A MUCH MISREAD PASSAGE OF THE *TIMAEUS*
(*TIMAEUS* 49 C 7–50 B 5).

In 1906 Fraccaroli declared that this passage of the *Timaeus* had been misunderstood in whole or in part by all earlier commentators. In 1928 A. E. Taylor in his *Commentary on Plato's Timaeus* agreed with this judgment but included in the condemnation Fraccaroli's own interpretation as well. Despite the appearance of Taylor's commentary, Bury's translation, Cornford's translation and commentary, the careful translation by Robin, and a special note by Hackforth on part of the passage, it remains true in my opinion that the passage has not been correctly translated and explained. Since in consequence it is often cited as evidence for a doctrine that it does not espouse, I have here undertaken to set down first what I hold to be the correct translation of 49 C 7–50 A 4, followed by a detailed commentary to defend and explain this translation point by point, then the translation with commentary of the illustrative passage, 50 A 4–B 5, and finally some supplementary remarks upon the significance of the whole passage in its context.

In *Timaeus* 48 E ff. Plato has said that his account of the universe now requires the introduction of a third factor besides the two that he has hitherto been employing. In an attempt to explain this third factor he speaks of the fact that phenomenal fire, air, water, and earth seem to be constantly changing and giving rise one to another. It is to these phenomena that τούτων in 49 D 1, the second word of the translation, refers.

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Timaeus 49 C 7–50 A 4

TRANSLATION

49 C 7– D1 Since these thus never appear as severally identical, concern-
ing which of them could one without shame firmly assert that
this is any particular thing and not another?[1] It is not possible,
but by far the safest way is to speak of them on this basis:—
49 D 5 What we ever[2] see coming to be at different times in different
places, for example fire, not to say " this is fire " but " what on
any occasion is such and such is fire " nor " this is water " but
" what is always such and such is water " [3] nor ever " ⟨this⟩ ",
as if it had some permanence, " is some other " [4] of the things
49 E 1 that we think we are designating as something when by way of
pointing we use the term " this " or " that." [5] For it slips away
and does not abide the assertion of " that " and " this " [6] or any
assertion that indicts them of being stable.[7] But ⟨it is safest⟩
not to speak of these as severally distinct [8] but so to call the
49 E 5 such and such that always recurs alike in each and all cases
together,[9] for example ⟨to call⟩ [10] that which is always such and
such [11] fire and so with everything that comes to be ; [12] and, on
the other hand, that in which these severally distinct character-
istics [13] are ever and anon being manifested as they come to be
50 A 1 in it and out of which again they are passing away, it is safest
to designate it [14] alone when we employ the word " this " or
" that " but what is of any kind soever, hot or white or any of
the contraries and all that consist of these, not in turn to call it [15]
any of these.

COMMENTARY

[1] ποῖον αὐτῶν ὡς ὂν ὁτιοῦν τοῦτο καὶ οὐκ ἄλλο παγίως διισχυριζόμενος.
Stallbaum (1838) construed ποῖον αὐτῶν ἐστιν ὅ τις παγίως διισχυριζό-
μενος ὅτι ὁτιοῦν αὐτῶν τοῦτό ἐστι καὶ οὐκ ἄλλο. This is syntactically
possible but it is nonsensical to say: " of *which of them* could one
without shame assert that *any of them* is this and not another."
Now, in 49 B 2-5 Plato has said: " For it is hard to assert of each
of these severally ὁποῖον ὄντως ὕδωρ χρὴ λέγειν μᾶλλον ἢ πῦρ καὶ
ὁποῖον ὁτιοῦν μᾶλλον ἢ καὶ ἅπαντα καθ᾽ ἕκαστόν τε (. . . " and which
one must call any particular thing rather than everything at once
as well as severally "). This indicates that in the present passage
τοῦτο is the subject of ὄν and ὁτιοῦν καὶ οὐκ ἄλλο the predicate, the
antecedent of τοῦτο being ποῖον αὐτῶν. The result is the translation
that I have given, which is perfectly logical and in accord with

49 B 2-5 in intention as well as in grammar. So far as I know the commentators and translators of the passage, only Eva Sachs (*Die Fünf Platonischen Körper*, p. 189) has clearly got this sentence right, though Robin in his translation (*Platon: Oeuvres Complètes*, II [1942]) *may* have construed it correctly (. . . " qu'il est celui-ci ou celui-là et non point un autre "). Archer-Hind made τοῦτο καὶ οὐκ ἄλλο the predicate and neglected ὁτιοῦν altogether (. . . "which of them can we positively affirm to be really *this* " . . .); and Cornford, construing in the same way, tried to account for ὁτιοῦν as a kind of modifier of τοῦτο (" which of them can we stedfastly affirm to be *this*—whatever it may be—and not something else "). Martin's translation seems to follow Stallbaum's construction. Apelt, Bury, Fraccaroli, and Rivaud are unclear, but all of them either neglected τοῦτο altogether or took ὁτιοῦν τοῦτο together somehow as predicate of ὄν. Taylor in his *Commentary* does not express himself on this matter. The construction of this sentence has real significance, for anyone who takes τοῦτο here as predicate of ὄν is almost bound to misconstrue all the rest of the passage.

