

Oliver Primavesi  
Plato's Theory of Principles in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC  
Neglected Renaissance evidence on Eudorus of Alexandria

1) Aristotle on Plato: *Metaphysics* A 6

Aristotle *Metaphysics* A 6, 988<sup>a</sup>7–14 ed. Primavesi 2012

<p>Πλά-[8]των μὲν οὖν περὶ τῶν ζητουμένων οὕτω διώρισεν. φανερὸν δ' [9] ἐκ τῶν εἰρημένων ὅτι δυοῖν αἰτίαι ἐστὶ μόνον κεκρημένος, τῇ τε [10] τοῦ τί ἐστὶ καὶ τῇ κατὰ τὴν ὕλην (τὰ γὰρ εἶδη τοῦ τί ἐστὶν [11] αἴτια τοῖς ἄλλοις, τοῖς δ' εἶδεσι τὸ ἓν),  καὶ τίς ἡ ὕλη ἢ [12] ὑποκειμένη καθ' ἧς τὰ εἶδη μὲν ἐπὶ τῶν αἰσθητῶν τὸ δ' [13] ἓν ἐν τοῖς εἶδεσι λέγεται,  (ὅτι αὕτη δυάς ἐστὶ, τὸ μέγα καὶ [14] τὸ μικρόν).</p>	<p>That is how Plato declared himself on the points in question. – From what has been reported, however, it is evident that he has made use of two causes only, of the cause of essence and of the material cause (for the Forms are the cause of the essence of all other things, and the One is the cause of the essence of the Forms); and it is evident what the underlying matter is, of which the Forms are predicated in the case of sensible things, and the One in the case of the Forms, viz. that this is a dyad, the great and the small.</p>
<p>9 ἐστὶ μόνον κεκρημένος α Al.<sup>c</sup> 58,27 : μόνον κέκρηται β    12–13 τὰ εἶδη μὲν ... τὸ δ' ἓν ἐν β, citat Al. 59,23 ex aliquo libro, edd. : τὰ εἶδη τὰ μὲν ... τὰ δὲ ἐπὶ Al.<sup>c</sup> 59,16–17 Lat<sup>s</sup> : τὰ εἶδη τὰ μὲν ... τὸ δ' ἓν ἐν α    13–14 ὅτι ... μικρόν α Lat Ar<sup>n</sup> Al.<sup>p</sup> 59,20–23 (qui addit διὰ τῆς προσθήκης ἐδήλωσεν) Ascl.<sup>p</sup> 52,18–20 : om. β</p>	

2) Alexander on Aristotle *Metaph.* A 6  
(*In metaph.* 58,27–59,8 Hayduck = Eudorus Fr. 2 Mazzarelli)

2.1) Alexander *In metaph.* as edited by Christian August Brandis 1836:

*Scholia in Aristotelem* 552<sup>b</sup>20–31 (in *Metaph.* A 6, 988<sup>a</sup>7; Alexander)

