, in the relevant respect, like a color in a piece of ribbon. If so, then it seems quite clear that for Aristotle it is this vink in this ribbon

and one in number, it is difficult to make sense of the suggestion that perhaps some are and some are not.

²² "Things that are individual and one in number are not said of any subject whatsoever, but nothing prevents some of them from being in a subject. This bit of grammar is among the things in a subject." (1^b6-9) Cf. 4^a10-21.

and that vink in that ribbon (like this 'a' in this token word and that 'a' in that) that are individual and one in number, and not vink *tout court*, or, of course, the letter type 'a'.

Professor Owen is surely right to insist that, according to Aristotle, pink, and not merely vink, can be in a given piece of ribbon. In fact for pink to be in a given piece of ribbon is just for some particular shade of pink to be in it. But Owen's understanding of what a color-individual is for Aristotle makes that the end of Aristotle's story, whereas on our reading Aristotle wants to go on and say that for this piece of ribbon to have the shade it has is just for this very bit of color it has in it to be in it.

Consider an analogy. Callias has a dog; his dog is Boso. For Callias to be a dog-owner, i.e., for him to have a dog, is (in this case) for him to have Boso. Of course having a dog and having Boso are not the same thing. Still, to have a dog is just to have some particular dog or other. And in Callias's case the dog is Boso.

Aristotle's talk of individual colors that are one in number suggests that we ought to conceive of something's being pink (or grey) along the lines of Callias's having a dog. For this particular piece of ribbon to be pink is just for it to have in it the bit of pink that it has. To be sure, being pink is not, in general, the same as having *this* bit of pink. But for a thing to be pink is just for it to have in it some particular bit of pink or other.

The question may arise, what is the relation between a particular bit of pink and pink in general? Or between this bit of pink and that? Concerning the first question, it would be a mistake to think of a given color-individual as being something independent of the shade of color it exemplifies, such that it could bear a relation to it. The very existence of the color-individual is correlative with its exemplifying just the shade of color it does. Apart from its color it is nothing. And apart from there being color-individuals, such as this one, there would be no universal colors either.

As for the relation between this bit of pink and that, let us suppose that this bit of pink is in *x* and that bit is in *y*. Then this bit is *x*'s way of being pink and that bit is *y*'s way of being pink. The two bits are related to one another, not as two "bare bits"

partaking in the same thing, pinkhood, but rather as two ways of being pink (cf. two ways of being a dog-owner, viz., having Boso and having Fido).

III

Let us see exactly how this understanding of quality attribution that we are reconstructing from Aristotle's *Categories* bears on the One-Over-Many Argument. Fenimore is grey, Felix is grey; therefore (according to the One-Over-Many Argument) there must be something, greyness, by virtue of which they are both properly said to be grey. Aristotle answers that that by virtue of which the two cats are both properly said to be grey is this bit of grey for Fenimore and that bit for Felix. Fenimore's having his bit of grey in him is what makes him grey, just as Callias's dog, Boso, is what makes him a dog-owner. Fenimore couldn't have his bit of grey in him without being grey or be grey without having some particular bit of grey in him. (Compare: Callias couldn't have Boso without being a dog-owner, or be a dog-owner without having some particular dog.) Fenimore and Felix are both grey; but each cat's greyness accrues to him by virtue of his own particular bit of grey.

Clearly this understanding of quality attribution is a natural extension of the Aristotelian conception of substantial predication we discussed in section I. Both arise from the idea of basic classification. In the case of substantial predication, to say of x that it is F is (according to Aristotle) to classify x ; in the other case, to say of x that it is F is (on our reading of Aristotle) to classify something *in* x . Both analyses provide ways of denying that we need, or should, make reference to F -ness to understand what it is for x to be F .

But the point in denying that we need or should make reference to F -ness to understand what it is for x to be F differs in the two cases. Where F is a secondary substance, the point is to avoid the dilemma, either Felix is what he is independent of participating in cathood (and is therefore a bare individual, whatever that might be thought to be) or else he is a mere relational entity (like a shadow or a reflection, or, to use an Aristotelian example, a thresh-

old (1042^b26)) that owes its identity and continued existence to the relation it bears to something else. Aristotle's non-relational account goes between the horns of this dilemma.