[2] ἀεὶ ὃ καθορῶμεν ἄλλοτε ἄλλῃ γιγνόμενον. Eva Sachs (*op. cit.*, p. 189, n. 1) says that ἀεί belongs to προσαγορεύειν in D 6 just as ἀεί in 49 D 7 does; and Taylor (*Commentary*, p. 319, n. 1) criticizes Fraccaroli for taking " the ἀεί of 49 D 4 and that of D 7 apart from the καλεῖν to which they belong." (Since there is no καλεῖν in this sentence, Taylor presumably means προσαγορεύειν in D 6, as Miss Sachs does.) If the ἀεί in D 7 goes with προσαγορεύειν, however, the ἑκάστοτε of D 5-6 does too; and, if ἑκάστοτε modifies προσαγορεύειν, the ἀεί here in D 4 surely does not, for ἀεί . . . ἑκάστοτε προσαγορεύειν would be at least redundant and to construe so would deprive ὃ καθορῶμεν . . . γιγνόμενον of the generalizing adverb that it clearly requires. Even if ἑκάστοτε in D 5-6 and ἀεί in D 7 do *not* modify προσαγορεύειν, as I believe they do not (see note 3 *infra*), both the word-order and the logic are against taking ἀεί here with προσαγορεύειν in D 6 and in favor of taking it with the whole phrase ὃ καθορῶμεν . . . γιγνόμενον, practically meaning: " whenever anything is seen happening now here and again there." Cf. in the parallel sentence at 49 E 7 ff. (see notes 3 and 14 *infra*) ἐν ᾧ δὲ ἐγγιγνόμενα ἀεὶ . . . ἀπόλλυται. . . .

[3] τὸ τοιοῦτον ἑκάστοτε (D 5-6) and τὸ τοιοῦτον ἀεί (D 6-7) are clearly parallel and have the same meaning. This is expressed more circumstantially by τὸ τοιοῦτον ἀεὶ περιφερόμενον ὅμοιον in E 5, where ἀεὶ modifies not περιφερόμενον alone (as Taylor implies [*Commentary*, p. 319, n. 1]) but περιφερόμενον ὅμοιον, i. e. ὅμοιον no less than περιφερόμενον. In E 6-7 τὸ διὰ παντὸς τοιοῦτον is explicitly given as the shorter equivalent of the phrase in E 5; and this in itself shows that τὸ τοιοῦτον ἑκάστοτε and τὸ τοιοῦτον ἀεί in D 5-7 are to be taken as unitary phrases, i. e. that ἑκάστοτε and ἀεί are not to be separated from τὸ τοιοῦτον and construed with προσαγορεύειν.

That τοῦτο ἀλλὰ τὸ τοιοῦτον ἑκάστοτε and τοῦτο ἀλλὰ τὸ τοιοῦτον ἀεί are primary objects of προσαγορεύειν (i. e. subjects of the statement itself) and πῦρ and ὕδωρ are secondary objects (i. e. predicates) is shown by the use of τὸ τοιοῦτον rather than τοιοῦτον and by the fact that ὃ καθορῶμεν . . . γιγνόμενον, which in fact is what men commonly call " fire," " water," etc., is taken up by τοῦτο (cf. ἐν ᾧ . . . ἀπόλλυται, μόνον ἐκεῖνο αὖ προσαγορεύειν . . . [49 E 7–50 A 2] and note 14 infra). Thus τοῦτο here (D 5 and 6) corresponds to τοῦτο in D 2 correctly understood as the subject of ὄν, and πῦρ and ὕδωρ here correspond to the predicate ὁτιοῦν there (see note 1 supra). The injunction therefore is " not to call this transient phenomenon fire or water." So Martin construed these words, and so did Fraccaroli and Ritter (Platons Dialoge [1903], p. 115, note: " nicht dieses Bestimmte sondern eben was eine bestimmte Beschaffenheit habe sei Feuer ") ; Eva Sachs (op. cit., p. 189) apparently construed correctly but confused herself by translating τοῦτο " die Substanz " and τὸ τοιοῦτον " die Qualität." Taylor (Commentary, p. 316) says explicitly that Martin is wrong and that τοῦτο and τὸ τοιοῦτον are predicative (i. e. secondary objects) : " we must in every case call fire not ' this ' but ' this-like ' "; but the only reason that he gives for rejecting Martin's construction is that it " makes the text really untranslatable," and this is not true. In fact, if τοῦτο were predicative, the πῦρ in D 6 would be worse than redundant; this Cornford seems to have recognized, for he proposed to excise it (Plato's Cosmology, p. 179, n. 1) since he too took τοῦτο ἀλλὰ τὸ τοιοῦτον to be predicative. So it had been taken by Archer-Hind, Apelt, and Bury; before them Stallbaum had so construed it as the natural consequence of his misconstruing ὡς ὂν ὁτιοῦν τοῦτο in D 2. Rivaud appears to waver (. . . " du feu par exemple, il ne faut jamais l'appeler ' ceci,' une chose déterminée [i. e. τοῦτο as predicative], mais dire ' ce qui a telle qualité ' c'est du feu; ni de l'eau, mais toujours ' ce qui a telle qualité ' c'est de l'eau " [i. e. τὸ τοιοῦτον as subject of the statement]), while Robin in his translation appears to construe τοῦτο ἀλλὰ τὸ τοιοῦτον in D 5 as subject of πῦρ but the same phrase in D 6 as predicate of ὕδωρ.

