

3

Proclus and the Forty Logoi of Zeno*

JOHN DILLON

At a number of places in his *Commentary on the Parmenides*, Proclus seems to show knowledge of a treatise of Zeno of Elea's which is not derivable from the text of the *Parmenides*, and the inference seems possible that he has access to a document, whether genuine or otherwise, purporting to be the original book of Zeno.

I propose in this article, first, to present all the references which Proclus makes to Zeno's treatise, to see how many of them are susceptible to such an interpretation, and then to draw some general conclusions.

(1) At 619.30–620.3 Cousin, Proclus introduces us to Zeno's treatise:

Ὁ δὴ τοῦ Παρμενίδου μαθητῆς Ζήνων αὐτόθεν μὲν πως τῷ τοῦ διδασκάλου δόγματι συνηγορεῖν οὐ βουλόμενος, ὡς οὐδὲν τοῦ δόγματος δεομένου πίστεως ἄλλης, βοήθειαν δέ τινα πορίζειν κεκρυμμένην ἐπιχειρῶν, γράφει τι βιβλίον, ἐν ᾧ δαιμονίως εἰδείκνυεν οὐκ ἐλάττω ἐπόμενα δυσχερῆ τοῖς πολλὰ τὰ ὄντα τιθεμένους ἢ ὅσα τοῖς ἐν τῷ ὄν εἰρηκόσω ἔδοξεν ἀπαντᾶν καὶ γὰρ ὅμοιον καὶ ἀνόμοιον ταυτὸν εἰδέκνυ καὶ ἴσον καὶ ἄνισον ἐσόμενον, καὶ πᾶσαν ἀπλῶς ἀναίρεσιν τῆς τάξεως τῶν ὄντων καὶ πάντων ἐσομένην σύγχυσιν πλημμελή.

Now Zeno, Parmenides' disciple, did not care to plead directly for his master's doctrine, since he thought it needed no additional confirmation, but attempted to give it secret aid by writing a book in which he ingeniously showed that those who suppose that beings are many encountered no fewer difficulties than were alleged against those who say Being is one. For he showed that the same thing will be both like and unlike, both equal and unequal, and in general that there will

*I am most grateful to Jonathan Barnes for various helpful comments.

result the abolition of all order in the world, and that everything will be thrown into confusion.

Everything that Proclus states here is derivable from Plato's *Parmenides*, 127d–128e, except the statement at the end that Zeno showed that the same thing will be, not only “like and unlike,” but “equal and unequal” (ἴσον καὶ ἄνισον). One might say that this is an easy extrapolation from “like and unlike” (and that the final remark about “the abolition of all order in the world” is likewise a natural deduction from the text); but it need not be, and I think it may be regarded as a straw in the wind.

(2) At 684.21–26, Proclus refers to Zeno's treatise as follows:

Τοιοῦτος ὁ Ζήνων ἴσως μὲν καὶ τῷ σώματι “χαρίεις καὶ εὐμήκης,” πολλῶ δὲ πλέον κατὰ τοὺς λόγους· ὅσα γὰρ ὁ Παρμενίδης ἀγκύλως καὶ συνεσπειραμένως ἀπεφθέγγετο, ταῦτα ἀνελίττων οὗτος καὶ εἰς παμμήκεις λόγους ἐκτέινων παρεδίδου.

Such was Zeno, perhaps, in bodily appearance, “handsome and tall,” but far more so in respect of his discourse (λόγοι). For what Parmenides had uttered in an intricate and terse style, Zeno unfolds and transmits in a rather extended discourse (εἰς παμμήκεις λόγους ἐκτέινων).

There is nothing here, certainly, that could not be derived from the text, though the adjective παμμήκης is quite emphatic.

(3) The next substantive reference occurs at 694. 23 ff. (= 29A15 D–K), in connection with Socrates' questioning of Zeno:

Πολλῶν δ' εἰρημένων ὑπὸ τοῦ Ζήνωνος λόγων, καὶ τετραράκοντα τῶν πάντων, . . .

Zeno had put forth many arguments, *forty in all*.¹

He then reports the first one, in terms entirely derivable from the text of the dialogue. Further down, however, he makes some remarks which would seem more natural if he had a text of Zeno in front of him. At 696.8–11 he says

Πάνν καὶ συνηρημένως καὶ σαφῶς ἐξέθετο τὸν ὅλον λόγον τὸν πρὸς τὴν ὑπόθεσιν, τὴν πρώτην ὑπόθεσιν ἀκριβῶς κατανοήσας καὶ θεασάμενος τί τὸ τέλος ἐστὶ τοῦ παντὸς λόγου. . . .