<p>[552<sup>b</sup>20] τῶν τεσσάρων αἰτίων ὧν ἐξέθετο οὗτος τοῖς δύο φησὶ [21] κεκρησθαι Πλάτωνα, τῇ τε ὕλικῇ καὶ τῇ κατὰ τὸ εἶδος· τὰ γὰρ εἶδη καὶ [22] αἱ ιδέαι αὐτῶ τοῦ εἶδους εἰσὶ παρεκτικαὶ αἰτίαι, ὥσπερ οὖν καὶ αὐτοῖς [23] πάλιν τοῖς εἶδεσι καὶ ταῖς ιδέαις τὸ ἓν αἴτιον τοῦ εἶδους· ἡ γὰρ δυάς [24] ὕλης ἐν αὐτοῖς ἐπέχει λόγον. φέρεται ἔν τισι γραφῇ τοιαύτη “τὰ [25] γὰρ εἶδη τοῦ τί ἐστὶν αἴτια τοῖς ἄλλοις, τοῖς δὲ εἶδεσι τὸ ἓν καὶ τῇ [26] ὕλη.”  καὶ εἴη ἂν δι' αὐτῆς λεγόμενον ἔτι τοῖς οὐκ εἰδόσι τὴν Πλά-[27]τωνος δόξαν τὴν περὶ τῶν ἀρχῶν ὅτι τὸ ἓν [...] καὶ τῇ ιδέᾳ αἴτιον τοῦ τί [28] ἐστὶν. ἀμείνων μέντοι ἡ πρώτη γραφὴ ἢ δηλοῦσα ὅτι τὰ μὲν εἶδη [29] τοῖς ἄλλοις τοῦ τί ἐστὶν αἴτιον, τοῖς δὲ εἶδεσι τὸ ἓν.  ἱστορεῖ δὲ Ἀσπά-[30]σιος ὡς ἐκείνης μὲν ἀρχαιοτέρας οὕσης τῆς γραφῆς, μεταγραφείσης [31] δὲ ταύτης ὕστερον ὑπὸ Εὐδώρου καὶ Εὐαρμόστου.</p>	<p>Of the four causes listed by Aristotle himself, Plato, he says, used only two, the material and the formal. For the Forms and the Ideas are, in his view, causes capable of supplying the form, as in fact the One in turn is the cause of form for the Forms and ideas themselves; for among the ideas the dyad has the role of matter. Some manuscripts have the following reading: ‘Since the Forms are the causes of the essence for the other things, and for the forms the One (is the cause of the essence), <b>and for the matter</b>’. And this should mean even for those who do not know Plato's doctrine about the principles that the One [...] is cause of the essence for the Idea, too.  The preferable reading, however, is the first one, which makes it clear that the Forms are cause of the essence for the other things, and the One for the Forms. Aspasius relates that the former is a more ancient reading, but that it was later changed by Eudorus and Euharmostus.</p>
<p>21. καὶ κατὰ εἶδος L.    22. καὶ om. L.    24. φέρεται – 31. Εὐαρμόστου om. L.    31. ἀρμόστου A, ab Eudoro et Harmosto Sepulv.</p>	

2.2) The section on the variant reading (58,31–59,8 Hayduck) as edited by Hermann Bonitz 1847  
*Alexandri Aphrodisiensis Commentarius in Libros Metaphysicos Aristotelis* 44,17–24

<p>[44,17] φέρεται ἔν τισι γραφῇ τοιαύτη      ,τὰ γὰρ εἶδη τοῦ [18] τί ἐστὶν αἷτια τοῖς      ἄλλοις, τοῖς δὲ εἰδόσι τὸ ἔν καὶ τῇ ὕλη·      καὶ εἴη ἂν δι' αὐτῆς [19] λεγόμενον ἔτι τοῖς      οὐκ εἰδόσι τὴν Πλάτωνος δόξαν τὴν περὶ τῶν      ἀρχῶν ὅτι τὸ [20] ἔν καὶ ἡ ὑποκειμένη ὕλη      ἀρχαὶ καὶ ὅτι τὸ ἔν καὶ τῇ ἰδέᾳ αἷτιον τοῦ τί      ἐστὶν.      [21] ἀμείνων μέντοι ἡ πρώτη γραφῇ ἡ      δηλοῦσα ὅτι τὰ μὲν εἶδη τοῖς ἄλλοις τοῦ τί      ἐστὶν [22] αἷτιον, τοῖς δὲ εἶδεσι τὸ ἔν. ἱστορεῖ      δὲ Ἀσπάσιος ὡς ἐκείνης μὲν ἀρχαιοτέ- [23]ρας      οὔσης τῆς γραφῆς, μεταγραφείσης δὲ ταύτης      ὕστερον ὑπὸ Εὐδώρου καὶ [24] Εὐαρμόστου.</p>	<p>Some manuscripts have this reading:      'For the Forms are the causes of the essence for      the other people, but <b>for those who know</b>, the      One (is the cause of the essence) for matter, too'      And this should mean even for those who do not      know Plato's doctrine about the principles, that      the One <b>and the underlying matter are</b>  <b>principles, and that the One</b> is cause of the      essence for the Idea, too.      The preferable reading, however, is the first one,      which makes it clear that the Forms are cause of      the essence for the other things, and the One for      the Forms. Aspasius relates that the former is a      more ancient reading, but that it was later      changed by Eudorus and Euharmostus.</p>
<p>17. φέρεται – 24. Εὐαρμόστου om. <b>L.</b>    59.1 εἰδόσι] εἶδεσι <b>ABr</b>, <i>scientibus S</i>; inde scripsi εἰδόσι propter ea quae sequuntur    20. καὶ ἡ –τὸ ἔν <b>AS</b>, om <b>Br</b>.</p>	

