Plato Imitates Aristotle:
Alcmaeon of Croton, *Phaedrus* 245c-e and *Laws* 10[1]

Gregory L. Scott

Aristotle
…actuality in the strict sense is identified with movement. And so people do not assign movement to non-existent things, though they do assign some other predicates. E.g. they say that *non-existent* things are *objects of thought and desire*, but not that they are *moved*…
(*Metaphysics* Theta 3, 1047a31-36)[2]

Plato (as the "Athenian Stranger")
…*soul* is precisely that which is defined by the expression '*self-generating motion*'…[and thus] is identical with the original source of the *generation and motion* of all past, present and future things and their contraries…" [because] it has been shown to be *the cause of all change and motion in everything*
(*Laws* 10, 896a).[3]

Background and Introduction

The basic reasons for Aristotle abandoning by mid-career the Unmoved Mover of *Metaphysics* Lambda 6 in favor of an unchanging but enmattered primary reality have been provided in my *Aristotle's "Not to Fear" Proof for the Necessary Eternality of the Universe*.[4] In what follows, I provide a very brief summary of the Proof for those not familiar with the book, and I add at the end the URLs of the book's six "digital extensions," downloadable pdf files that not only address objections but cover scholarship that came to my attention after the book's publication.

The most recent extension ("On Sarah Broadie's 'Heavenly Bodies and First Causes'") resolves an unaddressed dilemma in the book pertaining to whether the Northern Greek from Stagira maintained that the outer spheres are ensouled or whether he progressed to the "fifth element" that moves everlastingly in a circle. I not only give the justification for the latter but provide more historical evidence for my position: No other Peripatetic (and seemingly no other known scholar) for 500 years accepted the *immaterial* Unmoved Mover of Lambda until Alexander of

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1 Published first at www.epspress.com/NTF/AlcmaeonOfCroton.pdf on 24 May 2021. The ideas were first presented at the Zoom session of the Society of Ancient Greek Philosophy ("SAGP"), *Aristotle Work in Progress*, 6 March 2021, and I am grateful for feedback from the organizers Angela Curran and Anthony Preus and from the other participants. Additions or revisions are noted at the very end.

2 Transl. W.D. Ross, in *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, Vol. 2., Ed. Jonathan Barnes (Princeton: Princeton University Press) 1985, first published 1984; my italics.

3 Transl. Trevor J. Saunders, in *Plato: Complete Works*, Ed. John Cooper; Assoc. Ed. D.S. Hutchinson (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co.) 1997. Unless noted, other translations of *Laws* are by Saunders; my italics.

4 Gregory L. Scott, *Aristotle's "Not to Fear" Proof for the Necessary Eternality of the Universe* (New York City: ExistencePS Press) 2019.

Aphrodisias and Plotinus mistook Lambda for the Stagirite's mature, or one and only, metaphysics. *They* are the two who not only created and cemented the modern perspective on Aristotle's theology but who completely muddied for us the Stagirite's more developed and more reasonable later doctrines.

Another dilemma that I had not addressed in the book was the peculiar similarity of some of Aristotle's mature principles with Plato's *Phaedrus* 245c-e, and I simply noted the similarities without trying to resolve them. Here, in this last expected digital extension, I remedy this oddity, taking into account the seemingly universally accepted opinion that Plato took the proof of the human and divine immortal souls in 245c-e directly from Alcmaeon of Croton, the renowned physician who wrote a philosophical treatise apparently between 500 and 450 BCE. Given that tensions result for Plato as a result of this accepted opinion and given the quirkiness of sophis-ticated Aristotelian doctrine being superficially alluded to in that passage, I argue that the more plausible timeline is this: The Stagirite, who wrote a (lost) book on the Crotoniate according to Diogenes Laertius (V 25), influenced his mentor-colleague, who himself, in one important way at the end of his life, then imitated his student-colleague, dropping completely the *unmoving and unchanging immaterial* Forms that in his earlier career were the *primary realities*. This mimics the Northern Greek abandoning by about 355 BCE, eight years before Plato's demise, the *unmoving, unchanging and immaterial* Unmoved Mover of Lambda 6 that had been his own *primary reality*. This Mover had functioned for the youthful Stagirite like the Forms for Plato.

In brief, both the Stagirite and the Athenian, as confirmed for the latter in *Laws* 10, evolve to an ontology in which their primary entity moves forever (albeit unchangingly) *in virtue of its own nature*. To summarize what was explained in the previous digital extension, for the Northern Greek the "fifth element"—the heavens, sun and stars—move circularly and eternally, in the same way that fire and air move straight up, and earth and water straight down, unless the motion of these four elements is interfered with. The outer spheres, though, are never interfered with, and, as *De Caelo* II 1 confirms, they have no soul. Thus, they cannot love or desire an Unmoved Mover; nor do they need to, in order to move without end. For the Athenian Stranger in *Laws* 10, often considered Plato's final major work, the Forms play no role whatsoever in his cosmology, ontology, and theology, and it is an eternally *moving* (world-)soul that becomes the primary reality. (I leave aside the god that the Athenian always maintains, but I consider that a matter of theology, not necessarily of ontology, and if one wishes to include theology under ontology, then consider the relevant domain now to be one of physical ontology.) One result is that the contrast typically ascribed to the two Greek thinkers concerning primary realities pertains to the doctrines they held in their early or middle periods, not to their final and most reflective periods.

A final, bifurcated prefatory note: The type of influence that in my opinion the post-20-year-old Stagirite had on the Athenian is frequently seen through history and in our own careers: 2-10 years after PhD students defend their dissertations and go on to become full-fledged (and sometimes prestigious) professors in their own right, they persuade their former supervisors to change important positions. Lastly, whether the Stagirite wrote his book on Alcmaeon by 360-355 is irrelevant for my purposes. It suffices that Aristotle had heard of, and been inspired by, Alcmaeon's theory, and had discussed it with Plato by 360 or so, about the time of the final revision, or one of the final revisions, of the *Phaedrus*, our next topic.

Phaedrus 245c-e

This dialogue is often thought, correctly in my view, to have had great influence on Aristotle, given, for example, similar applications of "organic unity" and the use of collection, division and definition in the *Dramatics*, also known as the *Poetics*,[5] of which more later. The *Phaedrus* is also often thought to have had a later revision. Anna Usacheva recounts that:

> [Thomas] Robinson argued that in the *Phaedrus* 'Plato still adhered to many of his earlier (*Republic*/*Timaeus*) views in the domain of epistemology, metaphysics and philosophical psychology but was now moving towards a revised version of them not immediately compatible with the original version'. Bostock in his monograph *Plato's Theaetetus* also mentioned the ideological diversity of the *Phaedrus*, whose first part returns to still earlier themes, *notably the theory of recollection*, while its second part is very much more forward looking (conceptions of collection and division, detailed investigation of the soul and a science of rhetoric). This observation led him to the assumption that 'the *Phaedrus* was composed shortly after the *Republic*, *the second half was not added until rather later*'... Thesleff suggested the conception of the two *Phaedrus*: the first written in the mid-380s and the second revised version made in the end of 360s."[6]

[continued on next page]

5 I have published amply on why *Poetics* is an absurd title, three of the many reasons being that: (i) there is not one poem in the work; (ii) tragedy, the paradigm in the extant text, is a fully performed "musical" art, having music and dance (*rhuthmos*) in the definition and having spectacle (*opsis*) as a *necessary* condition, even if it is *least necessary* in the *ranking* of the *six necessary conditions*; and (iii) speech (*lexis*) is not the most important of the six necessary conditions, but only the fourth; rather, plot (*muthos*), not "myth" but the "structure of actions" as Aristotle explains the term and the most crucial element, can be, and in the earliest tragedy according to Chapter 4, was, done essentially with mere dance or miming, analogous to our *Swan Lake* or *Giselle*.

6 Anna Usacheva, "Concerning the Date of Plato's *Phaedrus*," *Hermathena*, No. 189 (Winter 2010) 53-70; pp. 53-4; my italics.

The soon-to-be masterful logician Aristotle entered the Academy about 367, at around the same time Plato began composing the *Theaetetus*.[7] What has not been fully explored to my knowledge, and what I leave aside in this work, is how much the Northern Greek may have influenced his mentor in the following years with his own systems and conceptual approaches, say, perhaps of division and collection as given in the *Phaedrus* (265d-266b) and of classification, as given in, e.g., the *Categories*. As noted, this digital extension will provide evidence that the student-colleague swayed to some extent the teacher-colleague, but whether we could conclusively establish the precise influence on any particular topic in the Academy is often a difficult issue.

Let us begin with the discussion immediately before 245c-e. Socrates discourses on the importance of divine madness for musical composition, in line with the dialogue *Ion*, in which the (singing and not merely speaking) rhapsode of the same name credits divine madness for his talents. Socrates mentions the pure and gentle soul that would be receptive to this admirable madness and then attempts to prove the immortality of the soul, as follows (and I add numbered brackets for further commentary):

> Now we must first understand the truth about the nature of the soul, **[1]** divine (*theias*) or human, by examining **[2]** what it does and what is done to it. Here begins the proof: Every soul is immortal (ἀθάνατος). That is **[3]** because whatever is always in motion is immortal while what moves, and is moved by, something else stops living when it stops moving. So **[4]** it is only what moves itself that never desists from motion, since it does not leave off being itself. In fact, **[5]** this self-mover is also the source and spring of motion in everything else that moves; and a source has no beginning. That is because anything that has a beginning comes from some source, but there is no source for this, since a source that got its start from something else would no longer be the source. And **[6]** since it cannot have a beginning, then necessarily it cannot be destroyed. That is because if a source were destroyed it could never get started again from anything

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7 As Werner Jaeger avers: "The *Theaetetus*, which is contemporary with Aristotle's entrance into the Academy, is the first of a group of dialogues that are *radically different from the earlier ones both in form and in content*, and it ushers in the transference of Plato's main philosophical interests to *methodological, analytical, and abstract studies*" (*Aristotle: Fundamentals of the History of his Development*, translated with the author's corrections and additions by Richard Robinson, 2nd ed., Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1948, first publ. 1934; p. 25; my italics).

In the previous, sixth digital extension, I covered in some detail the ways in which Jaeger believes Aristotle develops his thought during his career. Alexander Mourelatos remarked after the SAGP Zoom session that Thomas Case anticipated Jaeger in the very extensive entry (pp. 501-521) for "Aristotle" in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th ed., published in 1910-1911, an edition that, leaving aside some of the racism and other flaws in various entries according to various reviewers, "was the last great work of the age of reason, the final instance when all human knowledge could be presented with a single point of view" (from www.theguardian.com/books/booksblog/2012/apr/10/encyclopedia-britannica-11th-edition). (I should add, if only because it reflects Aristotle's emphasis at times on *historia* and the continuity of knowledge, that Mourelatos was pointed to Edition 11 in 1964 by Julius Weinberg, 1908-1971, a professor of philosophy at the University of Wisconsin; charmingly, Mourelatos still recalls the episode, almost 60 years later.) Although I disagree vehemently at times with Case's interpretation of Aristotle's theology in the 11th edition, I completely agree with the British don's statement that "However early Aristotle began a book, so long as he kept the manuscript, he could always change it" (p. 507), — and he gives examples of when the Northern Greek did change a book. He adds, correctly in my mind, at least concerning the esoteric works: "So generally, the references backwards and forwards, and the cross-references, are really evidences that Aristotle mainly wrote his works *not successively but simultaneously*, and entered references as and when he pleased, because he had not published them" (p. 516; my italics).