⁴ μηδὲ ἄλλο ποτὲ μηδέν (D 7) is parallel to the preceding πῦρ and ὕδωρ (D 6) and like them must be a secondary object (i. e. predicative). As the preceding προσαγορεύειν is " understood " with μηδὲ ὕδωρ τοῦτο in D 6, so τοῦτο προσαγορεύειν is " understood " with μηδὲ ἄλλο ποτὲ μηδέν here. So Taylor also understands the supplement, though he takes this τοῦτο once more as secondary object (i. e. predicative). This τοῦτο, however, being the same as that in D 5 and D 6, refers to ὃ καθορῶμεν . . . γιγνόμενον and is the primary object of προσαγορεύειν, i. e. the subject of ἄλλο μηδέν, and ὥς τινα ἔχον βεβαιότητα modifies this τοῦτο, not ἄλλο μηδέν as Taylor supposes. The point is that as we should not say of the transient phenomenon " this is fire " or " this is water," so we should not

imply that it has any permanence by saying of it " this is air,"
" this is earth," or " this is " anything else either (see note 5 *infra*).
Taylor thinks (*Commentary*, p. 317) that Martin's periphrastic
translation implies his own construction, but it seems to me rather
to imply the construction that I have adopted. Eva Sachs (*op. cit.*,
pp. 189-190) may also have construed this clause as I do, but her
translation like Fraccaroli's is too compendious to be clear in this
matter. Apelt, Bury, Rivaud, and Robin translate as if they
" supplied " only προσαγορεύειν, with ὥς τινα ἔχον βεβαιότητα as the
predicate of ἄλλο μηδέν (e. g. Cornford: " nor must we speak of
anything else as having some permanence . . ."); but the parallelism
of the preceding two clauses, προσαγορεύειν with primary and secon-
dary objects, is against the introduction of such a construction here.
Archer-Hind's translation, on the other hand, implies ἄλλο μηδέν as
primary object of προσαγορεύειν, ὥς τινα ἔχον βεβαιότητα in agreement
with this, and ὅσα δεικνύντες . . . ἡγούμεθά τι as predicate of ἄλλο
μηδέν. Archer-Hind translates this last clause: " such predicates as
we express by the use of the terms ' this ' and ' that ' and suppose
that we signify something thereby." As Taylor has said (*Commen-
tary*, p. 317) this mistranslates the words δεικνύντες and δηλοῦν, and
in saying " this " of something one does not apply a predicate to it;
but possibly Archer-Hind meant by his translation only " such words
as we put into the *grammatical* predicate when we mean to signify
something by saying ' This is X '." In that case, however, his transla-
tion would mean " we must not imply stability of *anything* by saying
of it that it is e. g. fire, water, etc."; but this the passage cannot
mean, for, far from saying that nothing can be called " fire," etc. it
explicitly states what should and what should not be so called.

⁵ ὅσα . . . ἡγούμεθά τι = (τούτων) ὅσα . . . ἡγούμεθά τι and de-
pends upon ἄλλο μηδέν, which it thus specifies (so Taylor, Cornford,
Bury and apparently Fraccaroli, Apelt, and Robin); but " the ante-
cedent to ὅσα " is not, as Taylor says it is (*Commentary*, p. 316), the
" things which we mistakenly suppose to be permanent," i. e. the
ever-changing phenomena. Taylor supports this interpretation by
saying: " For the subject of the following φεύγει cannot well be
anything but the ὅσα, and it is the things falsely supposed to be
permanent which φεύγει." Martin, Fraccaroli, Apelt, Rivaud, Corn-
ford, and Robin would all appear to admit this argument of Taylor's,
for they all translate as if the subject of φεύγει were plural. It must
be singular, however, as οὐχ ὑπομένον proves (of this Archer-Hind,
Bury, and Eva Sachs were evidently aware); and the subject of
φεύγει, therefore, is not ὅσα but the τοῦτο which is the primary object
of προσαγορεύειν and of which ἄλλο μηδὲν (τούτων) ὅσα . . . ἡγού-
μεθά τι is the predicate.

The clause, ὅσα . . . ἡγούμεθά τι, does not itself mean " phe-
nomena "; it means simply " X, where X is what we mean to desig-
nate as something when by using the deictic pronoun we say ' this is

X '." In short it means what Archer-Hind's inaccurately expressed
translation of it may have intended, though not in the construction
that he gave it (see note 4 *supra*), for the point is not that you
should not designate a phenomenon " this " or " that " (the fact
that you *cannot* do so is in the next sentence given as the reason why
you *should not* do what this sentence enjoins) but that you should
not call the phenomenon anything (like " fire " and " water," the
examples already given) that is designated in such statements as
" this is X."