2.3) Some Conjectures proposed since Bonitz 1847

<p>18. καὶ τῇ ὕλη] „fort. καὶ ἡ ὕλη“ Hayduck 1891: 59 in app.    19. ἔτι] ἐπὶ Moraux 1969 : 498 n. 18    20. καὶ τῇ ἰδέᾳ] καὶ τῇ ὕλη Dörrie 1944: 39 : καὶ &lt;τοῖς&gt; τῆδε Rashed 2012 per litt.    23. – 24. Εὐδώρου καὶ &lt;Εὐ&gt;λαρμόστου] Εὐδώρου καὶ &lt;εὐ&gt;λαρμόστου (scil. οὔσης) Moraux 1969 : 493–494 : Εὐδώρου &lt;οὐ&gt;κ ἀναρμόστως Rashed 2012 per litt.</p>
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2.4) The alternative reading in its Aristotelian context – as reconstructed by Moraux 1969

<p>[988<sup>a</sup>8] φανερόν δ' [9] ἐκ τῶν εἰρημένων ὅτι      δυοῖν αἰτίαι ἐστὶ μόνον κεχρημένος,      τῇ τε [10] τοῦ τί ἐστὶ {καὶ τῇ κατὰ τὴν ὕλην } (τὰ      γὰρ εἶδη τοῦ τί ἐστὶν [11] αἷτια τοῖς ἄλλοις,  <b>τοῖς δ' εἰδόσι τὸ ἔν)</b>  <b>καὶ τῇ ὕλη,</b>      καὶ τίς ἡ ὕλη ἡ [12] ὑποκειμένη καθ' ἧς τὰ      εἶδη μὲν ἐπὶ τῶν αἰσθητῶν τὸ δ' [13] ἔν ἐν τοῖς      εἶδεσι λέγεται, (ὅτι αὕτη δυάς ἐστὶ, τὸ μέγα      καὶ [14] τὸ μικρόν).</p>	<p>From what has been reported, however, it is      evident that he has made use of two causes only,      of the cause of essence {...} (for the Forms are      the cause of the essence for ordinary people, but  <b>for those who know, it is the One)</b>  <b>and of matter;</b>      and it is evident what the underlying matter is, of      which the Forms are predicated in the case of      sensible things, and the One in the case of the      Forms, viz. that this is a dyad, the great and the      small.</p>
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2.5) The section on the variant reading as translated by Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda 1536

*Alexandri Aphrodisie commentaria in duodecim Aristotelis libros de prima Philosophia* 26,9–14.