Where, however, 'F' attributes a quality to x, the point is quite different. This time there will not be the same worry about what (or whether) x is supposed to be whatever it is independent of F-ness. Since Aristotle groups differentiae with secondary substances rather than with qualities, what he recognizes as qualities will be things an individual can lose without losing its identity or ceasing to exist. The point this time is to deal with conundra that arise from the notion of F-ness being in some thing or other. Among the many places in which Plato worries about how one Form can be in many things, perhaps the most interesting is *Parmenides* 130E-131E. There Plato argues that the Form must be in the things it is in either as a whole or in part. If as a whole, then the Form will be separate from itself. If in part, then other paradoxical results will follow, e.g., that the smallness in x will be smaller than Smallness itself.

We avoid this conundrum if we insist with Aristotle that it is a mistake to think of F-ness as a thing apart from the F-ness in x, the F-ness in y (etc.). For F-ness to be in x is for something in x to be properly classified as an F. And so for F-ness to be in several things is not for F-ness to be parceled out among them, let alone for F-ness to be somehow mysteriously given in its entirety to each. Rather, for F-ness to be in both x and y is for something in each to be properly classified as an F.

A Platonist will want to object that the plausibility of all this is quite specious. It is all very well comparing Fenimore's being grey with Callias's having a dog. But what makes Callias and Coriscus both dog-owners is not a matter of their owning a common dog; rather it is (the Platonist continues) a matter of one man's property having something in common with another man's. By analogy, Fenimore's color must have something in common with Felix's color.

We have already objected, on Aristotle's behalf, to the notion that Boso (Callias's dog) and Fido (Coriscus's dog) have dogness in common. One thing wrong with that notion is the suggestion that Boso and Fido might somehow be something independent of

the dogness in which they both allegedly participate. A similar point could be made about the particular bit of grey Felix has and the particular bit Fenimore has. We cannot, without absurdity, suppose these to have greyness in common either. For it would be ridiculous to think of Felix's particular bit of grey and Fenimore's particular bit of grey as somehow quite distinct and separate from the greyness in which they both allegedly participate.

Doubtless the Platonist will not be so easily put down. It is all very well to speak of classification, he may say. But classification must be based upon something, or else it is arbitrary. If *x* and *y* are both *properly* classified as *F*, it must be because they have something in common.

The problem about whether a given classification system is arbitrary is, indeed, an interesting and important question. But a good first thing to say about this problem is that platonic realism is quite irrelevant to it. Suppose I decide to call each of the next ten people I meet tenpods. The classification, tenpod, would certainly be arbitrary. But there would be nothing to keep me from applying the One-Over-Many Argument to this situation and announcing that it is by virtue of tenpodity that these people are all to be called tenpods.

Or consider the question of what colors are primary colors. It is, to be sure, quite possible to argue that a classification scheme with blue, green, yellow and red as primary colors is less arbitrary than one in which purple, blue-green and yellow-red are the primary colors. The argument would turn on questions of physics, psychology, language and perhaps art. But it would have nothing to do with the One-Over-Many Argument.

But surely, the Platonist may insist as a final protest, if Felix and Fenimore are the *exact same shade* of grey, then, according to any non-arbitrary classification scheme, they will have the same color, and the reason will be that they have a completely specific and determinate shade of grey in common.

Imagine ten different shades of pink arranged on a color chart in spectral order such that there is no discriminable shade of pink lying between any two shades on the chart. Now if I decide to call anything of shades 1, 4, 5, 7 or 10 "plink" and anything of shades 2, 3, 6, 8 or 9 "pfink" then my classification scheme will certainly

be arbitrary—even though the demands of Platonic realism are met. (The demands of Platonic realism are easily met, for if *x* is plink and *y* is plink, no matter if *x* is of shade 1 and *y* is of shade 10, we can always say that it is by virtue of plinkity that they are to be called plink.)

But if I decide to call a ribbon of shade 6 “pfink” and some other ribbon that I recognize to be of the same shade “psink,” it will not be the case that my color classification is even more arbitrary than before. It will not be the case that my color classification is arbitrary at all, for my calling one ribbon “pfink” and another ribbon that I recognize to be of the same shade “psink” will simply not be a case of color classification at all. Not being color classification it will not be arbitrary color classification either.