Socrates has set forth the whole argument quite succinctly and clearly,

¹ Noted by Diels–Kranz (19A2), and by H. D. P. Lee in his collection of the fragments, *Zeno of Elea* (Cambridge 1936), p. 7, but neither of these authorities appears to have probed any further into the *Parmenides Commentary*.

having accurately identified the first hypothesis, and seen the purpose of the argument as a whole;

and then at 696.16–18:

καὶ παρὰ μὲν τῷ Ζήνωνι τούτων ἕκαστον εἶρηται διὰ πολλῶν, . . .

Zeno has developed each of these parts *at length* (διὰ πολλῶν).

Both of the latter remarks could, certainly, be deductions from the text of the dialogue (e.g. 128b2), but they are more naturally, I think, taken as the statements of someone who is comparing one text with another. As for the detail that the *logoi* amounted to *forty*, Proclus here is our earliest authority for this. Our only other authority, the sixth-century commentator Elias (also 29A15 D–K) gives no indication of deriving his information from Proclus, and may thus be regarded as an independent source.

(4) At 696.28 f. we have a reference to

. . . διὰ τε τούτων καὶ τῶν ἄλλων τοῦ Ζήνωνος λόγων

this and Zeno's other arguments,

which seems to indicate Proclus' acquaintance with a series of them.

(5) More substantially, in Book II.725.22–39, we find a passage where an argument of Zeno's against plurality is given which could not be derived from the text. In Plato's text we simply have the statement that, if things are many, they must be both like and unlike. We have no indication how Zeno argued for this conclusion, or what he meant by it. Proclus explains this as follows (29–39):

Εἰ ἄρα πολλά ἐστὶν ἐνὸς ἀμέτοχα, καθ' ἑν δὴ τοῦτο, τὴν ἀμεθεξίαν λέγω τοῦ ἐνὸς, καὶ ὅμοια ἔσται καὶ ἀνόμοια, ὡς μὲν κοινὸν αὐτὸ ἔχοντα ὅμοια, ὡς δὲ μὴ ἔχοντα ἀνόμοια· διότι μὲν γὰρ αὐτὸ τοῦτο πέποιθε τὸ ἐνὸς μὴ μετέχειν, ἀνόμοιά ἐστι· διότι δὲ κοινὸν αὐτοῖς τὸ μὴδὲν ἔχειν κοινὸν, ὅμοιά ἐστὶν, ὥστε τὰ αὐτὰ καὶ ὅμοια καὶ ἀνόμοιά ἐστὶν· ὅλως γὰρ αὐτὸ τὸ μὴδὲν ἔχειν κοινὸν, αὐτὸ κοινὸν ἐστὶν αὐτοῖς, ὥστε αὐτὸς ἐαυτὸν ὁ λόγος ἀνήρηκε. . . .

[*In essence*] If things are many, they will be *unlike* one another, since they will have no share in unity or sameness; but they will also be *like*, in that they will possess the common characteristic of not participating in any "one" (characteristic).

The terminology which Proclus employs here is certainly not primitive (talk of "participation" is hardly Zenonian), but the basic argument surely is. Indeed, using "like and unlike" as if they described attributes of a subject would be absurdly primitive at any time after logic had been developed in the Academy and Peripatos (unless we are dealing with a very sophisticated forger). The argument can only

be effective at a time before the logic of predication was understood. I would suggest, therefore, that Proclus had before him a document which, however reworked, is of Zenonian origin.

(6) At 760.25–761.3, *à propos* of 129b6–8, we find the following:

Μετὰ τοὺς περὶ ὁμοιότητος καὶ ἀνομοιότητος λόγους ἐπὶ τὸ ἐν καὶ τὸ πλῆθος μεταβέβηκε πάλιν, καὶ ταῦτα ἀπὸ τῶν Ζήνωνος λόγων λαβῶν. ἐκένος δὴ γὰρ καθάπερ τὸ αὐτὸ δεικνύς ὁμοιον καὶ ἀνόμοιον διήλεγχε τοὺς τὰ πολλὰ χωρίζοντας τοῦ ἐνός, τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐνός καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ πλῆθους ἐπιχειρῶν διηγωνίζετο πρὸς αὐτοὺς, ἀποφάινων ὅτι (κατὰ) τὸ αὐτὸ καὶ πλῆθος ἔσται καὶ ἐν τὰ πολλὰ χωρὶς τοῦ ἐνός· τὰ γὰρ οὕτως ἔχοντα πλῆθη κατ' αὐτὸ τὸ μὴ μετέχειν ἐνάδος καὶ πολλὰ ἔστι· . . . τὸ γὰρ κοινὸν τινος μετεिल्χὸς ἐν ἔστι κατ' αὐτὸ τοῦτο τὸ κοινόν, ὥστε εἰ κοινὸν αὐταῖς τὸ οὐχ ἐν, ἔσται ἐν τὰ πολλὰ κατὰ τὸ οὐχ ἐν· καὶ πάλιν τὸ οὐχ ἐν ὡσαύτως ἐν τῶ ἐν πᾶσιν εἶναι ταῦτόν.