<p>Sepúlveda 1536: 26      [9] <i>Quanquam</i> in quibusdam exemplaribus ita scriptum reperitur.  <i>Ipsius enim quid</i> [10] <i>est, cæteris quidem formæ sunt causæ, scientibus autem vnum, &amp; formæ materia.</i>  <i>vt ,cæteros' eos esse</i> [11] <i>intelligamus qui ignorant Platonem sensisse vnum &amp; subiectam materiam principia esse, &amp; ipsum</i> [12] <i>vnum causam esse ideæ ipsius quid est.</i>  <i>sed prior scriptura castigatior habetur, quæ declarat formas</i> [13] <i>ceteris rebus causam esse ipsius quid est, formis autem ipsum vnum.</i>  <i>Et quidem illam lectionem ve-</i>[14]<i>tustioorem esse, auctor est Haspasius, sed postea mutatam fuisse ab Eudoro &amp; Harmosto.</i></p>	<p>Bonitz 1847 modified      in accordance with Sepúlveda 1536      φέρεται δ' ἔν τισι γραφῇ τοιαύτη      ,τὰ γὰρ εἶδη τοῦ τί ἐστὶν αἷτια τοῖς ἄλλοις,      τοῖς δὲ εἰδόσι τὸ ἔν καὶ ἡ τοῦ εἶδους ὕλη·      καὶ εἴη ἂν τὸ ,ἄλλοις' λεγόμενον ἐπὶ τοῖς οὐκ      εἰδόσι τὴν Πλάτωνος δόξαν ὅτι τὸ ἔν καὶ ἡ      ὑποκειμένη ὕλη ἀρχαὶ καὶ ὅτι τὸ ἔν καὶ τῇ      ἰδέᾳ αἷτιον τοῦ τί ἐστὶν.      ἀμείνων μέντοι ἡ πρώτη γραφῇ ἡ δηλοῦσα      ὅτι τὰ μὲν εἶδη τοῖς ἄλλοις τοῦ τί ἐστὶν      αἷτιον, τοῖς δὲ εἶδεσι τὸ ἔν.      ἱστορεῖ δὲ Ἀσπάσιος ὡς ἐκείνης μὲν      ἀρχαιοτέρας οὔσης τῆς γραφῆς,      μεταγραφείσης δὲ ταύτης ὕστερον ὑπὸ      Εὐδώρου καὶ Ἀρμωστοῦ.</p>
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2.6) Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda 1536 on his method in translating Alexander: Two sections from his *praeformatio*

## 2.6.1) Aa iiii verso, 34 – Aa v recto, 5

<p><i>Quasi enim parum esset in ipso opere tenebra- [35]rum, quod sine controversia totius philosophiae obscurissimum est, &amp; quod nemini [36] quanlibet in ipsa exercitato, non dico apte conuertere, sed ne intelligere quidem li-[37]ceat absque pertinaci studio, &amp; perpetuis lucubrationibus: innumera librariorum er-[38]rata, quae passim scatebant, quatuor exemplaribus conferendis, per laboriosum exa-[39]men mihi fuerunt castiganda:</i></p> <p><i>tum multa exprimenda latine, quae cum a Romanis nunquam [Aa v, 1] fuerint tractata, latinis vocabulis omnino carent, prorsus ut vel novis fuerint nun-[2]cupanda, vel vnius graeci verbi intellectus multorum latinorum circuitione expli-[3]candus.</i></p> <p><i>Quod ut saepe res ipsa factitare suadet, ratioque latinitatis, sic interdum tam [4] molestum est &amp; importunum, ut orationem, quae aliàs fuisset illustris, implicitam red-[5]dat, &amp; tenebris offuscet.</i></p>	<p>For as if this work contained not enough unclear passages, as it undisputedly is the most opaque work in all of philosophy, and which does not allow anyone—regardless of the level of his philosophical training—even to understand it, let alone to translate it correctly, without tenacious labour and continuous night shifts:</p> <p>The text was disfigured everywhere by innumerable scribal errors, which I had to correct by means of a painstaking examination for the sake of which I collated four manuscripts.</p> <p>Furthermore, many issues needed to be said in Latin which had no equivalent in the Latin language since they were never been treated by the Romans. By consequence, I had to either invent new words for them, or to express the meaning of a single Greek word by a verbose Latin paraphrase.</p> <p>Such paraphrase, though often suggested by the subject matter itself or by the structure of the Latin language, is sometimes so heavy-handed and inconvenient that it renders recondite and dark a text which had been crystal clear in the original Greek.</p>
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## 2.6.2) Aa v, 11–23

