Sayre finds in the *Philebus* glimpses of a newly renovated ontology as well as a compelling solution to problems of forms and their instantiation. To be sure, these particular claims are part of his larger project of showing that, unbeknownst to modern and ancient critics alike, Plato's so-called unwritten or esoteric doctrines actually inform the ontology and guide the methodological inquiries of the *Philebus*. There are, I think, strong reasons for being sympathetic to his more general goals of demystifying what Simplicius called, not at all unreasonably, Plato's "enigmatic utterances". Moreover, one welcomes his discovery of important correspondences between this esoteric lore and several equally enigmatic passages in the late dialogues. There still remain, however, considerable difficulties both in his overall strategy of interpreting the *Philebus* and in his account of individual arguments.

I wish to begin by looking at some of his evidence for a new ontology in the *Philebus*, especially since so many critics have denied that we can derive from the dialogue any clear ontological moral at all. A crucial element in Sayre's account is his claim that in Socrates' division of the cosmos into four *gene* (23c ff) forms and sensible particulars alike are constituted in the mixture of limit and the unlimited. He finds additional support for this view in "esoteric" reports that Plato made Unity and the Indefinite Dyad the principles of sensible things. This is indeed a tantalizing

1. Among whom, curiously, Sayre must include even Aristotle, our most important source for these disclosures.

2. Cf., among many, Moravscik "Forms, Nature, and the Good in the *Philebus*" *Phronesis* 24 1979 p.81ff and Dancy "The One, the Many, and the Forms: *Philebus* 15b1-8 Ancient Philosophy 4 1984 p.160ff who argue that Plato is concerned in the *Philebus* neither with the ontological status of particulars nor their relation to forms.
parallel; unfortunately though, there are no unambiguous references to sensible particulars anywhere in Socrates' account of *meikta* (indeed, at 52c pleasures that are violent or disordered turn up in the indeterminate class) and this raises serious problems for Sayre's general claims.

In his discussion of *meikta*, Socrates argues that the correct blend of limit and the unlimited will produce, for instance, *ten phusin hugieias* (25e7-8) and *mousiken sumpasan* (26a3). And in summarizing at 26b6, Socrates mentions "fineness", "strength", and "health" as examples of *meikta*. These remarks strongly indicate a concern with non-numerable types rather than with particular sensible tokens. Nor would an appeal to the much debated *genesin eis ousian* passage (26d8) help Sayre's case here, since it leaves unspecified the sorts of entities which can be engendered in the mixture (as does the phrase *gegenemenen ousian* at 27b8-9). Thus, although it might be plausible for someone defending the view that forms are ungenerated to try to restrict 26d8 only to sensibles, such a route is closed to Sayre. Clearly, the mere reference to *genesis* can by itself provide no reliable evidence for the status of sensible particulars, especially if forms, as he argues, also come into being in the mixture. Therefore, if Plato intends within the context of this four-fold classification to formulate a new theory about the relation of forms and particulars, his account of sensibles is unnecessarily elusive and we can easily excuse Aristotle for failing to have noticed in it any anticipations of unwritten doctrine.

Given these difficulties with sensibles,\(^3\) it is unclear exactly how problems of participation can be resolved. But even if one were to accept Sayre's view of particulars and of unseparated, mathematized forms, there still would remain mereological and relational problems in his account of participation, as well as obscurities in his notion of paradigmatism, particularly when applied to moral

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3. Not that the case of forms is all that much clearer. Sayre needs to explain the *prima facie* incompatibility of 58a-62a with his view of unseparated, generated forms.