After the words about likeness and unlikeness, he shifts back to unity and plurality, drawing upon Zeno's own discourse (καὶ ταῦτα ἀπὸ τῶν Ζήνωνος λόγων λαβῶν). For just as Zeno had refuted those who separate the Many from the One by showing that Likeness and Unlikeness become the same, so likewise he argues against them by starting from the One and from Plurality, and shows that apart from the One the same thing will be many and the many one. For a Plurality apart from the One is a many by the very fact that it does not partake of unity, for what is not controlled by unity is many. And since they have in common their not being one, they will be one by this very fact, for things that share a character in common are one by virtue of this common character. So that if not being one is common to them, the many will be one by virtue of not being one; and inversely their not being one will be one because it is present in them all.

Once again, Proclus professes to be checking the course of the argument in Plato's dialogue off against the sequence of arguments in Zeno's original work. The argument presented is similar to the one presented above about like and unlike, and presupposes a similar level of logical primitiveness, when one has abstracted the later (Procline?) terminology of participation.²

(7) At 769.22–770.1, *à propos* of Socrates' mention of Rest and Motion at 129e1, we find the following:³

² The manuscript tradition, by the way, both Greek and Latin (Moerbeke's translation) becomes confused at 761.2–3 Cousin, as is perceived by Chaignet in his translation (p. 218). For καὶ πάλιν τὸ οὐχ ἐν ὡσαύτως ἐν τῶ ἐν πᾶσιν [οὐκ] εἶναι ταῦτόν/et omne quod non unum eodem modo in eo quod unum omnibus inest idem (rendering καὶ πᾶν τὸ οὐχ ἐν ὡσαύτως ἐν τῶ ἐν πᾶσιν ἐνάται ταῦτόν?), we should read καὶ πάλιν τὸ οὐχ ἐν ὡσαύτως ἐν, τῶ ἐν πᾶσιν εἶναι ταῦτόν, since what we need is "and inversely their not being one will be one, because it is present in them all."

³ This passage I have discussed already in *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 58 (1976), 221–22.

προσέθηκε γὰρ δὴ ταῦτα ταῖς εἰρημέναις συζυγίαις· ἐπεὶ κἂν ὁ Ζήνων, οὐ μόνον ἐξ ἐκείνων, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐκ τῆς τούτων ἀκολουθίας ἀπήλεγχε τὴν ἀτοπίαν τῶν τὰ πολλὰ τοῦ ἐνὸς χωριζόντων· οὐ γὰρ μόνον ἐκ τοῦ ὁμοίου καὶ ἀνομοίου ἐπεποίητο τὴν ἐπιχείρησιν, οὐδὲ αὐτὸ μόνον ἐκ τοῦ ἐνὸς καὶ τοῦ πλήθους, ἀλλ' ἤδη καὶ ἀπὸ στάσεως καὶ κινήσεως. Τὸ γὰρ αὐτὸ καὶ κατὰ τὸ αὐτὸ καὶ ἰστάμενον καὶ κινούμενον ἀπέφηνεν, εἰ τὰ πολλὰ μὴ μετέχοι τοῦ ἐνός· πᾶν τὸ ἰστάμενον ἐν τινὶ ἐστὶν ἐνί, καὶ πᾶν τὸ κινούμενον ἐξίσταται τοῦ ἐνός, ὥστε τὰ πολλὰ εἰ μὴ μετέχοι τινὸς ἐνός ἄστατά ἐστι· καὶ πάλιν εἰ αὐτὸ τοῦτο ἔχει κοινὸν τὸ μὴ μετέχειν τινός, ἐν τινὶ ἔσται· ταύτη οὖν πάλιν ἀκίνητα· τὰ αὐτὰ ἄρα καὶ κινούμενα ἔσται καὶ ἐστῶτα· οὐκ ἄρα πολλὰ ἐστὶν ἔρημα πάντα τοῦ ἐνός. Ἄλλ' ὁ μὲν Ζήνωνος λόγος καὶ ἐνταῦθα τοιοῦτος· . . .

These last two (sc. Rest and Motion) he has added to the pair's previously mentioned, since Zeno also had used them as well as the former pairs to prove the absurdity of separating the Many from the One. Zeno's refutation has been based not only on Likeness and Unlikeness, Unity and Plurality, but also on Rest and Motion. He showed that if the Many does not participate in Unity, it follows that the same thing in the same respect will be both at rest and in motion. For everything at rest is in a one something (*ἐν τινὶ ἐστὶν ἐνί*), and everything that is in motion is departing from some one (position); so that if the Many do not share in a Unity, they will be unresting; and again, if they have in common the character of not sharing in some Unity, they will be in some one (state); hence again will be unmoving. The same things, therefore, will be moving and at rest; so that the Many are not altogether devoid of Unity. Such was Zeno's argument.