⁶ I have omitted καὶ τὴν τῷδε in E 3 (instead of which according
to Rivaud W, Y, and Parisinus Graec. 1812 have καὶ τὴν τούτου)
because it is absent from Simplicius' quotation of this passage
(*Phys.*, p. 224, 4-5). It is not, however, open to any of the objec-
tions raised against it by Eva Sachs (*op. cit.*, p. 190, n. 1 and p. 204,
n. 1), Apelt (n. 140), Taylor (*Commentary*, pp. 317-18), and Corn-
ford (p. 179, n. 3); and the " emendations " of Eva Sachs (τὴν τοῦ
δέν, which she herself doubted but which is adopted by Rivaud and
Robin), Cook Wilson (τὴν τοῦ ὧδε), Richards (τὴν τῇδε), and Taylor
(τὴν τοῦδε) are either no improvement or betray misunderstanding
of the passage. To say that a phenomenon does not abide the asser-
tion τῷδε does *not* mean that it cannot be said " to exist *for* so and
so " (as Taylor puts it, *loc. cit.* [if it did, his τὴν τοῦδε would be open
to the same objection]) but that you cannot designate *it* τῷδε just as
you cannot designate *it* τόδε or τοῦτο. To designate something τῷδε
is to indicate that *this thing* has *something else* as a predicate (cf. the
Aristotelian formula τὸ ὑπάρχειν τόδε τῷδε, where τῷδε is " subject "
and τόδε " predicate " [e. g. *Anal. Prior.* 49 A 6]), just as to desig-
nate it τοῦδε is to indicate that *it* possesses something else or is the
object of an action, thought, or assertion (not that *it* is " relative to
a *this*," i. e. to something else, as Taylor presumes). If because a
γιγνόμενον is constantly changing you cannot point to it and say
τόδε (" *this* "), it is obvious that you cannot point to it and say
τῷδε (" to [or] for *this* ") or τοῦδε (" of *this* ") either (cf. *Par-
menides* 142 A 1-2: ὃ δὲ μὴ ἔστι, . . . εἴη ἄν τι αὐτῷ ἢ αὐτοῦ;).

⁷ The plurals, μόνιμα ὡς ὄντα αὐτά (E 3-4) are at first sight strange
after the singular subject of φεύγει οὐχ ὑπομένον (E 2, see note 5
supra), to which αὐτά should refer. They present no problem, of
course, to the interpreters who erroneously represent the subject of
φεύγει as plural. On the other hand, Archer-Hind and Eva Sachs,
who correctly translate that subject as singular, improperly translate
μόνιμα . . . αὐτά as singular too. Bury tries to preserve the change
in number by translating " For such an object shuns . . . which indi-
cates that they are stable "; but " such an object " is an evasion
calculated to soften the transition, which neither he nor anyone ex-
plains. Apparently Plato, just because he has said that " it," the
phenomenon, does not abide, immediately and without further ex-
planation refers not to " it " as a single thing but to " them," the

multiple and transient phases of the phenomenal flux that cannot
be identified as distinct objects.

[8] ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν ἕκαστα μὴ λέγειν (E 4). Archer-Hind took ἕκαστα
as primary object of λέγειν and ταῦτα as secondary object (i. e. predi-
cate of ἕκαστα) : " The word ' this ' we must not use of any of them."
Eva Sachs, Apelt, and Bury construed in the same way and to the
same effect. So did Hackforth (C. Q., XXXVIII [1944], p. 36:
" . . . not to speak of the several things in question as ' these ' "),
though Taylor had already objected (Commentary, p. 318) to the
supposed use of ταῦτα as the plural of τοῦτο in this sense. Taylor
himself took ταῦτα ἕκαστα together as object of λέγειν and interpreted
the clause to mean: " one should use none of these phrases." Corn-
ford struck a compromise, construing as Archer-Hind had done but
taking ταῦτα to mean " these expressions ": " we should not use these
expressions of any of them."

Apart from the dubious assumption that Plato would have written
μὴ . . . ἕκαστα if he had meant only μηδὲν αὐτῶν, all these interpre-
tations make this clause a mere repetition of the preceding sentence,
which has already said that no phenomenon can be designated τοῦτο
or τόδε. What is new in this clause is the word ἕκαστα; and, since
the datum from which the whole of D 4–E 4 has proceeded is the
" fact " that phenomena are processes in which no clear distinction
of separate phases can be made (C 7 f.: τούτων οὐδέποτε τῶν αὐτῶν
ἑκάστων φανταζομένων), it seems probable that here the word ἕκαστα
is itself a significant part of the injunction consequent upon this
fact. I have shown that τοῦτο is the primary object (not the secon-
dary object or predicate) of προσαγορεύειν in D 5 and D 6 and is to
be supplied as such in D 7 (see notes 3 and 4 supra). It is only
reasonable to construe ταῦτα in the same way here, taking it to mean
the transient phases of phenomenal process to which the immediately
preceding αὐτά refers (see note 7 supra), and to construe ἕκαστα as
predicative. Martin may have construed the words in this way (" il
ne faut jamais nommer à part, comme une chose distincte, aucun de
ces objets "), and so may Rivaud (" il ne faut jamais les désigner
comme des objets isolés "). Robin must have understood ταῦτα to
refer to the phenomena, but he seems to have taken ταῦτα ἕκαστα
together as the object of λέγειν (" mais ce sont là, dans leur singu-
larité, êtres à ne point nommer "). This rather obscure translation,
when read in the light of Robin's note (p. 1473: " le sujet sensible
. . . , determination passagère . . . , est proprement innomable ")
appears to approximate the intention of the Greek; but the implied
construction can hardly be right, for it leaves οὕτω in E 6 with no
reference (as Robin must have sensed, since he evades this difficulty
by rendering οὕτω " uniformément "). Fraccaroli clearly took ταῦτα
ἕκαστα in the way Robin later did, but he seems to have " supplied "
οὕτω with λέγειν by anticipation of οὕτω καλεῖν in E 6 (" non si chia-
mino quindi così queste cose singole ") ; this is not only an improbable