IV

In part I we considered Aristotelian reasons for rejecting the One-Over-Many Argument as it might be applied to statements like ‘Fenimore is a cat’ and ‘Felix is a cat’. On Aristotelian reasoning it is a mistake to think of cathood as something “over against” Felix and Fenimore. (A similar point, as we saw, might be applied to *differentiae* as well.)

In part II we considered Aristotelian reasons, from what seems to be the most plausible reconstruction of the *Categories*, for rejecting the One-Over-Many Argument as applied to statements like ‘Fenimore is grey’ and ‘Felix is grey’. This time Aristotle’s view (on our interpretation) turns on the notion of queer entities like *this bit of grey* in Fenimore and *that bit of grey* in Felix. But *this bit of grey* is surely as much a philosopher’s entity as is Plato’s Form, greyness. There are at least two reasons for saying this.

We might suppose that the following, non-philosophical, statements make use of something like the Aristotelian idea of unit qualities:

- 1) The color of Felix is a dark grey.
- 2) John’s generosity is his outstanding virtue.
- 3) The shape of that mirror is convex.

Tempting as it may be to suppose that these statements introduce us to something like Aristotelian unit qualities, reflection on the following statements will surely remove that temptation:

- 4) Felix's color has recently turned darker.
- 5) John's generosity has turned into mere indulgence.
- 6) The shape of that mirror will change under extreme heat.

What these last statements show is that insofar as we are inclined to speak of the quality that some individual person or thing has, as itself an individual thing, to that extent we are also inclined to speak as though the individualized quality could itself undergo change. This flies in the face of Aristotle. For only in the case of substance, he says, can something that is one in number receive contraries (4*10-21).

There is another way of showing that Aristotelian unit qualities are not embodied in our non-philosophical ways of talking. In the discussion of secondary substance above we said that, where *x* is a primary substance and *F* a secondary substance, if *x* is *F* and also identical with *y*, then *x* and *y* are the same *F*. (E.g., Tully and Cicero are the same *man.*) Something analogous should hold for qualities. Now certainly we do have a use for 'the same color', 'the same shape', etc. in non-philosophical prose. But consistent with the notion of Aristotelian unit qualities it would be only of, say, the color of this ribbon on two different occasions that I could say "same color"—and never of the color of two different ribbons. Yet the non-philosophical use of 'same color', 'same shape', 'same condition' (etc.) allows us to say of the color of two different ribbons, "same color," to say of the shape of two different vases, "same shape," to say of the condition of two different heart patients, "same condition" (etc.). This brings out clearly that the notion of Aristotelian unit qualities is not embedded in non-philosophical talk of qualities, that it is rather a philosopher's notion.²³

²³ Cf. Wittgenstein's *Blue Book* (Oxford, 1958): "We use the phrase 'two books have the same colour', but we could perfectly well say: 'They can't have the same colour, because, after all, this book has its own colour,'

To say that it is a philosopher's notion is not to damn the conception of unit qualities. But it is to indicate that the philosopher who wants to make use of this notion ought to be in a position to sell us on its merits. In fact this paper could be considered the preliminary part of such a sales effort. In parts II and III we tried to show that one can tell a plausible philosophical story in terms of unit qualities. But to show that this philosophical story has a certain coherence and plausibility is only the first step in selling us on its merits. For, whereas the idea that there are individuals like Fenimore and Nellie and Socrates is a preanalytic given, in terms of which the philosopher's problems are first stated, the idea that there are individuals like *this bit of grey* in Fenimore and *this bit of bravery* in Alcibiades needs to be justified in terms of the light it sheds on preanalytic statements like 'Fenimore is grey' and 'Alcibiades is brave'. What light does it shed?

Perhaps the greatest illumination shed by this Aristotelian way of conceiving attribution is shed on the connection between, e.g., 'John's ball is crimson' and 'John's ball is red'. Aristotle rejects the notion that *x*'s being *F* is to be understood as *x*'s having some relation to the *F*-ness that all things that are *F* have in common. Instead he says that *x*'s being *F* is to be understood either as a classification of *x* or else as a classification of something in *x*. Appeal to the idea of classification makes it clear why 'Socrates is a man' entails that Socrates is also an animal; it also makes clear why 'John's ball is crimson' entails that John's ball is red. By contrast, Plato's way of understanding '*x* is *F*' leaves these relationships of entailment entirely mysterious.