<p>[11] <i>pugnam tam saepe redintegrabam, donec superior mihi [12] viderer euasisse, praeter loca nonnulla, quae librariorum incuria in omnibus, quae mi-[13]hi videre contigit exemplaribus, deprauata esse, non tam ingenio meo fidens asseve-[14]raverim, quam assensu Nicolai Iudeci confirmatus,</i></p> <p><i>viri doctrina singulari exactoque [15] iudicio, &amp; cui eruditorum consensus neminem, ut video, huius aetatis in omnis philo-[16]sophiae, ac medicinae, quaecunque graecis literis continentur, nodis explicandis, &amp; latine [17] transferendis, anteponit.</i></p> <p><i>Ego enim mihi impeditissimam quamque difficultatem non [18] satis ante videbar explicasse, quam iudicio eius satisfacissem, cum quo talia loca saepe, dum [19] per ipsius occupationes liceret, conferebam.</i></p> <p><i>Sed quorundam pertinaciam, quae vtrius-[20]que ingenio, nisi diuinatio processerit, obstinate repugnauit, non dubitabat ille negli-[21]gentiae librariorum assignare.</i></p> <p><i>Quae appositis asteriscis idcirco notavit, ut si cui for-[22]te emendatius exemplar contigerit, quibus potissimum vulneribus sanandis studia no-[23]stra in publicam vtilitatem suscepta iuuari valeant, sit in propatulo.</i></p>	<p>I have taken up the struggle again and again until I believed to have made some progress, except in a number of passages which I believe to be corrupted by scribal carelessness in <i>all</i> manuscripts I was capable of setting eyes on—an assessment based less on my own judgement than on the encouragement provided by the consent of Niccolò Giudecco,</p> <p>a man of such unique erudition and fine judgement that, as all scholars agree, no contemporary is better suited than he to disentangle, or to translate into Latin, any difficult philosophical or medical passage within the whole of Greek literature.</p> <p>For the more baffling a difficulty was, the less I felt to have solved it properly as long as I had not convinced Giudecco, with whom I used to discuss such passages whenever his own chores allowed it.</p> <p>Yet he attributed the resistance of <i>some</i> passages doggedly defying the sagacity of us both, unless one resorted to guessing, without hesitation to the slovenliness of the scribes.</p> <p>For this reason, he marked those passages by asterisks so that it be immediately clear to anyone who might come upon a manuscript with fewer errors by the healing of which wounds our study, which we undertook for the benefit of all, would be helped most.</p>
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2.7) A new edition of Alexander *In metaph.* 58,27–59,8 Hayduck