device in itself, but it would require οὕτω either to have different references in the two places (i. e. not to call the several phenomena "this," etc. but to call τὸ τοιοῦτον "fire," etc.) or to have the wrong reference in one of the two (i. e. not to call the several phenomena "this," etc. but to call τὸ τοιοῦτον "this," etc.).

⁹ τὸ δὲ τοιοῦτον ἀεὶ περιφερόμενον ὅμοιον ἑκάστου πέρι καὶ συμπάντων οὕτω καλεῖν. Fraccaroli, Eva Sachs, Robin, and Hackforth take τὸ τοιοῦτον . . . συμπάντων as a single phrase. Martin, Rivaud, Taylor, and Cornford take τὸ τοιοῦτον . . . ὅμοιον as a single phrase but construe ἑκάστου πέρι καὶ συμπάντων with καλεῖν. Stallbaum, Archer-Hind, Apelt, and Bury all separate ἀεὶ περιφερόμενον ὅμοιον from τὸ τοιοῦτον, which they take to stand alone as the designation to be used of "each and all" the phenomena. Stallbaum, changing ὅμοιον to ὁμοίως, interpreted: "to use τὸ τοιοῦτον, since it is always in flux, equally of each and all of them." Archer-Hind adopted Stallbaum's emendation but construed it differently; his translation, supplemented by his notes, is: "but such, applying in the same sense to all their mutations (i. e. keeping pace with the elements in their transformations), we must predicate of each and all (i. e. τοιοῦτον can always be applied to any of them in the same sense [ὁμοίως])." This seems to imply: τὸ τοιοῦτον, ἀεὶ περιφερόμενον ὁμοίως ἑκάστου πέρι καὶ συμπάντων, οὕτω καλεῖν (= ὁμοίως περὶ ἑκάστου καὶ συμπάντων καλεῖν), which at least gives a function to the οὕτω, which Stallbaum disregarded altogether. Apelt retained ὅμοιον, but by "understanding" τῷ γιγνομένῳ with it (see his note 141) interpreted in the same general sense as Archer-Hind: "sondern nur ' das Derartige ' dürfen wir als eine in ihrer Bedeutung sich entsprechend wandelnde Bezeichnung von jedem einzelnen wie von allen zusammen brauchen." Here again οὕτω is disregarded, as it is by Bury too, who furthermore, while keeping ὅμοιον, changes περιφερόμενον to περιφερομένων: "but in regard to each of them and all together we must apply the term ' such ' to represent what is always circling around (ἀεὶ περιφερομένων ὅμοιον)." Bury's "emendation" is alone enough to condemn his interpretation, since it imports into the text a construction, ὅμοιον with the genitive, unexampled in Plato and questionable in any good Greek (cf. Kühner-Gerth, II, 1, p. 413, n. 10; Stephanus, Thesaurus, V [1851], 1966-67). The interpretations of Stallbaum, Archer-Hind, and Apelt all are determined by the erroneous assumption that περιφέρεσθαι must connote a change of nature and that τοιοῦτον must therefore be meant to be the proper denotation of anything so changing (e. g. Archer-Hind: "that is to say τοιοῦτον . . . denote[s] . . . a variable attribute"; Apelt: "Dieser [der Name] . . . ist also in einem beständigen Bedeutungswandel begriffen"). Nothing is ever said here or elsewhere, however, to suggest that the word τοιοῦτον itself implies transience or instability of what it is used to denote, and the verb περιφέρεσθαι need not and in fact usually does not connote change of nature or character in its