> else and nothing else could get started from it—that is, if everything gets started from a source. **[7]** This then is why a self-mover is a source of motion. And *that* is incapable of being destroyed or starting up; **[8]** otherwise all heaven and everything that has been started up would collapse, come to a stop, and never have cause to start moving again. But since we have found that a self-mover is immortal, we should have no qualms about declaring that this is the very essence and principle of a soul, for every bodily object that is moved from outside has no soul, while **[9]** a body whose motion comes from within, from itself, does have soul, that being the nature (*phuseōs*) of a soul; and if this is so—that **[10]** whatever moves itself is essentially a soul—then it follows necessarily that soul should have neither birth nor death.
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> That, then, is enough about the soul's immortality. Now here is what we must say about its structure…[8]

At this point, Socrates explains the soul using the analogy of the charioteer with two winged horses, a controlled one and a rambunctious one, with Socrates engaging in flights of (psychological) fancy that arguably match the flying horses. Consider now more closely the bracketed statements:

[1] "…the nature of the soul, divine or human"

245c-e is clearly an attempted proof for immortality of the divine *and* human soul, whether or not we think that the proof assumes what it needs to prove, with "soul" being defined, tautologically, as that which is always in motion and thus as that which is immortal.[9] Leaving aside these issues, because it is not my goal to defend the soundness of the proof, which I think is ultimately indefensible, Jonathan Barnes considers the proof to have been adopted directly from Alcmaeon. Barnes provides a sophisticated analysis of Alcmaeon's similar argument, one which Barnes (correctly in my mind) deems to be attempted rigorous philosophy rather than, say, Pythagorean religious dogma masquerading as (empirical) philosophy.[10]

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8 Trans. by Alexander Nehamas and Paul Woodruff, in *Plato: Complete Works*, *op. cit.*

9 Mourelatos noted this on the Zoom SAGP session, and I am in accord. To give Socrates the benefit of the doubt, though, we might assume that the ancient was merely being repetitious for the sake of clarity, presenting the conclusion in advance, as the goal of his proof, despite the precise wording.

10 Jonathan Barnes, *The Presocratic Philosophers: Vol. 1, Thales to Zeno* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul) 1979; pp. 116-20. My gratitude goes especially to Woodruff, who recalled that Barnes had traced the source of 245c-e to Alcmaeon: As alluded to, I had included 245c-e in *Aristotle's "Not to Fear" Proof* (pp. 244-5), using Woodruff's (and Nehamas's) translation simply to note the similarities of some of the doctrines with Aristotle's later ontology. However, being utterly baffled, I corresponded with Woodruff and Nehamas to determine whether they had done research on the passage while translating it.

W.K.C. Guthrie,[11] Kirk-Raven-Schofield,[12] and André Laks[13] all accept Alcmaeon's influence on 245c-e, as if it came directly to Plato from the physician-philosopher. Yet something smells as fishy as a beached mullet in the sun near Croton. Plato already had a "proof" in the *Phaedo* for the immortality of the soul, based on recollection and transmigration or metempsychosis, seemingly coming from Pythagoras. Even though recollection is mentioned in passing in the description of the ideal divine madness of souls in the *Phaedrus* (249c-250a), it plays absolutely no role in the proof at 245c-e. Indeed, not even memory (which obviously some later philosophers in history have required for personal identity), much less recollection, is needed for the proof: eternal motion and its association with immortality and the soul, which were Alcmaeon's contributions, suffice. Barnes's perspicacious analysis is the primary reason that I claim 245c-e is a more powerful argument for the immortality of the soul than the one from the *Phaedo*. It appears that Plato was no longer convinced by the argument from recollection and progressed to a seemingly stronger proof. Indeed, the discourse of *Laws* 10, which is surely at the last stage of his philosophy, whether or not we accept that it was absolutely his final work, confirms this. We examine that book below, but other remarks deserve airing beforehand.

[2] "…what it does and what is done to it."

This implies the "recursive method," which is explained at 270d by Socrates, who in essence says that to achieve the best understanding of something simple, we must understand how it acts on other things and how other things act on it. That is, we must understand its active and passive powers (*dunameis*). If complex, we should dissect the thing into its simple components and (recursively) follow the same procedure. Given that the recursive method is not advocated and explained until later in the dialogue, and that Socrates's appeal to it at this point suggests it is already known to the reader, 245c-e appears to be interpolated and part of the later edition(s) of the *Phaedrus*.

Confirmation of this interpolation results from omitting 245c-e: The discussion of divine madness then flows more consistently, in terms of style and content, with the fanciful flights of the winged horses and the charioteer. Finally, there is arguably no other possible insertion point in the whole dialogue where Plato could have added 245c-e to the original edition, with minimal stitching needed. The transition to the "structure of the soul" appears to be the most suitable spot.

It bears emphasizing that the recursive method is presented, if in slightly different words, at the very beginning of the *Dramatics* as the approach Aristotle will follow in that book.[14] He also

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[11] W.K.C. Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy: I The Earlier Presocratics and the Pythagoreans* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) 1984, first publ. 1962; p. 351.

[12] G.S. Kirk, J.E. Raven, and M. Schofield, *The Presocratic* Philosophers, 2nd Ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) 1983, first published 1957; p. 347.

[13] André Laks, "How Preplatonic Worlds Became Ensouled," *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, Vol. 55, 2018, 1-34; espec. pp. 28ff. Laks also notes regarding Alcmaeon that "Aristotle's lines in the first book *On the Soul*…are seminal for all later interpretations" (p. 16); I present the lines later.

[14] This is demonstrated in my *Aristotle on Dramatic Musical Composition: The Real Role of Literature, Catharsis, Music and Dance in the POETICS* (New York: ExistencePS Press) 2018, 2nd edition; first publ. 2016 (hereafter *ADMC*); pp. 141-2.

uses the method in *On Interpretation*, the *Analytics*, and the *Physics*, whether or not he explicitly advises the reader. I have always assumed that the Northern Greek follows his explicit strictures on definition for "tragedy" in *Dramatics* 1-6, but reviewing the *Phaedrus* again makes me wonder whether he initially simply followed the strictures of the other praised analytical method in Plato's work, on division, collection and definition (265-266d and 271b). Those doctrines are compatible with at least one Aristotelian theory of definition in the *Posterior Analytics* and in the biological treatises, and explaining the differences, if any, between them all would make for an illuminating dissertation.[15] At one stage of his thought, the Stagirite recommends strict Platonic diaresis, with the *definiens* collecting the divisions in exactly the same order as were done, whereas at another stage, which reflects the type of definition used in the *Dramatics,* Aristotle suggests the order does not matter, as long as all of the necessary conditions are collected.[16] To bring all of this to bear here, the pervasiveness of common analytical techniques that the two philosophers use throughout their overlapping careers, including subtle differences, is noteworthy, and it has typically been assumed, even by myself previously, that the Stagirite *always* took the doctrines from the Athenian, even if he then modified them. However, as mentioned, this article will suggest that at least sometimes the reverse was the case, and there is the possibility that Aristotle's ruminations on classification, logic and ontology, to say the least, led to Plato modifying the *Phaedrus* in other ways than interpolating 245c-e. In 360, when some think the *Phaedrus* was revised, the Stagirite would have been at the Academy for seven full years, the equivalent of not only a PhD student, but one of the best PhD students in all Western history, finishing his studies in one of the most prestigious programs in the world.[17]

[3] "…whatever is always in motion is immortal…"

This is Alcmaeon's credo, as we will see shortly from the Northern Greek's quotation in *De Anima*.

[4] "…it is only what moves itself that never desists from motion, *since it does not leave off being itself*."

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15 Cf. *ADMC*, pp. 139-41; 155. That is, how does the recursive method, along with collection, division and definition, relate to the theory of the *Posterior Analytics*? To the theory of classification with particulars, species (*eidos*) and genus (*genos*) in the *Categories* (e.g., 2a13-19)? Is Platonic division and collection a subset of definition for the Stagirite? Are they complementary, and, if so, in what ways precisely and how do Aristotle's systems relate to Plato's (and on this question, cf. pp. 137-9 of Gilbert Ryle's *Plato's Progress,* Cambridge: Cambridge at the University Press, 1966, the topic of the Appendix below)? Did Aristotle renounce the priority of the recursive method for the priority of definition as explained in the *Posterior Analytics* or the biological treatises, which means the *Dramatics,* or at least a first version, was much earlier than normally claimed? Or, as I have supposed until this point, are the recursive method and some type of classification/definition both applied, being analogous to a hammer and screwdriver that a homebuilder uses while building?

16 *ADMC*, p. 139.

17 In Ryle's view, "…Aristotle seems almost to begin his philosophical life fully equipped with an elaborate apparatus of categories… For another thing, Aristotle was, from pretty early in his career as a philosopher, quite at home with the notion of Potentiality *versus* Actuality, and with the kindred notions of Possibility, Contingency, Necessity and Impossibility. … There seem to have existed some powerful non-Platonic formative influences upon the young Aristotle; and Plato's formative influence seems to have been both slighter and patchier than we have assumed" (*Plato's Progress*, *op. cit.*, p. 4).

"…being itself" appears to be an indirect way of grounding the attributes and essence of the soul in its own nature, as will be confirmed at the end of 245c-e; this arguably also stems from Alcmaeon, at least by implication.

[5] "…this self-mover is also the source and spring of motion in everything else that moves; ***and a source has no beginning*****."**
This entails that soul must be infinite to the past, because it "has no beginning." Furthermore, the soul cannot be an immaterial Form (i.e., "Soul") that is at rest and changeless and atemporal and that yet somehow, mysteriously, still causes motion, because the soul is a *self-mover*.

[6] "…since it cannot have a beginning, then necessarily it cannot be destroyed."
This agrees with Aristotle's *De Caelo* I 10-12. The Northern Greek also argues for the reverse: whatever cannot be destroyed cannot be generated, but must exist infinitely to the past. It is unclear whether Plato also endorses that position (via Socrates) with this claim, although **[7]** and **[10]** appear to give the same result for the Athenian, if for a different reason.[18]

[7] "This then is why a self-mover is a source of motion. And *that* is incapable of being destroyed *or starting up*."
Although the self-mover cannot be started up, the reason is not necessarily because it was infinite to the past or to the future; it is because it is a self-mover. Thus, Aristotle can hold his own position without being committed to an (eternal) *ensouled* self-mover. As explained in the previous digital extension, he can, and does, maintain a type of self-mover, the fifth element, that in virtue of its own nature always moves; however, the element, like air and fire, has no soul.

[8] "otherwise all heaven and everything that has been started up would collapse, come to a stop, and never have cause to start moving again"
Note the similarity of this to one of the conclusions of Theta 8 and of the Not to Fear Proof, as given shortly. For Aristotle, of course, the *heavens* never "started." Is it the same for Socrates here? That dictum may or may not be implied with "all heaven and everything that has been started up." Is heaven being included in "everything that has been started" or is heaven being contrasted with "everything that has been started"? It is unclear and we must wait for *Laws* 10 to resolve the issue.

[9] "…a body whose motion comes from within, from itself, does have soul, that being the nature (*phuseōs*) of a soul"

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[18] In other words, *De Caelo* does not allow sempiternity, only eternity, with respect to existence apart from finite things or events (namely, those things that are constrained in all ways), whether the constraint is a beginning or end or spatial boundary. "Sempiternal" for me here has the sense of being created but existing forever thereafter, like some of the gods in Greek myth and the physical universe in the *Timaeus*, in contrast to eternal, which I assume means existing forever, with neither beginning nor end.

Having just spoken of the "essence and principle" of the soul a few lines before, now Socrates employs a very Aristotelian term, "nature," that will be emphasized in *Laws* 10.[19]

[10] "...whatever moves itself is essentially a soul [and]...necessarily that soul should have neither birth nor death."
Thus, any animate being like a woman, bird or lion is essentially a soul and, *qua* soul, has neither birth nor death. The bodily aspect is obviously different, which might cause great regret for some but absolutely none for others. That is, regarding the latter perspective, consider *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and what kind of creatures we would be, or have to interact with, if we or they could age and hobble along for 200, 2000 or 2,000,000 years...

As noted, until now all scholars seem to have thought that Plato takes eternally moving divine and human souls directly from Alcmaeon. Is it not more reasonable to suppose, though, that the philosophy was mediated by the Athenian's brilliant student-colleague, who wrote a book on the Crotoniate? Reflecting on one's own beliefs and modifying them throughout one's life is, of course, a normal process for thinkers, but it is also commonplace that constructive criticism from, or dialogue with, colleagues persuades us to revisit a questionable opinion and occasionally improve it. I suggest that Aristotle's mediation is much more sensible in this case, as can be seen further if we look more now at some of the Platonic similarities with (what I have argued is) Aristotle's more mature ontology. Let us examine, therefore, some Aristotelian texts that are implied in 245c-e and then Alcmaeon's excerpt from *De Anima* that, among other things, also illuminates *Phaedrus* 245c-e and that may well be the basis for Aristotle calling the ("merely" elemental) outer spheres "divine."