It may seem that we are being too hard on Plato. Surely Plato can suppose that Crimsonness, Redness and Coloredness are related to one another in such a way as to guarantee that anything that is crimson is also red and anything red is also colored. Plato might conceive of the relationship between these Forms as one of inclusion. Thus anything that participates in Crimsonness would

and the other book has its own colour too'. This also would be stating a grammatical rule—a rule, incidentally, not in accordance with our ordinary usage" (p. 55).

thereby have to participate in Redness; and anything that participates in Redness would have to participate in Coloredness.

Yet this is not enough. It is by virtue of a relation between the meanings of 'crimson', 'red', and 'colored' that 'x is crimson' entails that x is red and 'x is red' entails that x is colored. To account for this meaning relation, Plato must suppose that 'crimson', say, gets its meaning from referring—not just to the Form, Crimsonness—but also (somehow) to the relation of inclusion that obtains between Coloredness, Redness, and Crimsonness.

Of course, Plato might be brought to agree to all this, but not without his giving up the over-simplified notion of meaning that gives the One-Over-Many Argument its basic plausibility. The One-Over-Many Argument, let us recall, arises from a puzzle about how many things can be called by one "name." It leads us to suppose that there is one thing, F-ness, by virtue of which all things properly said to be F can be called F. *Unum nomen, unum nominatum*. But now if we are to think of this "name" as referring to a Form *in that Form's relation to various other Forms*, a puzzle more puzzling than the original puzzle will appear. How can a single "name" refer to one thing *in its relation to many things*? Anyone who can find himself at peace with this last puzzle will not find the original One-Over-Many Argument attractive.

Consider another point. Sometimes when I say that both x and y are F, it will be conceivable that x and y are distinguishable with respect to F-ness. Thus, if x and y are both red it will be conceivable, even likely, that x and y may be distinguished with respect to redness (e.g., x may be a darker red than y). This point brings out a familiar feature of classifications. But on Plato's analysis of 'x and y are F' it becomes mysterious. How could the fact that x and y are both red be a matter of their having redness in common, when x and y are distinguishable with respect to redness?

V

In the last section we pointed out that the Aristotelian notion of unit qualities might seem to be the conception that finds expression in phrases of ordinary English like 'the color of Felix', 'John's gener-

osity', and 'the shape of that mirror'. But we went on to argue that these phrases do not, in fact, express Aristotle's notion, and that Aristotle's notion is, instead, a technical, philosophical notion. There is often, of course, real point in introducing technical, philosophical notions; and we tried to offer several considerations that give point to this one.

One might wonder, however, whether the notion that finds expression in locutions of ordinary English like 'the color of Felix', 'John's generosity', etc. would not itself offer a good basis for dealing with problems about the One and the Many, and if so, just how an account of quality attribution based upon this notion would differ from Aristotle. The remainder of this paper will be an attempt to sketch such an account.

Where F-ness is said by Aristotle to be in some primary substance, *s*, (e.g., greyness in Fenimore) it will be the case that there is some generic quality φ (e.g., color) such that to say of *s* that it is F is to classify either a φ of *s*, or else the φ of *s*. Thus to say of Fenimore that he is grey is to classify the color of Fenimore (or, at least, a color of Fenimore). To say of Nellie that she is stubborn is to classify a vice of Nellie. And to say of that mirror that it is round is to classify the shape of that mirror.

Suppose we call the color of Fenimore, the vice of Nellie, and the shape of the mirror "quality individuals." A quality individual, as we shall use the expression here, is simply a quality under a description having the form 'a φ of *s*' or 'the φ of *s*'—where the replacement for ' φ ' will be the name of a generic quality and the replacement for '*s*' will designate some primary substance.

One may wonder why the color of Fenimore should be called a quality individual. May it not be that the color of Fenimore is identical with the color of something else, say, the color of Felix? And is it not then a universal rather than an individual?