subject. An exact parallel to περιφερόμενον here is to be found in *Republic* 402 A (ὅτε τὰ στοιχεῖα μὴ λανθάνοι ἡμᾶς ὀλίγα ὄντα ἐν ἅπασιν οἷς ἔστιν περιφερόμενα) and 402 C (πρὶν ἂν τὰ τῆς σωφροσύνης εἴδη . . . πανταχοῦ περιφερόμενα γνωρίζωμεν . . .). The letters and the εἴδη there are all severally the same wherever they *recur* (cf. the same example in *Politicus* 277 E–278 D and observe τὴν αὐτὴν ὁμοιότητα καὶ φύσιν [278 B 1-2] used for the identity of a letter that recurs in two different syllables); and ἀεὶ περιφερόμενον ὅμοιον here must have the same meaning: " always recurring alike," i. e. " always self-identical in its recurrences." τὸ διὰ παντὸς τοιοῦτον in the next line, which in the particular example there given must be the equivalent of τὸ τοιοῦτον . . . here, both confirms the meaning of ἀεὶ περι-φερόμενον ὅμοιον and shows that these three words at least must form a single phrase with τὸ τοιοῦτον (the predicative position being not unusual but normal for participial modifiers [cf. Gildersleeve, *Syntax of Classical Greek*, Part II, §§ 622, 623, 634]); and it is the stranger that Apelt, Archer-Hind, and Bury did not so construe them, for they all took τὸ διὰ παντὸς τοιοῦτον as a single phrase. There are at least two reasons for taking ἑκάστου πέρι καὶ συμπάντων also as part of this phrase instead of construing it with οὕτω καλεῖν. For one thing it is wanted to emphasize the identity of the character-istic through all its manifestations. The other and decisive reason is the meaning of οὕτω καλεῖν itself.

As has been said, Stallbaum, Apelt, and Bury simply disregarded οὕτω. Taylor (*Commentary*, p. 318) took it to refer forward to the example which follows (as Martin also had done) and interpreted: " in each case and in all to give the name (i. e. the name of ' fire ' or ' water,' etc.) to the this-like which is perpetually turning up as similar." Cornford (*Plato's Cosmology*, p. 179, n. 4), on the other hand, took it " as resuming the long phrase that precedes " and translated: " ' that which is of a certain quality and has the same sort of quality as it perpetually recurs in the cycle ' (τὸ τοιοῦτον . . . ὅμοιον)—that is the description we should use (οὕτω καλεῖν) in the case of each and all of them " (ἑκάστου πέρι καὶ συμπάντων). The " them " which we are so to describe are according to Cornford the phenomena, of which we are not to use the expressions " this " and " that "; and accordingly he tries to interpret τὸ διὰ παντὸς τοιοῦτον (E 6-7), which we are to call " fire," etc., as fiery stuff of which there is *at all times* a certain amount and of which the quality is sufficiently " alike " to be recognized and named (*op. cit.*, p. 179, n. 5). It is more difficult to be sure just what Taylor conceived τὸ τοιοῦτον . . . ὅμοιον to be, but his references to τοιοῦτον as meaning a " phase," " occurrence," or " passing phase " (*Commentary*, pp. 318-19, 321) suggest that like Cornford he supposed it to be phenomenal appear-ance for which the designation τοιοῦτον is here recommended. The following words, καὶ δὴ καὶ πῦρ τὸ διὰ παντὸς τοιοῦτον, whether in the original or in the translations of Taylor or of Cornford, comport

ill with such an interpretation, however. Hackforth, therefore, who holds (*op. cit.*, pp. 36-7) that " the purpose of the whole context is not to correct our ordinary *reference* of the terms, fire, air, etc. . . . ," objects that the interpretations of Taylor and of Cornford make Plato give a positive injunction that the words " fire," etc. are to be used in a new reference; and he proposes to cure this by placing a colon after καλεῖν and taking τὸ δὲ τοιοῦτον . . . καλεῖν to mean: " rather that quality which in the case of each and all of them is from time to time recurring as a similar quality we ought to designate accordingly (i. e. the right way to indicate a quality is by an adjective, such as πυρῶδες or ὑδαρές)." In fact, however, the whole point of 49 D 3–E 4 (of which Hackforth says nothing in his note) is that the proper reference for the terms " fire," etc. is *not* the phenomenal flux of which men do erroneously try to assert them (see notes 3 and 5 *supra*). Neither has there been anything in the passage so far to suggest that phenomenal fire should properly be called πυρῶδες; and, if οὕτω did refer to τοιοῦτον, as Hackforth makes it do, it ought to mean simply " to call the such and such . . . such and such (the construction which Eva Sachs had long ago put upon it) and not " to call it by adjectives." Hackforth objected to the clumsy Greek implied by Cornford's construction; but worse than clumsiness is its assumption that τὸ τοιοῦτον καλεῖν περὶ ἑκάστου is Greek for " to call each such and such." This construction is implied by the translations of Archer-Hind, Bury, and Apelt too, and Apelt tried to defend it (note 141); but he offers no example of τοῦτο καλεῖν περί τινος meaning " to call something this," and I have neither been able to find one nor do I believe that any exists. Cornford and Hackforth, on the other hand, are right as against Taylor and Martin in seeing that οὕτω must get its meaning from something that precedes it, not from what follows.