Theta 8, the Summary of Aristotle's "Not to Fear" Proof, and *De Anima*

The first relevant selection pertains to Socrates's similar concern in 245c-e about the heaven coming to a stop. The Northern Greek himself states in *Metaphysics* Theta 8:

> Nor does eternal movement, if there be such, exist potentially; and, if there is an eternal mover, it is not potentially in motion (except in respect of 'whence' and 'whither'; there is nothing to prevent its having matter for this). *Therefore, the sun and the stars and the whole visible heaven are ever active,* ***and there is no fear that they may sometime stand still****, as the natural philosophers fear they may.*[20]
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> (*Dio aei energei hēlios kai astra kai holos ho ouranos, kai ou phoberon mē pote stē, ho phobountai hoi peri phuseōs.*[21])

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19 *Laws* 10, 892c: "When *they* use the term 'nature', they mean the process by which the primary substances were created. But if it can be shown that soul came first, not fire or air, and that it was one of the first things to be created, *it will be quite correct to say that soul is preeminently natura*l. This is true, provided you can demonstrate that soul is older than matter, but not otherwise." It would be an interesting study to determine whether Plato uses *phusis* in relation to the soul before Aristotle's influence, starting in 367, and, if so, how much, or whether he typically uses "idea" or "account" or the like, as also given at 245e.

20 *Metaphysics* IX 8, 1050b19-24; my emphases; transl. by W.D. Ross, in *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, ed. J. Barnes, *op. cit.*

21 Aristotle. *Aristotle's Metaphysics*, ed. W.D. Ross (Oxford: Clarendon Press) 1924.

Obviously, Aristotle is not one of the natural philosophers to whom Socrates is referring when the latter speaks in 245c-e of those worrying about the heaven stopping. Again, though, the Stagirite's lack of fear is *not* based on the heavens having a (divine) soul, as it is for Socrates, who presumably represents Plato. Rather, as I have demonstrated previously, the lack of fear of heaven "standing still" is based on an understanding of not only potentiality but, as the following "Not to Fear" Proof shows, *ontological* senses of necessity and possibility, the latter of which at times is synonymous with potentiality (*dunamis*).

Moreover, as alluded to, Aristotle denies the existence of an eternal soul for the outer spheres in *De Caelo* II 1, 284a26-33. This is one, but only one, reason that the Stagirite must have progressed from his belief in the Unmoved Mover of Lambda 6 and in the God of Lambda 7. Assuming, rightly or wrongly, that these "entities" are identical,[22] in Lambda the eternal motion of the universe *depends on the outer spheres loving and desiring the Mover*. Yet, without a soul, and with the outer spheres being a "fifth element," the loving and desiring cannot exist, and the ostensible cause of movement *a fortiori* cannot exist, whether one thinks of the cause as final or efficient or anything else in the ways attempted over hundreds of years. Nor does the external cause *need* to exist: The outer spheres (and sun and stars) move eternally in a circular way, by their own nature, just as fire and air move straight up always by their own nature, unless impeded. No other justification needs to be given, and for the mature Northern Greek it would be as foolish to justify eternal movement of the whole heaven because of the Mover as it would be to say fire moves *because* it loves the Mover.

9-step "Not to Fear" Proof

I furnished a 12-step version in *Aristotle's "Not to Fear" Proof* because, for historical continuity, I accepted Jaakko Hintikka's formulation of the Principle of Plenitude—"In infinite time, any possibility will be actualized"—and I wanted to cover both eternal *and finite* objects and events, like the cloak of *On Interpretation* 9 that gets destroyed, say, by burning, before a possibility of being cut (in half) ever gets actualized. For Hintikka, we must unpack Aristotle's presuppositions, and the relevant Principle more sensibly becomes (even if Hintikka only explains the reasons without giving this exact formulation): "In infinite time*, any sort of genuine* possibility will be actualized."

However, if we only care about eternal things like the universe, as we do here, we can simplify the Proof and drop the concern for the Principle of Plenitude (all the textual citations are given in my book):

1. The past is infinite.
2. The universe as The All (*to pan*) has never gone out of existence (in that infinite time).
3. It is not possible for the universe simply to go out of existence and then to re-appear *ex nihilo*.
4. "Infinite (past) time" and "eternality" *function* the same in this context.
5. Thus, the universe is eternal.
6. (Ontological) possibility involves *finite* options X *and* not X (at some point in eternity).

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[22] For why the two "entities" are not identical, see Michael Bordt, "Why Aristotle's God is Not the Unmoved Mover," *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, Vol. XL, Summer (2011) 91-109; for the absurdities, which Bordt does not develop, that result in assuming the two entities are identical, see: www.epspress.com/NotToFearUpdates.html#Bordt.

7. Therefore, the existence of the eternal universe is, strictly speaking, *not* possible.
8. However, the existence of the universe is likewise *not* impossible in the triangular modal model (from #2, #5 and because we live in it).
9. Therefore, The All must also be (ontologically) *necessary* (from the equivalence of eternality with necessity, that which cannot be otherwise, per *Metaphysics* V 5).[23]

(9) entails, therefore, that we need not fear the heavens will stop (assuming that the divine 5th element includes the eternal outer spheres); it also entails that Aristotle drops the *logically* contingent eternal universe of Lambda, as explained in the previous digital extension "The Ambiguity of 'Possible'." Consequently, he no longer needs the Unmoved Mover (of No Potentiality) of Lambda 6, which itself had guaranteed for him not only the *eternal* movement of the universe but its own (eternal) existence, because with no potential, it has no potential to "disappear." A further, practical ramification of all of this is that the Unmoved Mover *qua* God deserves only as much scholarly attention in the future as the Unmoved Movers of Xenophanes and Anaxagoras, and for the same reasons, despite Aristotle's praise of Anaxagoras in this regard at *Physics* VIII 5, 256b25-28.

I bring in now the final piece of the puzzle regarding the relation of Plato to Alcmaeon, namely, Aristotle's mature creed regarding "divinity." Everything afterwards in this article, especially the discussion of *Laws 10*, will be merely confirmational, helping demonstrate, I believe, that Plato without any remorse was persuaded by Aristotle to forsake completely the Forms and to progress to a cosmology and ontology that is more akin to the Stagirite's and the Crotoniate's, albeit with the Athenian still maintaining the notion of an ensouled and thinking god.[24]

Stavros Kouloumentas doubts the details of Aristotle's alleged book on Alcmaeon:

> The lack of genuine material from early philosophers is a problem that is often mentioned by the Neoplatonist commentators (cf. Simplicius, *In Phys*. 144.25–28, 151.20–30; *In Cat*. 352.22–24). Of particular interest is the remark found in Philoponus that the writings of early philosophers who referred to the moving and cognitive capacities of the soul, such as Thales, Diogenes of Apollonia, Heraclitus, and **Alcmaeon**, were not available in his era, and that **Aristotle did not comment on their doctrines in detail** (Philoponus, *In DA* 88.9–17). This indicates that **Aristotle and some of his disciples probably had direct access to Alcmaeon's treatise**, but the latter did not survive for a long

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[23] For those unfamiliar with the ontological (*aka* "2-sided") modals (e.g., possibility in opposition to both necessity and impossibility) versus the logical (*aka* "1-sided") ones (e.g., possibility in opposition to impossibility), see my book, or even better to start with, pp. 1-5 of
www.epspress.com/NTF/AmbiguityLambda.pdf
and pp. 7-9 of
www.epspress.com/NTF/OnHeavenlyBodies.pdf

[24] Whether this god changes drastically the Divine Craftsman of the *Timaeus* is a fascinating question, especially given that the Craftsman is not part of *Laws* 10. Some will surely say that the (primary) "god" of the *Laws* stands in for the Craftsman, but even granting this point, it is curious that the Athenian does not use the same name from his earlier dialogue. Another fascinating question is whether *Laws* 10 contains a substantial or minor evolution of the "world soul" of the *Timaeus*, which appears to have a birth (and which may well be one reason Plato is extremely ambiguous at times about whether the soul is infinite to the past or was born at the earliest time, when he calls it "most ancient" in the *Laws* 10, as we see in detail below). That is, Timaeus says at 36e: "Once the whole soul had acquired a form that pleased him [the Demiurge], he who formed it went on to fashion inside it all that is corporeal…" (transl. Donald J. Zeyl, in *Plato: Complete Works*, ed. John Cooper, *op. cit.*).

> period. It also confirms that Aristotle's monographs on his predecessors, with the exception of the writings on the Pythagoreans, were hard to find in late antiquity.[25]

Nevertheless, no scholar to my knowledge doubts that Aristotle knew of Alcmaeon's theory, and one of the handful of extant fragments of Alcmaeon's *oeuvre* is directly relevant here:

> ***De Anima* I 2:**
> Alcmaeon…says that it [the *psuchē*] is immortal because it resembles the immortals; and that this immortality belongs to it *in virtue of this ceaseless movement; for* ***all the divine things****, moon, sun, the planets, and the whole heavens, are in perpetual movement*.[26]

Let us assemble the pieces of the puzzle regarding the Crotoniate and the Athenian without driving a square peg into a round hole. As emphasized, the most likely solution appears to be that by the mid-350s Aristotle had relinquished both the ensouled outer spheres and the Unmoved Mover and instead embraced the theory of the "fifth element." At that point, then, if not before, he does not accept immortal souls. Souls only apply to mortal, living things and finish when life finishes. In addition, the final phrase in *De Anima*—"for all the divine things, moon, sun, the planets, and the whole heavens, are in perpetual movement"—is as much Aristotle's view as it is Alcmaeon's, just without the "divine" things being alive *per se* (analogous, as I discussed in previous publications, to the *divine* air of Diogenes of Apollonia). The divinity results from the perpetual movement, not, for the Northern Greek, from "being ensouled" or from anthropomorphism, and, quite possibly, "divinity" is simply honorific in this context.

Friedrich Solmsen championed the view that the Unmoved Mover of Lambda was, if not held always by the Northern Greek, fashioned very late in his life. Solmsen asserts that: "Unlike the Platonic world soul which is defined as always moving, Aristotle's prime mover is eternally unmoved."[27] On my interpretation, Solmsen is correct regarding Plato (leaving aside that *Laws* 10 seemingly requires *at least* two world souls, a good one and a bad one, of which more below) but incorrect regarding Aristotle. For the *mature* Stagirite, the divine heavens are the prime *enmattered* movers and are eternally moving themselves. They are only unmoved from the perspective *of understanding* or from the order of causation, and, in this vein, we should recall

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[25] Stavros Kouloumentas, "Aristotle on Alcmaeon in relation to Pythagoras: an addendum in *Metaphysics* Alpha?", *Aristotle and his Commentators*, edited by Pantelis Golitsis and Katerina Ierodiakonou [Volume 7 in the series *Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca et Byzantina*, edited by Dieter Harlfinger, Christof Rapp, Marwan Rashed, and Diether R. Reinsch] Berlin/Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2019: 49-70] p. 60; ft. 42; my bolding.

Andrea Falcon asserts: "One group of authorities (Thales, Pythagoras, Xenocrates, **Alcmaeon, and Plato)** defends the thesis that the soul is **ever-moving or self-moving.** In all probability, these authorities are to be contrasted with Aristotle, who elsewhere is credited with the view that the soul is not subject to motion, except *per accidens"* (Andrea Falcon, *Aristotelianism in the First Century BCE*, Cambridge University Press: Kindle Edition, 2012; p. 132; my bolding).

[26] I 2, 405a29-b1, transl. by J.A. Smith, in *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, ed. by J. Barnes, *op. cit.*; my emphases.

[27] *Aristotle's System of the Physical World: A Comparison with his Predecessors,* Cornell Studies in Classical Philology, Vol. XXXIII (Ithaca: Cornell University Press) 1960; p. 229.

the Northern Greek's example in *Physics* III 5 (256a6-13) of the man whose hand moves the stick, which itself moves the stone, -- the *man* is explicitly first *and* unmoved for Aristotle.

As noted, this is all supported by the subsequent Peripatetic tradition for 500 years, until both Alexander of Aphrodisias and Plotinus, and by *Laws* 10, to which I now turn.

