

PREDICATION AND DIVISION IN PLATO'S *PHILEBUS* (14B–20A)

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Shortly after the beginning of the *Philebus*, Socrates and his main interlocutor Protarchus face some puzzling arguments to the effect that the one is many and the many are one. The first of these puzzling arguments, which Socrates considers as unworthy of attention, concerns the unity and multiplicity of a perceptible particular that enjoys many attributes. For instance, since he enjoys many attributes, Protarchus, who is one, is also many. The last puzzling argument, which Socrates regards as deserving serious scrutiny, is about the unity and multiplicity of an attribute that belongs to many perceptible particulars. For instance, since the attribute man belongs to many men, it is in them, and it is therefore both one and many (for it cannot be present as a whole in each of them, so it is in them by being fragmented into them).

Socrates maintains that a solution to the second puzzle, the one about the unity and multiplicity of attributes, will be found by reflecting on division and collection, the procedures linked with the classification of genera, species, and particulars. The present study is dedicated to understanding how division can help to solve the puzzle about the unity and multiplicity of attributes.