The fundamental mistake made by these and most interpreters, however, is their assumption that Plato must here be saying what name or kind of name the phenomenal " phases," " moments," or " occurrences " should be called, whereas he has already said that these transient moments of flux cannot be called anything distinct from anything else. This so many have overlooked simply because they have misconstrued the τοῦτο in D 2, D 5, and D 6 and consequently the ταῦτα in E 4. When it is seen that ταῦτα μὲν ἕκαστα μὴ λέγειν means " not to speak of these phenomenal phases as severally distinct," the very balance of the sentence, τὸ δὲ τοιοῦτον . . . οὕτω καλεῖν, " but so to call the such and such . . . ," reveals the meaning necessarily to be that " severally distinct," ἕκαστον, is properly predicated rather of the characteristic that is identical in each and all of its recurrences; and in fact a few lines later (E 8) ἕκαστα αὐτῶν is used of these characteristics that are manifested in the medium. (For the interpretations of οὕτω καλεῖν implied by the translations of Fraccaroli and Robin see note 8 *sub fin. supra*. Rivaud apparently makes οὕτω refer to the τοῦ δέν that he adopts in

E 3; the improbability of that emendation apart [see note 6 *supra*], the reference could not be to τοῦ δέν without being to the τόδε and τοῦτο there [E 2-3] at the same time, and that would amount to making this passage say that τὸ τοιοῦτον κτλ. should be called τοῦτο καὶ τόδε.)

¹⁰ Hackforth (*loc. cit.*) would take this as a separate sentence: "and in point of fact fire is perpetual quality, as also is everything that comes into being." His reason for doing this is determined by his erroneous interpretation of the whole passage, however (see note 9 *supra*); and καὶ δὴ καὶ is best taken in its usual sense as introducing a particular example of the general rule just enunciated, not, as Hackforth does, to introduce a minor premise in a supposed syllogism, the conclusion of which is in fact not expressed.

¹¹ Eva Sachs (*op. cit.*, pp. 190-2) takes τοιοῦτον in E 7 as predicative to πῦρ τὸ διὰ παντός in E 6, which she translates "Feuer in seiner Gesamterscheinung" and distinguishes as "das Feuer im All" (i. e. the "non-substantial" idea of fire) from ἅπαν ὅσονπερ ἂν ἔχῃ γένεσιν, which in turn she takes to mean "jedes Feuer das ein Werden hat," i. e. "die Einzelerscheinung 'Feuer'." The very fact that whenever τοιοῦτον appears in this passage it appears with the article (τὸ τοιοῦτον in D 5, D 6, E 5) is enough to condemn such a construction and to make it practically certain that here too the article governs τοιοῦτον, i. e. that τὸ διὰ παντὸς τοιοῦτον is a single phrase to which πῦρ καὶ ἅπαν . . . γένεσιν is to be taken predicatively. (τὸ ἐν τῷ παντὶ πῦρ of *Philebus* 29 B-C will not support either term of Eva Sach's equation: it has nothing to do with an "idea of fire," and it cannot be a parallel to τὸ διὰ παντός in this passage.)

τὸ διὰ παντὸς τοιοῦτον is the equivalent of τὸ τοιοῦτον ἀεὶ περιφερόμενον ὅμοιον ἑκάστου πέρι καὶ συμπάντων, i. e. it is the characteristic X which is always X, always identical with itself. The only other possible meaning of διὰ παντός is "thoroughly," "altogether"; and, if that meant anything here, it would come to the same thing. Most interpreters translate by "constantly," "perpetually," "at all times"; but some of them clearly seek to give this a distributive or aggregative implication which approximates the interpretation of Eva Sachs, who baldly translates τὸ τοιοῦτον in E 5 by "Aggregatzustand" and τὸ διὰ παντός in E 6 by "in seiner Gesamterscheinung." So according to Cornford (see note 9 *supra*) τὸ διὰ παντὸς τοιοῦτον refers to a fiery stuff of which there is *at all times* (i. e. at any given time) a certain amount that can be recognized and named. Apart from the fact that διὰ παντός cannot bear such a meaning any more than it can the still freer translation of Apelt ("alles . . . was überhaupt als ein derartiges erscheint"), τὸ τοιοῦτον has *not* been prescribed as the proper designation of a single phenomenal occurrence, and so τὸ διὰ παντὸς τοιοῦτον cannot be prescribed as the designation of any phenomenal aggregate, all of which together must be as transient and indistinguishable as the transient components.

[12] ἄπαν ὅσονπερ ἂν ἔχῃ γένεσιν like πῦρ is predicate of τὸ διὰ παντὸς τοιοῦτον, and this itself proves that τὸ διὰ παντὸς is a general formula in which τοιοῦτον is a " variable." I. e. the only factors in generation that can properly be called by the distinct names, " fire," " air," " water," etc. are the characteristics which being perpetually identical are severally distinct, not the unstable manifestations in phenomenal flux that cannot be clearly distinguished from one another.

[13] ἕκαστα αὐτῶν (E 8), i. e. the perpetually identical characteristics which are severally distinct, each being τὸ διὰ παντὸς τοιοῦτον and which are properly called " fire," " water," etc. See note 9 *supra* (*sub fin.*).

[14] ἐκεῖνο (50 A 1) resumes ἐν ᾧ . . . ἀπόλλυται and is the primary object of προσαγορεύειν. This is exactly parallel to the construction in 49 D 4-6 where τοῦτο resumes ἀεὶ ὃ καθορῶμεν . . . γιγνόμενον and is the primary object of προσαγορεύειν (see note 3 *supra*).