Laws 10 & 12

Three preliminary remarks are apropos. First, one reason my insights have not been noticed regarding Plato (and Alcmaeon) is that far too little attention has been paid to Book 10 relative to his earlier works. Indication of this is provided by Robert Mayhew in his noteworthy, recent *Plato: Laws* 10.[28] As he informs us: "The commentary accompanying my translation is the first on *Laws* 10 to appear in English since the 1870 commentary (with Greek text) of the American Reverend Tayler Lewis, *Plato Against the Atheists; Or, The Tenth Book of the Dialogue on Laws*." To be clear, Mayhew does not propose, or even discuss whether, the Athenian drops the Forms. Mayhew is struck, however, enough by their omission in Book 10 that he refers to the "Forms" of virtue in Book 12, suggesting (without argument) that they are still important for the Athenian:

> …according to Plato positive serious mimetic art implies the actual, non-subjective existence of something called 'beauty' or 'virtue', and, as we have seen, the best by nature. (For Plato, even in the *Laws*, these would ultimately be Forms. For example, see 12.965b7–e4). (p. 85)

I suggest below that, despite Mayhew capitalizing the word "Forms" and thereby implying by convention that they are the separate entities in the non-sensory realm of reality, the "forms" of virtue of Book 12 are merely logical or conceptual classifications. That is, they do not have the same ontological status as Being, Same and Different in the *Timaeus*, and even Aristotelians can, and do, accept (merely conceptual) forms.

Second, although some like D.S. Margoliouth have thought that Aristotle's *Dramatics* was based on *Laws* II, it is very possible, and indeed probable in my view, that the reverse was *to some extent* the case, especially from about 360 onwards, following Plato's third trip to Syracuse, after which, if not before, the 24-year-old Stagirite was a mature, independent and confident thinker-scientist-philosopher. I discuss more the third trip below, but, leaving aside the development of 245c-e, which I also cover in more detail shortly, at least two ways in which Aristotle seemingly inspired Plato follow: To begin with, children jump and make chaotic vocal noises before putting order *by nature* into both practices that comprise the "choral art" (*choreia*) (*Laws* II, espec. 653a-654d; 665a; 672b-d; and 673c-d).[29] This conception arguably follows Chapter 4 of the *Dramatics*, at 1448b20-21, when Aristotle emphasizes that *by nature* we are predisposed to

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[28] Robert Mayhew, *Plato. Laws* 10*: Translation and Commentary* (New York: Oxford University Press) 2008.

[29] For an in-depth examination of this topic, see *ADMC*, Chapter 1. I put "choral art" in quotation marks because this often means for moderns merely a singing group, but even elementary students of classics know that the drama involved a chorus that sang *and danced*, although, shockingly, there are many specialists of the *Dramatics* like Malcolm Heath who still have not recognized that phenomenon, despite them perpetually touting the Northern Greek as an archetypal empiricist.

music (*harmonia*) and dance (*rhuthmos*).[30] Also, at *Laws* VII 816d-817d, the Athenian abandons his extreme censorship of the *Republic* and allows into the ideal state *both* "serious drama" *aka* "tragedy" (*tragōidia*)—which can end happily for both Plato and Aristotle—*and* comedy, if approved by censors, all of which suggests that the Athenian was persuaded by (the ideas of) *Dramatics* 15, in which "good" (*chrēstos*) is the most important aspect of portraying character for serious drama (above authenticity, appropriateness, and consistency), with bad characters allowed when absolutely necessary to further the plot (and only then). Comedy itself can be, and should be, performed for the Athenian so that we learn how to distinguish buffoonery from what is proper, although the vulgar impersonations should neither be learned nor performed by free men but by slaves and foreign hirelings. Presumably, the principles of comedy from Aristotle, only some of which are still extant in the *Dramatics* (Chapters 3-5 and 9), with the creators of comedy being praised for creating universal themes even before tragedians, along with the Northern Greek's discussion of (at least the ideas of) wit and buffoonery in the *Nicomachean Ethics* IV 8, softened the censorious mentor-colleague in his older age.

Third, Plato had already voiced concern about Forms in the *Parmenides*, in which "Aristotle" is also a character, although scholars debate whether the character represents the real student. The so-called 3rd Man Argument is introduced: Likeness between individuals is the reason for a "Form"; likeness between a Form and the associated particulars is then reason for a (meta-) Form; and hence *ad infinitum*.[31] The 3rd Man consequently destroys the possibility of knowledge for Plato, which requires grasping the Forms, even if no worry exists about the realm of reality getting too crowded *spatially* as a result of an infinite regress of *immaterial* Forms. Regarding ontology, two very sharp and strong screws in the coffin of Plato's earlier theory are applied by the Northern Greek at the end of the *Metaphysics*: The Forms cannot create anything in the universe, nor can they cause movement (and recall the quotation at the very beginning of this article). Men generate other men and trees generate other trees, both substances through "seeds" of a certain kind (liquid for human beings). The Forms "Man" and "Tree" generate neither any man nor any tree, nor do they cause any man or tree to move (meaning, at least in the case of the latter, to grow).[32]

Plato may very well, though, have enjoyed his friendly revenge, voicing this riposte: Neither can the Unmoved Mover generate anything! Nor, despite Aristotle's youthful claim to the contrary in Lambda 7, can the *Mover* cause *movement*, because having no physicality and *hence no potential whatsoever*, it cannot interact with anything physical, *even passively* (which is how it

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30 I do not assert that *Dramatics* 4 had already been written, only that Aristotle held the position in the 350s and probably even in the 360s. Some, following Margoliouth, will surely contend that Aristotle took the doctrine from Plato, but appealing to biological and natural qualities is more Aristotelian than Platonic. Coupled with the other considerations adduced here, I think the balance of evidence favors the Stagirite influencing the Athenian on this particular issue. Whoever had the initial insights, though, the texts show each thinker considering very seriously the other's positions, which suffices for my needs.

31 Cf. also, e.g., Alexander's commentary on the *Metaphysics,* as translated in *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, ed. J. Barnes*, op. cit.,* pp. 2438-9.

32 This topic is explained in detail in the two previous digital extensions: "Consigning Aristotle's 'God' to Oblivion" (pp. 13; espec. 18-20 and 27-8; 30; 34; and 36) and "On Sarah Broadie's 'Heavenly Bodies and First Causes'" (pp. 8; 10; 50; 53; 62; and 65-6).

supposedly causes movement as a result of the desire and love of the outer spheres). Thus, the entire early Aristotelian system of a completely non-physical Mover, of love and desire on the part of the outer spheres causing a certain eternal circular movement, and of a God selfishly and solipsistically thinking only of itself is mere imagination. Alternatively, or in addition at least concerning God, the system was political expediency, to help protect the Stagirite against murderous religious Athenians and their enablers (who, ironically and disturbingly, seem to include Plato himself, given *Laws* 10, as we see below). Whether other colleagues rather than Plato quickly showed Aristotle the failings of Lambda is irrelevant: The Northern Greek's more powerful ontology of the "fifth element," the conclusions of the "Not to Fear" Proof, which themselves reflect an acceptance of Alcmaeon's position that the universe is eternal in virtue of its own nature, and the rejection of any *non-physical* Unmoved Mover by seemingly every Peripatetic for 500 years all help demonstrate that Aristotle abandoned the Mover at some point in his career.

At any rate, as 245c-e has already begun to reveal, Plato ultimately embraces fundamentally-important eternal movement in ontology, rather than something like Forms, which have no movement or change whatsoever. Heraclitus must have guffawed loudly from his grave. We examine now Plato's more detailed version, as developed in *Laws* 10, and the Aristotelian concepts that also emerge throughout. I leave aside the fascinating political issues in that book, like why the *polis* for the Athenian should kill atheists or imprison them for rehabilitation (908a-909a). As suggested, this viewpoint in another setting would force us to consider whether Aristotle could even trust his own mentor enough to confess during the Stagirite's time in the Academy that Lambda, or at least Lambda 7, is mere political cover. 908a-909a also has interesting ramifications for the Peripatetics after Aristotle, especially for Strato, who was not as cautious as Theophrastus still was about atheism (a term that for me is consistent with *humanistic* theism *qua* philosophical ethical perfection).[33]

In the following, I focus only on the proof for the existence of god and on the accompanying cosmology and ontology. Given Mayhew's account, I assume that only a minority of readers will have read, *or recall the precise details of*, *Laws* 10; hence, I provide the important passages.[34] My comments are in blue and, in case a black and white print-out is desired, also in brackets.

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33 This topic is addressed in part at the very end of my book and in "On Sarah Broadie's 'Heavenly Bodies and First Causes'"; see especially in the latter the discussion of Theophrastus, Strato and the Lyceum being closed for about a year around 307 BCE, pp. 39-41.

34 As noted, unless otherwise stated, any translation is by Trevor J. Saunders, as published in *Plato: Complete Works*, ed. John Cooper, *op. cit.*, and I should add that the translation is based on the Greek text of Budé, bks. I-VI ed. E. des Places, VII-XII ed A. Diès, Paris (1951, 1956). Another translation used, compliments of the Perseus Project, is by R.G. Bury, *Plato. Plato in Twelve Volumes, Vols. 10 & 11* (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press; London, William Heinemann Ltd.) 1967 & 1968. I myself relied on the Greek text also from the Perseus Project: *Plato. Platonis Opera*, ed. John Burnet (Oxford: Oxford University Press) 1903. Mayhew's translation came to my attention right before publication, and although admirable in my view, it does not change any of my issues enough to force me to re-do the passages.

Crucial passages from *Laws* 10

[The Athenian Stranger stresses the importance of proving that god (or gods) exist, and he articulates three positions:]

(i) God does not exist; (ii) god exists but takes no thought in human race; and (iii) god exists but can be bribed with supplications and sacrifices (885ff). A number of [unnamed] current works exist in Athens now, some in poems and some in prose, pertaining to these options (886b-c).

All types of generation—past, present and future—result for some [unnamed] thinkers because of *nature, art or chance* (888e). The thinkers further claim that nature and chance provide the grand and primary source; art is minor. That is, the four elements owe their existence to nature and chance. Some of those thinkers say that the consequent appearance of four seasons led to plants and living creatures; these living things were thus, for them, *not* a result of either *intelligent planning, art, or deity* (889a-b).

[Curiously, "intelligent planning" would include Anaxagoras and his *Nous*, which sets everything in order, a kind of divine intelligent designer, one of the first after Xenophanes's own Unmoved Mover. Why this passage suggests Anaxagoras and why "intelligent planning" is not sufficient in and of itself is shown below, when we take up Book 12. The Athenian continues:]

The first mistake about the nature of gods is not realizing the nature and power of soul. The wrong-headed do not recognize that it is "the first cause of the birth and destruction of all things" and think it is a later creation. "It is one of the *first creations, born long before all physical things, and is the chief cause of all their alterations and transformations.* ...anything closely related to soul will necessarily have been created before material things...since soul itself is older than matter. ... Natural things, and nature herself...will be secondary products *from art and reason*" (891e-892a; my italics).

[This seems to reverse a famous principle from *Republic* X, with mimesis (and artistic creation) being secondary to nature, and therefore deficient, although perhaps in the sphere of theology this reversal is consistent, whereas *human* arts are secondary to nature. Recall Mayhew's statement about serious mimetic art implying the actual, non-subjective existence of something called "beauty," and let us recognize one implication in passing: If *mimēsis* entails a Form, *Mimēsis,* which it must, given the similarity of different instances of the phenomenon, it has no less primacy than any Form like Virtue or Being. I repeat now a passage delivered before in a footnote, given how important it is:]

"When *they* use the term 'nature' (*phusis*), they mean the process by which the primary substances were created. *But if it can be shown that soul came first, not fire or air,* ***and that it was one of the first things to be created****, it will be quite correct to say that soul is preeminently natural.* This is true, provided you can demonstrate that soul is older than matter, but not otherwise" (892c; my emphases).

[Oddly, the Athenian now suggests the soul was created, when at other times, as in *Phaedrus* 245c-e, it was uncreated to the (infinite) past. This all suggests the heavens were also *created*.

The Athenian now takes up change/motion at 893c, giving ten types, as if aware of Aristotle's *Physics* or *Categories* and the Stagirite's six types.[35] Note the same "change and

[35] "There are six kinds of change (*kinēseōs*): generation, destruction, increase, diminution, alteration, change of place" (*Categories* 15a12-13, transl. J.L. Ackrill, *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, ed. J. Barnes, *op. cit.*).

motion" (*metabolēn kai kinesin*) at 894c as in the *Physics*, as I discuss in detail in my previous digital extension, easily found by searching the pdf with the key words.]