Of course the color of Fenimore may be identical with the color of Felix. And in general the φ of *s* (or a φ of *s*) may be identical with the φ of *t* (or a φ of *t*), where *s* and *t* are two different primary substances. In this respect a quality individual is universal and is therefore ill-named an individual. What gives a quality individual some claim to being called an individual is the fact that it can undergo change—"receive contraries," in Aristotle's phrase. The

color of Fenimore may be white at one time and grey at another. In this respect what we are calling a quality individual clearly differs from the Aristotelian individual outside the category of substance, what we have been calling a "unit quality." For Aristotle says that:

a color that is one and the same in number will not be white and black; nor will the same action, one in number, be both bad and good; and similarly for other things that are not substance. But substance is something one and the same in number that can receive contraries. (4*14-18)

What we want to call here a quality individual could hardly be said to be numerically one the way Aristotle wants to say that "this bit of black" is one in number. But the point to emphasize is that what we are calling a quality individual can undergo change; and Aristotle's "this bit of black" cannot.

There is nothing mysterious about the fact that quality individuals can undergo change. For the color of Felix to undergo change is nothing more nor less than for Felix to undergo a change in color—to be, say, now light grey and later dark grey, or now white and later black.

It might have seemed that a quality individual would have to be either, say, a particular shade of grey, or else this bit of grey here. On Owen's reading of the *Categories*, the former would be an example of an Aristotelian non-substantial individual. On our reading of Aristotle, the latter would be. But what we are now considering is a third alternative. According to this third account (which, although Aristotelian in flavor, is not meant to be a reading of Aristotle) an individual in the category of quality is simply a quality under a certain kind of description.

We mean to follow Aristotle in supposing that, where F-ness is a quality and x a primary substance, to say of x that it is F is to classify something, viz., what we are calling a quality individual. But there is an apparent difficulty here. We have said that the quality individual, the color of Felix, may be identical with the quality individual, the color of Fenimore. Suppose the two are, in fact, identical. Do we not have to agree that in classifying the color of Felix I am *eo ipso* also classifying the color of Fenimore? And therefore if to say of Felix that he is grey is to classify the

color of Felix, in saying of Felix that he is grey, am I not thereby saying of Fenimore that he is grey? Surely to claim that would be absurd.

One way out of this difficulty is to insist that the context supplied by expressions like 'I am classifying . . .' is referentially opaque. And therefore it can be the case that I am classifying the color of Felix and also the case that the color of Felix is identical with the color of Fenimore without its being the case that I am also classifying the color of Fenimore.

There may seem to be another difficulty. We have said that a quality individual can undergo change. But now suppose that the color of Felix is grey. Surely grey cannot undergo change.

This apparent difficulty would indeed be a serious one if the color of Felix were *identical with* grey. But it is not. What we have been suggesting is that for Felix to be grey is for the color of Felix to be properly *classified* as grey (or as a grey). Since being classified as grey is not the same thing as being identical with grey, we may suppose the the color of Felix has changed, and that the color of Felix was grey, without supposing, absurdly, that grey itself has changed.

We have, however, allowed—even insisted—that the color of Felix may be *identical with* the color of Fenimore. Are we not then committed to the equally absurd conclusion that the color of Felix changes if, and only if, the color of Fenimore changes?

The first thing to say to this objection is that there might be nothing absurd about the conclusion that the color of Felix changes if, and only if, the color of Fenimore changes (even assuming, as we have been assuming, that Felix is not identical with Fenimore). This conclusion would, in fact, be warranted if either one of the following conditions obtained:

a) The color of Felix at t_m is identical with the color of Fenimore at t_m and the color of each never changes.

b) The color of Felix and the color of Fenimore change all right, but always and only in the synchronized way that the color of a pair of Siamese-twin chameleons might be thought to change. (Suppose that Ted and Jed are such a pair of chameleons, and that Ted changes in color when, and only when, and in exactly the same way as, Jed changes. There will be no time at which Ted and

Jed differ in color, even though there will be times during which the color of each changes. It would then be quite correct to say that the color of Ted changes if, and only if, the color of Jed changes.)

The second thing to say to this objection is that in addition to the possibility of identifying the color of Felix with the color of Fenimore *simpliciter* (so that whatever is true of one will be true of the other), there is also the possibility of identifying one with the other with a temporal qualification. That is, the color of Felix today, or during the first three weeks of his life, might be said to be identical with the color of Fenimore yesterday, or during the month of August. If they are identified only in this temporally qualified way, then of course there will be no reason to say that the color of Felix changes if, and only if, the color of Fenimore changes, and no worry about the fact that we cannot say this.

