

The One and the Many

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35 E. A. HAVELOCK, *The one and the many* [chez les Pythagoriciens et les Éléates] : Rés. ds TAPhA 1935 p. XLVII.

38. *The One and the Many*, by Eric Alfred Havelock,
Victoria College, University of Toronto.

The One which the early Pythagoreans and the Eleatics strove to elucidate was not the unit, but the cosmos regarded as a single continuous whole. In this they only strove to render explicit a notion implicit in most of the pre-Socratics. This then was the primitive pre-Socratic One. The later development of arithmetical science in the fourth century fastened attention on the unit considered as a mathematical symbol capable of multiplication.

Aristotle's critique of his predecessors on this point is hopelessly confused because he confused these two Ones. The doctrine of the early cosmic One can however be disentangled from his critical descriptions.

Later tradition, and modern criticism, share his confusion.