"The 8 kinds of motion…are—(1) circular motion round a fixed center; (2) locomotion (gliding or rolling); (3) combination; (4) separation; (5) increase; (6) decrease; (7) becoming; (8) perishing. The remaining two kinds …. are—(9) other-affecting motion (or secondary causation); and (10) self-and-other-affecting motion (or primary causation)" (894b-d; tr. Bury). Type #10 is really #1 in terms of *priority*. It then causes via other motions thousands and thousands of change and motion (894e).[36]
[For Aristotle the crucial kind is locomotion or change of place.[37]]

"Suppose the whole universe were somehow to coalesce and come to a standstill—the theory which most of our philosopher-fellows are actually bold enough to maintain…". How does motion begin again? The answer: Self-generating motion because no other source therefore exists. "Self-generating motion…is [the] source of all motions, and…the most ancient and the most potent of all the changes…" (895a-b).
[As we saw, the universe coming to a standstill is also Aristotle's concern in Theta 8, with the Stagirite denying it. Interestingly, the suppressed premise here, at least for the Athenian, is that the universe somehow *could* start moving again. Finally, the last phrase is ambiguous—is "most ancient" created or is it infinite to the past? As was just noted, at 392c, Plato suggests both at different times.]

Objects that move themselves are alive (895c). [Clinias now asks:] "Do you mean that the entity which we all *call* 'soul' (*psuchē*) is precisely that which is *defined* by the expression 'self-generating motion'?" [The Athenian replies:] "I do" (896a; Saunder's own italics).

The soul is "self-generating *motion* … [Thus] soul is identical with the original source of the generation and motion of all past, present and future things and their contraries… After all, it has been shown to be the cause of all change and motion in everything … soul, being the source of motion, is the most ancient thing there is" (896a-b; my italics).
["…the most ancient thing" is still ambiguous—is soul created or infinite to the past?]

The spiritual is older than the material; *soul* is the cause of *all* things… good and evil, beauty and ugliness…; soul controls the moving heavens too (896d). A minimum of two souls exist: "that which does good, and that which has the opposite capacity" (896e).
[Plato's theology here might be thought to be the predecessor of Manichaeism in spirit, if not in details. Whether or not that is true, according to Jaeger the dualism comes to the Academy from the ancient Iranians or from Pherecydes:

> The bad world-soul that opposes the good one in the *Laws* is a tribute to Zarathustra, to whom Plato was attracted because of the mathematical phase that

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36 One resulting question, at least for interested Platonists, is the relation of the ten motions to the *created* motions of the gods in *Timaeus* 40b: (i) rotating in place always, like a dancer pirouetting sempiternally, or (ii) "wandering" in a large circle, or (iii) the five other motions that are not at all obvious, at least to me.

37 "…[M]otion *(kinēseōs) in its most general and proper sense* is change of place, which we call 'locomotion'" (*Physics* IV 1, 208a31-33; my italics).

> his Idea-theory finally assumed, and because of the intensified dualism involved therein. From that time onwards the Academy was keenly interested in Zarathustra and the teaching of the Magi. Plato's pupil Hermodorus discussed astralism in his *Mathematics*; he derived the name Zarathustra from it, declaring that it means 'star-worshipper' (*astrothutēs*).
>
> These influences gave rise to Aristotle's interest in the Magi in the dialogue *On Philosophy*. Even the attempt to determine Zarathustra's date had been already made by other Academics. Hermodorus, for instance, had put him 5,000 years before the fall of Troy… Aristotle's interest…is clearly the view put forward in *On Philosophy* that all human truths have their natural and necessary cycles. Now in a fragment that is known to belong to the first book of this dialogue Aristotle speaks of the teaching of the Magi, *namely the Iranian dualism, according to which there are two principles, a good and a bad spirit, Ormuzd and Ahriman, and these he identifies with the Greek divinities Zeus and Hades, the god of heavenly light and the god of chthonic darkness.* Plutarch, also, compares Plato's doctrine of the good and the bad world-souls with the dualism of the Chaldees and Magi…
>
> It is natural to suppose that the same consideration was actuating Aristotle in the fragment where he draws a parallel between Zarathustra and Plato. This supposition is rendered certain by the only other passage where he mentions the Magi, namely one of the oldest parts of the *Metaphysics*, which must be assigned on other grounds to the time when *On Philosophy* was being written. Here again the subject is Platonic dualism. As the earliest forerunners of this view Aristotle mentions in Greece Pherecydes, in Asia the Magi. The Academy's enthusiasm for Zarathustra amounted to intoxication, like the rediscovery of Indian philosophy through Schopenhauer. *It heightened the historical self-consciousness of the school to think that Plato's doctrine of the Good as a divine and universal principle had been revealed to eastern humanity by an Oriental prophet thousands of years before.*[38]]

Soul is itself a divinity (897a). The good kind controls the universe, given, e.g., its heavenly regularity and order. The evil soul would have caused unbalanced disorder. Regular circular motion *at the same point in space*, around a fixed center, is best. This reflects order and reason, which must come from the good soul. Thus, the heavens revolving around the fixed center of the earth is ideal (897b-898c).

[Note the dissimilarity of the last point with Pythagoreans, for whom the earth revolves around the sun, but the similarity with the Stagirite's theory of the fifth element. That ontology, and astronomy, also has the earth at the center but, again, involves no soul for the outer spheres.]

Soul also drives the outer spheres individually. "…soul drives round the sun, moon and the other heavenly bodies" (898d). "If soul drives the sun, we shan't go far wrong if we say that it operates in one of three ways… Either (a) the soul resides within this visible spherical body and carries it wherever it goes, just as *our* soul takes us around from one place to another, or (b) it acquires its own body of fire or air of some kind (as certain people maintain), and impels the sun by the external contact of body with body, or (c) **it is entirely immaterial, but guides the**

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[38] Jaeger, *op. cit.*, p. 132-p. 133; my italics.

sun along its path by virtue of possessing some other prodigious and wonderful powers" (898e-899a).[39]

[I have argued in my previous publications that Lambda was primarily a youthful response to the *Timaeus*, and this passage, I believe, is powerful evidence that Plato knew of the Unmoved Mover. Jaeger himself and others like Düring have long propounded this latter point, which Mayhew acknowledges (pp. 151-2) in discussing briefly the debate.

The Athenian immediately insists on proceeding without determining which of the three options must be correct, only insisting that one would be. By implication, the "entirely immaterial" entity has a soul along with "prodigious and wonderful powers," because it causes the sun to move along its path, as if the Athenian is accepting the identity of the Unmoved Mover of Lambda 6 with the ensouled God of Lambda 7. The implication that something immaterial can have a soul is perplexing, however, given what the Athenian will say about Anaxagoras's view in Book 12.]

Gods exist, care for mankind and cannot be bribed (907b). "**The dissembling atheist deserves to die…not just once or twice but many times, whereas the other kind [of atheist] needs simply admonition combined with incarceration…of not less than five years…**" (908e-909a; my bolding)

[Allow me to repeat this, even though the last statement is utterly unambiguous: The mentor of the Stagirite, in apparently his final treatise, recommends killing atheists, or imprisoning them for at least five years, depending on their kind of atheism (and personality)! Should it be surprising that the Northern Greek's God (*ho theos*) of *Metaphysics* Lambda 7 was mere political artifice, whether inside the Academy or the Lyceum? Otherwise, Aristotle might as well announce that he is Catholic in the court of Queen Elizabeth 1, Huguenot in the courts of Louis XIV and XV, or Christian (or Hindu) in Pakistan from 2000 (if not earlier) to the time of this digital extension in 2021.

In other words, the metic from Stagira, without the full rights of an Athenian citizen, would have always been reluctant, to put it mildly, to publicize during his life beyond a trustworthy inner circle that (i) he was an atheist in the sense of not believing in official Athenian deities and that (ii) he instead embraced a "divine" fifth element for the outermost spheres that had neither soul nor mind nor capacity to love an Unmoved Mover (*qua* God) whatsoever. The "divine" planets do not think and, in essence, are no better than Anaxagoras's rocks in the sky, as far as Athenian and Platonic theology goes.

Besides, the "God" of Lambda 7 was not *really* identifiable for Aristotle with the Unmoved Mover of Lambda 6, which, being completely and utterly non-physical, with no potentiality what-soever of any kind, could not be the same "entity" as a god that has a blissful life and that thinks of itself thinking, when life and thinking require matter (assuming for the sake of argument that the label "Unmoved Mover" actually refers to something, rather than pure nothingness).[40] The fact that so many over the following generations, including the heavyweight Aquinas, have thought that the two "entities" were identical only shows how difficult it would

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39 My bolding but Saunders's italics.

40 See the discussion of Bordt above, footnote 22. Also, again, recall the first quotation at the very top of this work, from Theta 3.

have been for an ancient layman, *or even a philosopher not in the inner circle*, to uncover the ruse.]

Summary and Confirmation in *Laws* 12

It is crucial that the Guardians running the state understand theology well (966c). The two arguments, or phenomena, that most encourage belief in the gods are:

- The soul is far older and far more divine than all those things whose movements have sprung up;
- The heavenly bodies have systematic motion (966d).

[The Athenian obviously continues with his purposeful ambiguity "far older" (and "far more divine").]

"…even in those [earlier] days there were some who…assert it was reason that imposed regularity and order on the heavens. However, these same thinkers went sadly astray over the soul's natural priority to matter: regarding soul as a recent creation, they turned the universe upside down" (967c-d).

[This passage perhaps refers to Xenophanes and almost surely to Anaxagoras, but leaves aside how *Nous* can reason and yet not have a soul, unless, ironically, Plato's assumption that soul entails life requires that a non-living *Nous* is a mere fictional construct or a contradiction in terms. Thus, only souls and heavenly gods *that have life—and that therefore move*—are proper and primary in all ways: cosmologically, ontologically, and theologically. This means that for Plato the Unmoved Mover of Lambda 6 would also be flawed, and only if it has the potential of thinking and a life of some kind—the "add-on" of Lambda 7—would it be a viable theism, with the Stagirite not subject to prosecution for atheism.]

"…the soul is far older than any created thing, and … it is immortal and controls the entire world of matter; and… reason is the supreme power among the heavenly bodies" (967d-e).

[If this is not suggesting a type of theological Intelligent Design, then David Hume in writing *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion* must have been secretly an Orthodox Greek priest or a Franciscan monk.]

Final Considerations

As we have seen, and assuming that I have not omitted any important passage, Forms (or Ideal Numbers, which have the same ontological utility for Plato) play absolutely no role in *Laws* 10 and 12. Rather the self-moving *good* world soul—one that is also "other-moving," namely, the type 10 motion that is type 1 in terms of priority—is closer to Aristotle's heavenly bodies *also* functioning in large part like the Forms, because, moving in a perfectly consistent and unchanging way, like the "systematic" manner as noted in Book 12 (966d), the heavenly bodies are always the same. This is consistent with the Northern Greek's primary notion of (ontological) necessity in *Metaphysics* V 5, as covered in the previous publications. How could Plato complain, when being "always the same" had been the crucial consideration for the Forms, in part to reply to the dilemmas of Heraclitean flux?

A participant in the SAGP Zoom session, John Armstrong, the Willis J. Smith Professor of Philosophy at Southern Virginia University, said that the omission of Forms is no proof that

Plato dropped them. That is true, as far as the comment goes, but I believe that two considerations ultimately undercut Armstrong's objection, if it was an objection rather than just cautionary advice asking for more detail. First, how could Plato explain his theology, cosmology and ontology in Book 10, culminating in Book 12 at 966d-967d, and *not* mention the Forms, if he still subscribed to them? One might as well try to explain a *gas-powered* car and how it runs while explicating a *battery-powered* transmission, with no mention of gas or gas-engine. A listener similarly might contend that omitting the gas engine is no *proof* that the vehicle is *not* running on gas. Yet, why would this be an explanation of a gas-burning vehicle rather than an electrical one? It is absurd for Plato to expend so much effort on the little details and leave *the* core ontological entity completely untouched, which leads to the second consideration.