Aristotle's notion of a unit quality bears on this old conundrum: Is the greyness in Fenimore individual or universal? If universal, how can it be in Fenimore? If individual, how can the greyness in Fenimore be something Fenimore has in common with Felix? Aristotle answers that the greyness in Felix is something particular and numerically one. But it is also something of a certain kind; it is properly classified as a greyness. Greyness is in both Felix and Fenimore because there is something in each one that is properly classified as a greyness.

The notion of a quality individual bears on this conundrum, too. It does so by breaking down the absolute contrast between an individual and a universal. In his *Sense and Sensibilia*, John Austin suggests that the terms 'sense-data' and 'material things' "live by taking in each other's washing—what is spurious is not one term of the pair, but the antithesis itself."²⁴ Austin adds these remarks in a footnote:

The case of 'universal' and 'particular', or 'individual', is similar in some respects though of course not in all. In philosophy it is often good policy, where one member of a putative pair falls under suspicion, to view the more innocent-seeming party suspiciously as well.²⁵

²⁴ Oxford, 1962, p. 4.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

The conundrum above loses its force once we come to think that there may be things like the color of Fenimore which are in a certain respect individual, and in a certain respect universal. The color of Fenimore is individual insofar as it is subject to change. It changes, in fact, if and when Fenimore himself changes in color. It is universal insofar as the color of Fenimore (at a certain time, or *simpliciter*) may be identical with the color of Felix.

Would a quality individual count as a relative for Aristotle and thus threaten the distinction between qualities and relations? It might seem so. The color of Felix is the color *of* something; and the shape of that mirror is the shape *of* something.

But the proper answer to the question is surely 'No' According to the broader of the two definitions that Aristotle presents in the *Categories* (6^a36) a relative is something said to be just what it is *of other things*. Thus, a father is said to be father of something (or someone) and a double is said to be double of something. But a man is not said to be man of anything, nor a horse, horse of anything. Now the color of Felix is, of course, said to be a color; indeed, it is said to be the color *of something*. But it is a color-individual *only* under a description of the form 'a φ of s' or 'the φ of s'. And the color of Felix is certainly not the-color-of-Felix *of anything*. Therefore the color of Felix is not a relative and, more generally, quality individuals are not relatives.²⁶

To say this is not to deny, of course, that quality individuals have a status that is both logically and ontologically dependent. Their status is logically dependent insofar as the designation of a quality individual includes the designation of a primary substance ('the color of Felix', for example, includes the name of Felix), whereas a primary substance may be designated without designat-

²⁶ The following Aristotelian parallel may be instructive. A father is a relative in Aristotle's sense, for it is said to be what it is (i.e., a father) *of something*. But the father of Socrates is not, in Aristotle's sense, a relative, for it is not said to be what it is (i.e., father of Socrates) *of anything*. Similarly, a double is a relative for Aristotle, since it is said to be what it is (a double) *of something*. But the double of five is *not* a relative, for it is not said to be what *it is*—the double of five—*of anything*. The general point to be gleaned from these examples is this. Even if ' φ ' denotes what Aristotle would call a relative, and it is said to be a φ because it is the φ of s, 'the φ of s' need not denote a relative.

ing any particular quality individual. Their status is ontologically dependent insofar as the existence of a given quality individual presupposes the existence of the appropriate primary substance, though not the other way around. But all this fits perfectly under the Aristotelian motto, "If there were no primary substances, there could not be anything else" (2^b5-6).

It is easy to see that the notion of a quality individual sketched above leaves unaltered the Aristotelian point that quality attribution is classification. This means that the philosophical advantages assigned to Aristotle's own account will also fall to this account of quality attribution. Moreover, the basic answer to Plato will remain as before. According to the One-Over-Many Argument it is by virtue of the one thing, greyness, that the many things, Felix, Fenimore, Fern and Felicia, can be properly called grey. No, we can say with Aristotle, it is not by virtue of any one thing "over against" the many that all these cats are properly called grey. It is rather by virtue of the fact that the color of each one is properly classified as a grey that they are all to be called grey. Greyness, like man and animal, is a classification. And there being a classification of a certain sort is a fact *correlative with* there being things classifiable in the way the classification in question would classify them.

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