<p>φέρεται δ' ἔν τισι γραφῇ τοιαύτη</p> <p>τὰ γὰρ εἶδη τοῦ τί ἐστὶν αἴτια τοῖς ἄλλοις, τοῖς δὲ εἰδόσι τὸ ἓν καὶ ἡ τοῦ εἶδους ὕλη·</p> <p>καὶ εἴη ἂν τὸ ἄλλοις λεγόμενον ἐπὶ τοῖς οὐκ εἰδόσι τὴν Πλάτωνος δόξαν (τὴν περὶ τῶν ἀρχῶν) ὅτι τὸ ἓν καὶ ἡ ὑποκειμένη ὕλη ἀρχαὶ καὶ ὅτι τὸ ἓν καὶ τῇ ἰδέᾳ αἴτιον τοῦ τί ἐστὶν.</p> <p>ἀμείνων μέντοι ἡ πρώτη γραφὴ ἡ δηλοῦσα ὅτι τὰ μὲν εἶδη τοῖς ἄλλοις τοῦ τί ἐστὶν αἴτιον, τοῖς δὲ εἶδεσι τὸ ἓν.</p> <p>ἱστορεῖ δὲ Ἀσπάσιος ὡς ἐκείνης μὲν ἀρχαιοτέρας οὔσης τῆς γραφῆς, μεταγραφείσης δὲ ταύτης ὕστερον ὑπὸ Εὐδώρου &lt;οὐ&gt;κ ἀναρμόστως</p>	<p><b>Yet</b> some manuscripts have the following reading:</p> <p>‘For the Forms are the causes of the essence for the others, but <b>for those who know</b> (the causes of the essence are) the One <b>and the matter of the Form.</b>’</p> <p>And „the others“ should refer to those who do not know Plato’s doctrine according to which the One and the underlying matter are principles, and that the One is cause of the essence for the Idea, too.</p> <p>The preferable reading, however, is the first one, which makes it clear that the Forms are cause of the essence for the other things, and the One for the Forms.</p> <p>Aspasius relates that the former is a more ancient reading, but that it was later changed by Eudorus, and not badly so.</p>
<p>59.1 εἰδόσι vertit Sepúlveda 1536: 26 (<i>scientibus</i>) : εἶδεσι codd.    2 καὶ ἡ τοῦ εἶδους ὕλη vertit Sepúlveda 1536: 26 (&amp; <i>formae materia</i>), „fort. καὶ ἡ ὕλη“ iam Hayduck in app. : καὶ τῇ ὕλη codd.   καὶ εἴη ἂν τὸ ἄλλοις λεγόμενον ἐπὶ τοῖς οὐκ εἰδόσι ... vertit Sepúlveda 1536: 26 (<i>vt ,caeteros‘ eos esse intelligamus qui ignorant ...</i>); ἐπὶ et Moraux proposuit : καὶ εἴη ἂν δι’ αὐτῆς λεγόμενον ἔτι τοῖς οὐκ εἰδόσι codd.    3 τὴν περὶ τῶν ἀρχῶν (codd.) seclusi : non vertit Sepúlveda    4 ἰδέα : ὕλη con. Dörrie    8 Εὐδώρου &lt;οὐ&gt;κ ἀναρμόστως Rashed 2012 per litt. : Εὐδώρου καὶ ἀρμοστοῦ codd. : Εὐδώρου καὶ &lt;Εὐ&gt;αρμόστου Brandis : Εὐδώρου καὶ &lt;εὐ&gt;αρμόστου (scil. οὔσης) Moraux 1969 : 493–494</p>	

## 2.8) The alternative reading in its Aristotelian context – according to our reconstruction

<p>[988<sup>a</sup>8] φανερόν δ' [9] ἐκ τῶν εἰρημένων ὅτι δυοῖν αἰτίαι ἐστὶ μόνον κεχρημένος, τῇ τε [10] τοῦ τί ἐστὶ καὶ τῇ κατὰ τὴν ὕλην (τὰ γὰρ εἶδη τοῦ τί ἐστὶν [11] αἴτια τοῖς ἄλλοις, τοῖς δὲ εἰδόσι τὸ ἓν καὶ ἡ τοῦ εἶδους ὕλη),</p> <p>καὶ τίς ἡ ὕλη ἡ [12] ὑποκειμένη καθ' ἧς τὰ εἶδη μὲν ἐπὶ τῶν αἰσθητῶν τὸ δ' [13] ἓν ἐν τοῖς εἶδεσι λέγεται, (ὅτι αὕτη δυάς ἐστὶ, τὸ μέγα καὶ [14] τὸ μικρόν).</p>	<p>From what has been reported, however, it is evident that he has made use of two causes only, of the cause of essence and of the material cause (for the Forms are the causes of the essence for ordinary people, but <b>for those who know</b> the causes of the essence are the One <b>and the matter of the Form</b>);</p> <p>and it is evident what the underlying matter is, of which the Forms are predicated in the case of sensible things, and the One in the case of the Forms, viz. that this is a dyad, the great and the small.</p>
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