The good soul or god is said to be very concerned with little details at 903c, and the Athenian Stranger follows suit. Hence, it is extremely unlikely, to say the least, that the Athenian would omit the Forms in Book 10 (and only mention the conceptual classifications of virtue with the sub-kinds courage, temperance, justice and wisdom in Book 12) if they still had *ontological primacy* for him. That is not just a little detail; it is an absolutely fundamental consideration, and would be enormously important.

In private conversation, another professor of philosophy, John Brown, who, having taught at the University of Maryland for over 40 years, having concentrated on aesthetics and having published on Plato, wondered about the effect my views would have on teaching the Athenian. My reply was, and is, that just as Picasso has his different periods, and no art historian believes that he had a single, static style throughout his life, so Plato (like Aristotle) evolved his views over time. This has been recognized to some extent, and my interpretation simply reveals that the evolution is more pervasive than has been thought. Thus, when teaching Plato, instructors need to emphasize in discussing the Forms *qua* ontological realities (versus mere conceptual classifications) that those "entities" are only part of his early and middle periods, even if historically they have had significant influence on later philosophers' thought. Indeed, the historical impact is sufficient in and of itself for still teaching the Ideas carefully, even if we accept that Plato relinquished them starting with the *Parmenides* and *Phaedrus*.

I should emphasize that I am hardly the first to propound at least some progression in Plato's thought. Those focused on his work and the early to mid-20th century secondary literature will recall a movement in "Plato-evolutionism," apparently starting with Gilbert Ryle's article on Plato's *Parmenides* in 1939.[41] Whether they agree with Ryle or not, Gregory Vlastos and G.E.L. Owen also then contributed new, related scholarship, with Harold Cherniss seemingly being a nemesis of what might be called their "analytical-evolutionary approach." A very quick perusal of only a little of the total output indicates, though, how a rigorous review of those debates would massively extend this article. It is doubtful that, in any event, they would affect my conclusions. First, recall Jaeger's suggestion from above how Aristotle affected his mentor's approach over many years. Nevertheless, not even those like Jaeger who believed in Aristotle's evolution considered that the Northern Greek abandoned the Unmoved Mover; nor did they consider that Aristotle affected Plato accordingly *because* of both ancients embracing some of

41 Gilbert Ryle, "Parmenides," in *Mind*, Vol. 48, No. 191 (July 1939) 302-325. Yet again, I am grateful to Mourelatos, who summarized this history. My own graduate studies involving two disciplines in the 1980's-1990's did not permit me to read secondary literature extensively from the 1930s to the 1960s on Plato, unless it was obviously and directly relevant to my interests and projects.

Alcmaeon's metaphysics. Hence, it is difficult, if not impossible, to imagine that Ryle, Vlastos or any other specialist anticipated my arguments even in an obscure journal much less a highly publicized one. Second, to my knowledge there is no hint of the conclusions of those arguments in the relatively well-known secondary literature pertaining to the Unmoved Mover in the last 40-50 years, or in the treatments of Alcmaeon that I have cited.[42] Because *mega biblion mega kakon* ("A large book is a large evil"), I will therefore be saintly and end only with a bit more recent confirmation that Jaeger and I are not alone in advocating that the Athenian changed *because he was influenced by the Stagirite*. David Auerbach recently reviewed Ryle's *Plato's Progress* and states:

> If Plato contradicts himself from one dialogue to the next, *he really did change his mind*. To quote Ryle:
>
> > For philosophers the transformation of Plato from something superhuman to something human is compensated by the transformation of Plato from the sage who was born at his destination to the philosopher who had to search for his destination. We lose a Nestor, but we gain an Ulysses.
>
> Since we don't know much about Plato's life, and not *that* much about 4th-century Athens, Ryle has to make quite a few suppositions… Let's hit the main points:…
> Did Plato really reject the Forms and idealism? *Yes. He was virtually an Aristotelian scientist by the end of his life, possibly influenced* ***by*** *Aristotle*.[43]

"Possibly" is surely a decorous understatement, if, indeed, Plato was "virtually an Aristotelian scientist" before heading to Hades. At any rate, "virtually" need not mean, and cannot mean, "completely": As we have seen in *Laws* 10, Plato does *not* accept the Aristotelian "fifth element," namely, a metaphysical astronomy with no (thinking) god whatsoever and no ensouled heavenly bodies. The fates of Anaxagoras and Socrates presumably were too fresh on the Athenian's mind, as his admonition to kill or jail atheists in *Laws* 10 outwardly confirms. Thus, Auerbach is too extreme with his final sentence, especially considering that Plato did not engage, like Aristotle, in substantial data collection (of animals, political constitutions, and lists of dramatic

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[42] I cover Ryle in the Appendix, including the associated "Book Review of Gilbert Ryle, *Plato's Progress* (Cambridge: University Press; Toronto: Macmillan of Canada) 1966," by F.E. Sparshott, *Phoenix*, Vol. 22, No. 1 (Spring, 1968) 73-79; available at: https://www.jstor.org/stable/1087037?seq=1 For those who did not know him, Sparshott (1926-2015), an ancient Greek specialist and a University Professor at the University of Toronto, was in the same league as, e.g., Marshall McLuhan, publishing massively for over 40 years. He was also my PhD supervisor but, ironically, I only discovered his Review while preparing for the Appendix.

Because of restrictions at libraries resulting from Covid-19 and because of my desire to put out at least a sketch of my arguments, I will not wait for months to see exactly how others replied to Ryle in ways that impact my interpretation of *Phaedrus* 245c-e and *Laws* 10. Suffice it to say that I have additional, grave doubts anyone dealt with him on my issues because his book mentions Alcmaeon not once, even though Ryle discusses Aristotle taking a possible overland journey from Sicily to Tarentum in 361, which would have meant going through Croton (pp. 90-5, Ryle, *op. cit.*), of which more below. Nor does Ryle mention even once the Unmoved Mover or *Metaphysics* Lambda. I will update this pdf with a newer version, *if* I discover that the views of anyone replying to Ryle (or of anyone, for that matter) impacts my position in any significant way; such is one benefit of digital publication over traditional Gutenberg-style presses.

[43] David Auerbach, "Gilbert Ryle's PLATO," seen on 18 May 2012 at: https://www.waggish.org/2012/gilbert-ryles-plato/ All emphases are his, exactly.

victories), dissection, etc., if this is what Auerbach implies by "scientist." However, his general point is quite correct, as the following Appendix on Ryle's book confirms: Plato really did evolve with respect to some important doctrines throughout his life, even if he kept others.[44]

Appendix: On Ryle's *Plato's Progress*

Ryle was not only a specialist in both ancient Greek philosophy and Plato but the Waynflete Professor of Metaphysical Philosophy in the University of Oxford when he published *Plato's Progress* in 1966. "Metaphysical" is important to note, as the following reveals. Sparshott, in his 7-page Book Review, as just footnoted, only focusses on a handful of topics of the dozens that Ryle explores and finishes by admitting how little he (Sparshott) has covered: "…the book is full of interesting ideas, only a few of which have been touched on here, … many of which may be both new and sound." The problem in this context is that neither scholar even recognizes, much less discusses, the issues concerning Aristotle and Alcmaeon, whether metaphysical or psychological. Nevertheless, it is clear from Ryle's book that the Oxonian provides independent support for my theses that (i) the Athenian developed and changed philosophically throughout his life and, even more precisely, (ii) the Athenian dropped *completely* the Forms in his final

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44 Some have considered a passage by Antiochus (c. 120 – c. 69 BCE) to suggest that he accepted a 2-world view of reality or attributed to Plato such a view: transcendent Forms and the physical universe. If so, how can I be correct that Plato abandoned the Forms? Yet George Boys-Stones provides incisive arguments to demonstrate that "Forms" are really only concepts ("ideas" or "forms," lower-case) in the texts under consideration. As he says:

> …I have argued that there is nothing in the evidence for Antiochus which gives any hint at all that he believed in the existence of transcendent entities of any kind (*or, indeed, that he believed that any of his predecessors believed in such a thing*) ("Antiochus' metaphysics," in D. N. Sedley [ed.], *The Philosophy of Antiochus*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012, 220-236; 230; my italics).

If Boys-Stones is correct, as I believe he is, in showing that already by the time of Antiochus transcendental Forms were simply ignored by (at least some) philosophers, then my picture of Plato dropping transcendental Forms completely by *Laws* 10 and meaning only *conceptual forms* the one time he mentions them in *Laws* 12 is enhanced. The passage that Boys-Stones quotes for Antiochus pertains to the *early* Academy:

> The single most important text for the 'Platonizing' view of Antiochus' metaphysics is a passage of Cicero's *Academica* (I.30-2)…Varro, Cicero's spokesman for Antiochus in this work, is here describing the view he believes was held *in common by members of the early Academy* (p. 221; my italics).

As even Ryle argued decades ago, which is explained in the Appendix here, transcendental Forms were held at the most only at the beginning, or earlier period, of Plato's evolution. By the *Parmenides* they were being seriously questioned, and, again, by the *Laws* they have disappeared into the dustbin of useless-albeit-at-one-moment-fascinating philosophical doctrines, like the Unmoved Movers of Anaxagoras and Xenophanes.

After corresponding with Boys-Stones, I received potentially even more compelling evidence for my whole view on Plato's evolution and his mimicking Aristotle in *Laws* 10 (although, again, I emphasize the Athenian never relinquishes his belief in a god, or, as he says, a minimum of two gods, as discussed above relative to *Laws* 10, 896-897): Boys-Stones recommends a forthcoming book (available late December 2022) for which he has advance knowledge of the contents--
https://www.routledge.com/The-Theology-of-the-Epinomis/Calchi/p/book/9780367683214
--and says "[Vera] Calchi argues that it is Philip of Opus who offers the first Platonism without forms" (private correspondence, July 26, 2022). If Calchi is correct, then since Philip reputedly edited the *Laws*, arguably Philip immediately recognized that the Athenian had relinquished the (ontological) Forms and proceeded accordingly.

ontology of *Laws* 10 and, indeed, even before.[45] What is not clear is whether Ryle provides *unintentional* additional evidence for my further thesis that (iii) Plato took Alcmaeon's doctrine from Aristotle (because the arguments I gave in this regard were primarily based on Aristotelian mature concepts and systems occurring in *Phaedrus* 245c-e and in the *Laws*). I summarize the evidence for these three theses, in order, and in finishing offer a judgment on (iii).

(i) The Athenian Evolving over his Professional Life

I cited specialists who indicate how the *Phaedrus* had an earlier and later version, the latter from about 360. Even without taking them into account, Ryle gives an account of how the dialogue was composed for presentation in Syracuse about 360 (p. 41), even though Sparshott doubts the chronology. The *Republic* and *Laws* are shown to have different parts that seem to have been stitched together (e.g., pp. 89, 180, 189, 216, 238, and 244ff, espec. 257), as I claim 245c-e was when interpolated into the *Phaedrus*. Even before discovering Ryle's book, I had confirmed the oddity of Plato postponing *Laws* II, which finishes with a discussion of dance and music while training children. Plato via the Athenian Stranger invokes wrestling that had never been introduced, *when the Athenian pretends it has*, explicitly putting on hold the whole discussion to discuss the unrelated topics of Books III-VI, before returning to wrestling and dance in VII.[46] *Parmenides* has a second part that for Ryle is very different from the first and, unlike earlier dialogues, is not suited for the general public; more than that—because the same

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45 Regretfully, I must diverge at times from my former supervisor, but then I follow Aristotle diverging at times from Plato or the older Stagirite diverging from his younger self. Sparshott starts his review by writing that "In this boldly speculative *but closely reasoned and heavily documented book*, Ryle contends that Plato's lifelong intellectual commitment was to the practice of dialectic rather than to any dogma" (p. 73; my italics). In my own view, this slightly de-emphasizes Ryle's fundamental goal, which is iterated after an initial recount of some problems with the stereotypical view of Aristotle's relation to Plato and of Plato's own conventional reputation *of a philosopher holding static theories or "dogmas" throughout his life*. Ryle states "the story of Plato's philosophical development still awaits the telling. In justice to Plato we should ask not 'Did Plato grow?' but rather 'What was the course of his philosophic growth?'" (p. 10). The issue of dialectic, then, is merely one aspect, even if admittedly the most important, of Plato's whole "progress," obviously the reason for the title of the book and the primary theme in my opinion.