This argument uses the ambiguity of the expression *ἐν ἐνί*, which can be taken to mean "in a place," "in a state," or "in a position," to construct an argument of similar form to the previous ones.

(8) At 862.26–34, while commenting on Socrates' attempted analogy of the daylight (131b3) Proclus says:

καὶ ὅτι μὲν ἐκ τοῦ Ζήνωνος λόγου τὸ παράδειγμα εἰληφε, δῆλον· ἐκείνος γὰρ δηλώσαι βουλόμενος ὅπως τὰ πολλὰ μετέχει τινὸς ἐνός, . . . κἂν εἰ διεισθήκει πορρωτάτω ἀπ' ἀλλήλων, εἶπεν ἐν τῷ ἑαυτοῦ λόγῳ μίαν οὖσαν τὴν λευκότητα παρεῖναι καὶ ἡμῖν καὶ τοῖς ἀντίποσιν οὕτως, ὡς τὴν εὐφρόνην καὶ τὴν ἡμέραν.

It is clear that he has taken his example from the discourse of Zeno; for Zeno, in his endeavor to show that the Many participate in some One, and are not devoid of One, even though greatly separated from each other, has said in his discourse that whiteness, which is one, is present both to us and to the antipodes, just as night and day are.

This passage has a number of interesting aspects, which I have discussed in an earlier article,⁴ but which may be repeated now. The

⁴ "New Evidence on Zeno of Elea," *AGPh* 56 (1974), 127–31.

point of the argument was presumably that "white" is taken to be "one thing," and yet the many say that there are many white things, so that, "if there are many," "white," which is *one*, would have to be in various different places at once. The Antipodes are brought in, I assume, as being the most remote people from us, but they are a strange and notable feature, since, if Zeno really mentioned them, this would be their earliest attested occurrence. Certainly, the form of the argument, with its ignorance of predication, is primitive enough to be Presocratic.

(9) In Book V, 1024.12 f. Proclus tells us that Zeno used to call some of his arguments "true" and others "tactical," or "useful for the purpose at hand" (*χρειώδεις*). This detail seems to be recorded nowhere else, but on the other hand it is hardly the sort of thing that Zeno would admit in the course of presenting his Forty Logoi, so I would not wish to claim it as a further testimonium to that work.

This seems to complete the references to Zeno's work which are not clearly derivable from the text of Plato. What are we to make of them? And how is this work that Proclus talks of to be related to that which was available later to Simplicius? I see no reason that the arguments should not come from the same work as was available to Simplicius, at least in respect of the arguments he quotes against Plurality (there seems to have been a separate treatise against the possibility of motion, cf. Zeno A15 D-K). If these seem puerile in comparison to those, then we may perhaps take refuge in Zeno's own reported distinction, just mentioned above, between Logoi that are *ἀληθείς* and those that are *χρειώδεις*. To quote Jonathan Barnes:

Many modern interpreters of Zeno have argued that such and such an account of a paradox is wrong because it attributes such a silly fallacy to a profound mind. Zeno was not profound: he was clever. Some profundities fall from his pen; but so too did some trifling fallacies. And that is what we should expect from an eristic disputant. If we meet a deep argument, we may rejoice; if we are dazzled by a superficial glitter, we are not bound to search for a nugget of philosophical gold. Fair metal and base, in roughly equal proportions, make the Zenonian alloy.⁵

I quote this eloquent passage with a certain relish, since Barnes does not accept the genuineness of (7) and (8) above.⁶ He may be right, but he is also right to suggest that philosophical naiveté need not be a bar to genuineness. Furthermore, all Greek thinkers were

⁵ *The Presocratic Philosophers* I (London 1979), pp. 236-37.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 236, note 8.

prepared to throw bad arguments as well as good at a thesis in the hope that something would stick. It did not necessarily mean that they were persuaded by the arguments themselves.

Barnes states just below: "We do not know how Zeno argues for the proposition (a) 'If *P*, then everything is alike, and (b) if *P*, then everything is unlike'."⁷ I suggest that we do, and that it is contained in passage (5) above.

My conclusion is that Proclus certainly had a document in his possession called the *Forty Logoi of Zeno*, or something such—probably, though not certainly, the same document that was available to Simplicius a century later—and it seems possible to me that it at least contained genuine material, though perhaps worked over at a later date, or even incorporated from another, genuine source, into a pseudepigraphic work.

Trinity College, Dublin

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 237.