After a very short evaluation of the life of the Forms for Ryle's interpretation of Plato, of which more below, the British-Canadian scholar then critiques Ryle's very lengthy and complex account of Plato's travels to Syracuse and the alleged forgery of his *Letters* before offering a fairly devastating rebuttal of Ryle's provocative timeline of Plato's dialogues. Nevertheless, as enlightening as his review is and apart from a few remarks on Forms, of which more shortly, Sparshott gives no arguments *against* the theme of Plato's "progress" in metaphysics, even if he pokes holes in some of Ryle's "boldly speculative" ruminations and in some of the "heavy documentation." Certainly, nothing is implied one way *or the other* on the metaphysical issues pertaining to Alcmaeon, *Phaedrus* 245c-e and *Laws* 10.

One final comment: Ryle, as noted, himself does not cover in any manner whatsoever the meta-physical issues pertaining to the Unmoved Mover and, e.g., its relation to the *Timaeus*, which for Ryle is surprisingly emphasized not for its theological, cosmogonical and cosmological aspects but because for Plato "Only the *Timaeus* can be described as being about 'Nature'" (p. 63), as if *Laws* 10, in which nature is emphasized, does not exist! Moreover, Sparshott does not address Ryle's claim that "…from his early days Aristotle draws on the *Timaeus* far more frequently than on any other Platonic dialogue" (p. 12), a claim that would require a vast amount of research on my part (or a vast amount of experience on anyone's part) to verify or dispute rigorously. However, let us grant Ryle the assertion: Why, then, no focus on the themes of Lambda being in some ways very similar to those in the *Timaeus,* as I have discussed above and in the previous publications, notwithstanding that Aristotle modifies the Platonic doctrines to a slight extent?

46 *ADMC*, the final section of Chapter 1.

philosophical themes could be treated lightly for laymen and more rigorously for aspiring scholars—the legitimacy of the Forms is questioned in the dialogue (e.g., pp. 16-19; 27; 101; 109; and 252). I could continue but it would be tedious, because the issue for me is one of changing doctrine, not change of style of presentation or of argumentation. A philosopher can present the same ideas in, for instance, dialogue form, question-and-answer *elenchus* or in exposition, with different strengths and weaknesses for each approach (cf. pp. 201 & 204 for Platonic examples on Ryle's assessment).

One might accept, as I do, Sparshott's critique of Ryle's belief that, e.g., the Platonic dialogues were composed to be read at competitions, similar to, or happening alongside, the "musical" competitions of Athens and the Olympics, with Plato taking the spoken role of "Socrates," unless Plato was ill (especially pp. 27-41).[47] Ryle further hypothesizes that interpolations, changes in "address" (direct versus indirect speech), and the like in some of the dialogues demonstrate an urgency to have certain works completed by a certain date, namely the relevant competitions, whose dates we know, all of which helps set some of Plato's timeline of composition for the British scholar. Then Ryle attempts to explain how and why the early "eristic" dialogues stopped (e.g., p. 204) with new approaches to the dialogues and dialectic occurring. We might also accept Sparshott's rebuttal of other parts of Ryle's "boldly speculative but closely reasoned" work and Ryle's proposed general timeline; however, the whole analysis by Ryle has some options built into it (pp. 216-300), allowing us ultimately to accept with little worry that at least style has changed for Plato over his whole professional life. Yet, none of this proves nor disproves an evolution of certain *doctrinal* positions, only, typically, how eristic, dialectical and the Socratic method are employed or not and how and why Plato changed from one approach to another. Finally, even if the "progress" of the title of the book is most importantly about dialectic, howsoever it is construed, the focus for us then switches to those minor sections in which content is crucial, especially regarding metaphysics and ontology.

In brief, the issue is whether, as Thomas Case proposed wisely for the Stagirite, the Athenian could also have been amending and updating his dialogues *in terms of content* throughout the course of the 360s and 350s, and for Ryle the answer is clearly in the affirmative (e.g., p. 295). Yet, we must be careful: "Amending" can mean many things, and it does not necessarily entail changing one's fundamental position on an issue. As Sparshott prudently says of the book, "each of its errors deserves *separate* refutation" (p. 79; my italics). In summary, Ryle's focus on the type of dialectic is at least sometimes independent of *both* the ultimate timeline that Ryle challengingly proposes *and* the issue of whether Plato evolved *some* of his doctrines throughout life. When all is said and done, the preceding summaries reflect for Ryle a hitherto

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47 Regarding the issue of "reading" for competitions, we only need modify Ryle's proposal to the very plausible one that Ryle also offers, namely, that the dialogues were written to be read out loud to a much smaller and more intellectual group, with professional actors sometimes hired (e.g., pp. 27-30). This sometimes happens nowadays, even when books or poems are often *not* expected to be read out loud, in contrast apparently to Plato's time, even when reading by oneself and to oneself. I have personally experienced at the United Nations a professional poet hiring not an actor but a very accomplished reader of poetry, who presented the creation to a sophisticated group of diplomats and friends in a way the poet herself simply was not trained to do (and perhaps could never have been trained to do, because excellence in vocalization depends in part on the anatomical vocal structure given at birth). Ryle focusses well on the relation between writing, books, publishing, (the lack of) bookstores, and the Greek custom of reading out loud, and his less provocative claims are often very persuasive.

unrecognized cognitive flexibility, curiosity and willingness to change even fundamental doctrine, a theme that Sparshott does not adjudicate precisely, at least explicitly and obviously. In short, even if Ryle's timeline is not correct, in part for some of the reasons Sparshott gives, the more important questions are, in my opinion, what doctrines are held in the texts that survive, are they internally consistent, and which doctrines are most mature. This is all I need for my purposes, apart from the timeline of the particular, relevant doctrine of immortal souls, their relation to Alcmaeon and Aristotle and to the Forms. I turn now, then, first to the famous creed of the *ontological* Ideas.

(ii) The Athenian Dropping the Forms in the Final Ontology of Laws 10

Ryle discusses how, e.g., the Forms are questioned by Plato himself in the *Parmenides*, *Theaetetus* and *Philebus*, among other places, and how no other (well known) Academician accepted the Forms (pp. 16 and 286ff). Ryle states "The sole prop provided for the Theory of Forms by Plato's *Timaeus* is tranquilly removed by [the time of] Plato's *Theaetetus*" (p. 15), and the Oxonian summarizes his view of the Athenian: "His captivation by the Theory of Forms was of relatively short duration, lasting, perhaps, for about the half-dozen years from, say, 370 to 364" (p. 102).

As noted, Ryle does not even focus on the lack of Forms in *Laws* 10. In fact, he never discusses this book even though he mentions in passing that, for example, books VIII-XII were composed by about 357 (p. 258). His evidence for Plato dropping the Forms comes from other considerations, which give additional, independent weight for my conclusion (and, to some extent, vice-versa). Sparshott barely addresses this whole issue: "The theory of forms was according to Ryle a mere passing phase in the quest for an underpinning for dialectic" (p. 76). This statement seemingly implies that there was an epistemological, but no ontological, motivation for the Forms, which goes against Aristotle's arguments at the end of the *Metaphysics*, as discussed above when I noted that Plato could have exacted "friendly revenge" against the Unmoved Mover. Then, after a very short paragraph on the related sub-themes pertaining to the forms, including a couple of sentences on the connection to division, Sparshott drops the whole issue. Thus, there is no telling whether he agrees or disagrees with Ryle on Plato having completely relinquished the Forms by the mid-350s.[48] At any rate, anyone who rejects Ryle's views on Plato's dropping the Forms still needs to cover the arguments of *Phaedrus* 245c-e and *Laws* 10.

There is an interesting ramification for Ryle recognizing that by the 350s not only Aristotle but the Athenian himself rejects the Forms, just as both *ultimately* have similar views for Ryle on, e.g., the very important topic of dialectic (e.g., pp. 130-1, 144 and 210). As discussed in previous digital extensions and especially with respect to Julian, all of this helps reveal why the writers of late antiquity were convinced that Plato and Aristotle often, if not always, maintained the same

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[48] I do not recall any verbal decision one way or the other by Sparshott on a *lifelong* commitment by Plato for the Forms, but it would have been utterly shocking if he had said that the Athenian definitely discarded them. I cannot imagine forgetting such a provocative remark. My dissertation was on Aristotle's *Dramatics*, which of course involved directly related themes in the Platonic corpus, but I did not need to address any question of the lifelong legitimacy of the Forms. Rather, I only needed to focus on, e.g., related issues implied in the ascent to the Beautiful in the *Symposium* and in the denigration of *mimēsis* in the *Republic* to a secondary level of Reality, when Plato was seemingly still committed to the Forms. As alluded to, the *Parmenides* reveals doubts about the Forms but the issue was still inconclusive for most specialists in Plato in the 1980s and 1990s, if memory serves me well.

crucial doctrines, in distinct contrast to an often-found caricature that Plato is the other-worldly rationalist in virtually all (important philosophical) respects and Aristotle the scientist. The more sensible, sophisticated and complimentary stance is that Plato blends his other-worldly view of a supernatural god with a great concern at times for the customs and phenomena around him, even if he is not the archetype of science that Aristotle is, with Plato being somewhat analogous to an Anaxagoras, a Jesuit or a Francis Sellars Collins (the religious head of the National Institutes of Health in the USA). Actually, we need not leave the Academy and Lyceum for an illuminating comparison: Is this not the profile fitted to the Stagirite for generations—a believer in God (*qua* Unmoved Mover) who is simultaneously one of the greatest empiricists, biologists and psychologists of all time?

(iii) Alcmaeon's Influence in Phaedrus 245c-e (and in Laws 10) Coming via the Stagirite

What Ryle does and does not say with respect to this final topic is especially intriguing. First, to emphasize, he never once mentions Alcmaeon of Croton; nor does he mention the Unmoved Mover; nor *Metaphysics* Lambda. It is as if the whole issue of the Mover, which I have argued is the Northern Greek's youthful response to the *Timaeus*, is completely irrelevant to a Professor of Metaphysics. This is doubly remarkable because of the implications of the hypotheses that Ryle develops, with evidentiary justification, regarding Aristotle and Plato going to Syracuse around 361 and perhaps even visiting the Italian cities that are next to Croton.

Let us start, however, from the beginning: Ryle barely touches on Plato's first visit around 388 to Syracuse under Dionysius I, when the Athenian was reportedly almost executed, sold into slavery and, on one account, luckily rescued through his purchase by an apparent friend Anniceris. Ryle describes, though, Plato's second visit to Syracuse in detail, whether the Athenian was invited by a reconciled Dionysius or his just-invested heir, Dionysius II. The trip, which lasted 18 months according to Ryle (p. 37), seemingly happened shortly after the Stagirite joined the Academy at the age of about 17. Ryle subsequently notes:

> …[Plato] left Sicily [in 366] in excited possession of a mass of new natural science. Archytas and Philistion had given him a wealth of systematized knowledge of Nature. No longer has the Other World to monopolize the Sunlight. The philosopher's Here is no longer his prison (p. 64-5).

This is one serendipitous time during which Plato could have been introduced to the doctrine of *the other* Italian, from Croton, but Ryle never considers the option. Archytas is Pythagorean, from Tarentum, slightly northeast of Croton on the southern coast of Italy and closer to Alcmaeon's city than Croton is to Syracuse. Philistion was a physician-philosopher from Locri, the city closest on many ancient maps to Croton, on the way to Sicily. How difficult would it have been for two philosophically inclined physicians from the same local region, Alcmaeon and Philistion, to have known about each other's theories and for Philistion to have discussed them with Plato or for the Locrian to have given the Athenian a copy of the one and only book Alcmaeon apparently wrote? Even if, though, Plato had been introduced to the Crotoniate's views before Aristotle, still (i) the doxography that Aristotle, from a medical family, wrote a book on the renowned Italian physician; (ii) the Aristotelian terminology and concepts in *Phaedrus* 245c-e and *Laws* 10; and (iii) the rivalries between the different Italian cities (and their schools) suggest Aristotle could have taken Alcmaeon's empiricism more to heart than Plato. In any event, the similar final ontological products for both could have been the result of protracted

debate between student-colleague and mentor-colleague over a number of years. Indeed, Plato could have been given Alcmaeon's book and he could have re-gifted it to his protégé, just as we, if truth be forced from us, sometimes re-gift items that are of merely lukewarm interest to us. Ryle's account of Plato's third visit to Syracuse supports this latter set of reasons, with Aristotle rather than Plato becoming first intimately and enthusiastically acquainted with Alcmaeon's philosophy, as we consider now.

Based on a variety of sources and reasons, Ryle conjectures that Aristotle went along to Syracuse with others from the Academy in 361 to present dialogues and an encomium to the court of Dionysius II. The Professor of Metaphysics concludes:

> This assemblage of straws does not *prove* that Aristotle was with the Athenian delegation in Sicily in 361-360; but it amounts to a circumstantial case for it *better than the case against it* that rests on the silences of taciturn history (p. 101; my italics).

One of the many reasons for the Northern Greek being part of the delegation for Ryle is Aristotle knowing much about Italian philosophy (especially Pythagoras), which is best explained were he in the Sicilian area at some point (on pp. 90-2). Another reason is that Aristotle's knowledge of Italian fish and shellfish can also be well and elegantly explained if the Stagirite took an overland journey from Sicily to Tarentum, whether or not he was there to meet Archytas or to study Pythagoreanism in more detail (p. 92-4). This would have meant going through Locri and meeting Philistion, and when else in his life could he have done this? His travels after Plato's death took him, of course, in opposite directions, to Lesbos and Assos and then to Macedonia. Ryle explains (pp. 55-7) in a related discussion how the seasons make a sea voyage from Athens to Syracuse dangerous, which Sparshott doubts but without giving any precise reason (and, at any rate, Sparshott only seems to doubt the precise month and not the attested journey); in the case of Aristotle, if he also went to Syracuse, the additional local overland journey or even a regional sea excursion is perfectly reasonable. This raises the question: Why should we believe Aristotle would *want* to meet Philistion, apart from the coincidence that the Stagirite also came from a medical family? Ryle inadvertently gives the answer:

> C. Albutt's *Greek Medicine in Rome* and W. Jaeger's *Diokles von Carystos* make it clear that Aristotle's physiology is so heavily indebted to the teachings of the Syracusan doctor, Philistion, that the young Aristotle must have sat at Philistion's feet for quite a long spell (p. 95).

Again, Ryle's hypothesized overland journey would necessarily take the Stagirite through Croton, almost in the middle between Locri and Tarentum, and maybe he even terminated his journey at Croton. In that case, the Stagirite himself, not the Athenian, could have first obtained the physician Alcmaeon's philosophical text or at least his ideas. Moreover, Ryle does not take advantage of the option that Aristotle need not be doing serious research on marine life but could simply have been taking a leisurely trip "for the sights" and for meeting on occasion with physicians and philosophers along the southern Italian coast, given the proximity to Sicily. Knowledge of the local fish and shellfish and their habits or environments could be obtained in a variety of ways along the trip, including discussions with fishmongers and cooks (and of course learned men or meal companions), with just a few trips to the beach. The Stagirite himself need not have spied a beached mullet baking in the sun to dissect, eat or discuss it.

Previous Digital Extensions

1. www.epspress.com/NecessaryImplication.pdf
2. www.epspress.com/NTF/VariousVersionsOfThePrinciple.pdf
3. www.epspress.com/NTF/CantorAndTheAttemptToRefuteAristotle.pdf
4. www.epspress.com/NTF/AmbiguityLambda.pdf
5. www.epspress.com/NTF/3ObjectionsAndReplies.pdf
6. www.epspress.com/NTF/OnHeavenlyBodies.pdf

For other Updates/Errata/Comments concerning *Aristotle's "Not to Fear" Proof*

www.epspress.com/NotToFearUpdates.html

Postscript

In an article[49] that was brought to my attention after this "digital extension" was first published,[50] Jaap Mansfeld argues that "self-mover" does not come from Alcmaeon in the debate about the immortality of the soul (or of divine bodies) for Plato; rather it comes from Aëtius. As Mansfeld concludes, after examining the six remarks on Alcmaeon as collated by Diels-Kranz: "Plato may have found the concept of eternal motion in Alcmaeon, but the concept of self-motion was not to be found there" (p. 5 of 9, and Section 13 on the pdf at the website).

This is perfectly consistent with my reading of the timeline: Aristotle's passage in *de Anima* likewise has no reference to "self-mover," and immortality results (simply) from eternal motion. The mature Stagirite himself holds the "divine" eternal (but unsouled) fifth element as the primary reality, moving in virtue of its own nature without impediment, as fire moves straight up by nature (unless impeded). *Laws* 10, along with the peculiar similarities of Aristotelian doctrine in *Phaedrus* 245c-e, strongly suggests that the mature Athenian was inspired by Alcmaeon via his student-*colleague* but refused to give up the importance of soul and thus self-movement, no matter how Plato was first inspired to accept self-movement (and its identification with soul). Thus, especially because Mansfeld neither considers the possibility of Aristotle influencing his mentor-*colleague* nor examines how *Laws* 10 develops 245c-e, I believe his illuminating article adds support for my position.

Postscript #2: On Shields and Freeman

With respect to the title "Plato Imitates Aristotle," I am not the first, of course, to consider whether the mature Plato learned anything from Aristotle, especially anything that caused the great Athenian to change his views or to arrive at new ones. In recently coming across *A Companion to Plato*, I discovered that Christopher Shields addresses the theme, at least indirectly, in "Learning about Plato from Aristotle."[51] However, Shields does not touch on, much less discuss, any of the issues pertaining to the *Laws* or *Phaedrus* that reflect the commonalities of the mentor and his student, who by about 355, if not earlier, was an equally capable colleague. Naturally, these commonalities may have had their source in the Stagirite's

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49 Jaap Mansfeld, "Alcmaeon and Plato on Soul," *Platon et la* psychè, in *Études Platoniciennes* 11 (2014): https://journals.openedition.org/etudesplatoniciennes/508 as of 15 June 2021.

50 My gratitude goes to Jonathan Griffiths, University College London, for the notice.

51 Christopher Shields, "Learning about Plato from Aristotle," in *A Companion to Plato*, ed. Hugh H. Benson (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing) 2006; 403-417.

theories. Shield's focusses on the theory of Forms and on goodness. *Laws 10 (and other texts) might as well not even exist,* and partly as a result of this, he cannot seemingly appreciate that Plato completely dropped the (ontological) Forms by the end of his life, given their total absence in *Laws* 10. Mere conceptual forms as ideas or mental constructs are kept, with an example used by the Stranger in *Laws* 12, but Aristotelians or anyone else can accept "ideas."

In the *Companion,* Cynthia Freeland's "The Role of Cosmology in Plato's Philosophy" (pp. 199-213) can also be found, and Freeland has more to say, directly or indirectly, about the themes of this digital extension. Relating to *Laws* 10, Plato's most mature cosmology, theology and ontology, and about the passage in the *Phaedrus* (245c) in which Plato seems to interpolate a very different view, as influenced by the Stagirite, she writes not surprisingly but disappointedly:

> A…problem in trying to give an account of Plato's cosmology is that *all* of his cosmological views are set out in passages explicitly described as "myths" or stories. This holds true of the three most important presentations of such views: toward the end of the *Phaedo* …; in the *Phaedrus'* account of the lives of souls before birth and embodiment; and, finally, in the *Timaeus*, where cosmology is presented in the guise of an *eikos muthos* or "likely story" (p. 199; my italics).

She devotes not a word to the cosmology of *Laws* 10, which seems to supersede all of the earlier views. Moreover, Freeland only touches upon *Phaedrus* 245 in passing:

> Socrates begins the relevant section of the dialogue by describing his view that every soul is immortal, at 245c5. He says that there is a self-mover or source in each soul, which itself has no source; so can't be destroyed either. *(This may be a response to Parmenides, making each soul a complete, indestructible "one being" like his One.)*" (p. 203; my italics).

Obviously, this briefest of analyses in no way recognizes the similarity that much, if not all, of the fuller, encompassing passage at 245c-e has with Aristotle's later metaphysics; in fact, just the opposite: Freeland attempts to relate it to a pre-Socratic (but obviously not Alcmaeon). Again, though, as amply explained in my book and the digital extensions, the unthinking 5th element for the Stagirite is "divine." God is not part of Plato's "proof" of the immortality of the soul in 245c-e, even though the soul is mentioned there to be "divine" (*theias*), which makes the proof strikingly similar to Aristotle's, as I have explained it. In addition, Freeland offers an implausible reason for Plato's theory: If there is more than one soul, as "each soul" implies (and in *Laws* 10 there are indubitably a multiplicity of souls), then Plato's psycho-cosmology cannot be similar to Parmenides because the true Reality for the Eleatic is One and *not* multiple.

However, what is most disappointing for me in Freeland's article are not these two aspects, ignoring *Laws* 10 and thinking that *Phaedrus* 245 follows Parmenides, rather it is that she tantalizingly recognizes the importance of the Principle of Plenitude (p. 212), which I have demonstrated is crucial to understanding the Stagirite's mature metaphysics. Yet she then leaves the subject after (insightfully) mentioning some of the important historical influences of the doctrine, including Arthur Lovejoy. It is a pity that she did not explore this theme more, either in this article or in her later scholarship (because to my knowledge she does not return to it, although I would actually enjoy being proved wrong on this particular matter).

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Revisions

6 June 2021: "apparently" and "superficially" for "seemingly" on p. 2.
15 June 2021: Added "Background and Introduction" on p. 1, and added the Postscript.
2 Nov 2021: "Auerback" to "Auerbach" on p. 22; "the preceding summaries reflect" for "all of this reflects" on p. 24.
25 June 2022: "1047a31-340" to "1047a31-36" on p. 1.
6 Aug 2022: Footnote 45 on Antiochus and Philip of Opus added; with the change of Sept 2024, this is now footnote 44.
10 Sept 2023: Postscript #2, Bibliography; page numbers for Laks; and the Greek word (*theias*) for "divine" in *Phaedrus* 245 added on p. 4.
8 Sept 2024: Recast and replaced the original 9-step "Not to Fear" Proof by omitting the Principle of Plenitude, which is not really needed if only dealing with eternality or eternal substances. That original was as follows:

1. "For…*eternal* things, what may be, is" (*the* indubitable and primary version of the Principle of Plenitude for Aristotle).[52]
2. The universe as The All (*to pan*) is eternal.
3. The past is infinite.
4. The universe has never gone out of existence (in that infinite time).
5. It is impossible for the universe simply to go out of existence and then to re-appear *ex nihilo*.
6. "Infinite (past time)" and "eternality" *function* the same in this context.
7. Therefore, the existence of the eternal universe is, strictly speaking, *not* "possible" (because possibility involves finite options X *and* not X; otherwise, necessity or impossibility must apply).[53]
8. Moreover, the existence of the eternal universe is *not* impossible (from #2 and because we live in it).
9. Hence, (the only remaining option is that) the eternal universe is *necessary* (in a strong ontological, and not merely logical or fictional, sense).

8 Sept 2024: After the new version of the 9-step Proof, added "(assuming that the divine 5th element includes the eternal outer spheres)" to "(9) entails, therefore, that we need not fear the heavens will stop".

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[52] *Physics* III 4, 203b30; transl. by R.P. Hardie and R.K. Gaye, in J. Barnes, *The Complete Works of Aristotle, op. cit.*, as are other passages from the *Physics*. This Principle was either inspired by, or it inspired, Plato's similar thoughts in *Timaeus* 37e. I should add that Plato and Aristotle are right in one fundamental manner: We say "2+2 ***is*** 4," not "2+2 ***will b***e 4" or "2+2 ***has been*** 4," even if all three statements are true. For a brief account on the different formulations of the Principle of Plenitude, formulations that have led to arguments at cross-purposes across centuries, see:
https://www.epspress.com/NTF/VariousVersionsOfThePrinciple.pdf

[53] For those unfamiliar with the ontological (*aka* "2-sided") modals (e.g., possibility in opposition to both necessity and impossibility) versus the logical (*aka* "1-sided") ones (e.g., possibility in opposition to impossibility), see my book, or even better to start with, pp. 1-5 of
www.epspress.com/NTF/AmbiguityLambda.pdf
and pp. 7-9 of
www.epspress.com/NTF/OnHeavenlyBodies.pdf