[15] ἐκεῖνο in 50 A 4 is the primary object of καλεῖν (just as ἐκεῖνο in 50 A 1 is the primary object of προσαγορεύειν [note 14 *supra*]) and μηδὲν τούτων, which resumes τὸ ὁποιονοῦν τι . . . ἐκ τούτων is predicate to this. Just as 50 A 1-2 means " to designate it (i. e. the receptacle) alone when we employ the word 'this' or 'that '," so 50 A 2-4 means " not to call it (i. e. the receptacle) any of these (i. e. any *kind* of thing [cf. *Theaetetus* 152 D 4 for ὁποιονοῦν τι])." This clause was correctly construed by Stallbaum and Martin; but Archer-Hind perversely took ἐκεῖνο to refer to τὸ ὁποιονοῦν τι . . . ἐκ τούτων and the antecedent of μηδὲν τούτων to be τῷ τε τοῦτο καὶ τῷ τόδε in the preceding clause (50 A 1-2), and the translations of Apelt, Bury, Cornford, and Hackforth all adopt this misconstruction (e. g. Hackforth, *loc. cit.*: " to a qualitative entity, whatever it be, . . . we must not apply any of these terms [i. e. terms like 'this' or 'that']"). Fraccaroli and Rivaud have the same misinterpretation, but they seem to have reached it by another way. They appear to have taken μηδὲν τούτων as referring to τὸ ὁποιονοῦν τι . . . ἐκ τούτων but to have made this the primary object of καλεῖν and to have taken ἐκεῖνο as predicative (e. g. Rivaud: " pour ce qui est qualifié de quelque manière que ce soit . . . nous ne le designerons jamais du terme *cela*"). As for Taylor, I cannot find that he expresses himself on the matter in his *Commentary*. Robin in 1919 (*Études sur . . . la Physique . . . de Platon*, p. 20, n. 2) adopted Archer-Hind's translation, which he says agrees with that of Cousin; but in his own translation of 1942 he silently discarded it and construed correctly: " mais toute détermination qualitative, chaud ou blanc etc. . . . , aucune de ces appellations ne lui (the receptacle) doit être assignée," simply referring to 50 D-51 B, which shows conclusively that this is the meaning of 50 A 2-4 (e. g. 51 A 5-6: τὴν . . . ὑποδοχὴν μήτε γῆν μήτε ἀέρα μήτε πῦρ μήτε ὕδωρ λέγωμεν μήτε ὅσα ἐκ τούτων μήτε ἐξ ὧν ταῦτα γέγονεν).

Timaeus 50 A 4–B 5

There follows immediately a visual figure intended to illustrate what has just been said in 49 C 7–50 A 4.[16] Suppose that golden figures of all kinds are continually being remoulded each and all into all others, and suppose that someone points to one of them and asks "What is it?" In reply to this question, Plato says:

50 B 1 By far the surest answer so far as truth is concerned is to say "gold"; but as to the triangle and all the other figures that were coming to be in it, ⟨the surest thing is⟩ never to say "these are,"[17] since they ⟨i. e. what would be denoted by "these"⟩[18] are changing even while one is making the statement, but to be content if with some assurance he may be willing to accept ⟨the

50 B 5 statement⟩ "What is such and such ⟨is⟩."[19]

[16] With the use of σαφέστερον . . . εἰπεῖν here (50 A 4-5) cf. σαφέστερον παράδειγμα in *Sophist* 233 D 3 ff. and τὸ σαφέστατον in *Laws* 691 B 11 ff.

[17] The reply "gold" (i. e. "this is gold") corresponds to the admonition to designate only the receptacle by the statement "this is . . ." or "that is . . ." (49 E 7–50 A 2). The continually re-moulded gold (*not* the figures themselves that come and go in it) stands for the transient phenomena; and to the injunction not to say of the latter "this is fire," etc. (49 D 5–E 2) corresponds the injunction here μηδέποτε λέγειν ταῦτα ὡς ὄντα. This, since the reason given for the injunction (B 3-4: ἃ γε . . . μεταπίπτει) is the same as that given (E 2-4: φεύγει γὰρ . . . φάσις) for not calling the phenomenon anything of which we say "this is X" (D 7–E 2, see notes 4 and 5 *supra*), must mean "never to say that these are" in the sense "never to say 'this is triangle,' 'this is square,' etc."

This construction and interpretation are in fact implied by Taylor's paraphrase (*Commentary*, p. 321: To the question "What is this I have in my hands?" he says "it would be safer to say 'gold' than to say 'a triangle' or 'a square,' since the figure [i. e., the golden figure to which one would point and say: 'this is . . .'] would be actually changing as you spoke"). All interpreters, so far as I know, elicit an entirely different meaning from the Greek, however, for they take ταῦτα as merely resumptive of τὸ τρίγωνον . . . ἐνεγίγνετο and ὄντα as existential and translate "never to speak of them (i. e. the triangle, etc.) as existing" or the equivalent. Cornford too translates in this fashion, but in a note (*op. cit.*, p. 182, n. 2) he suggests as preferable: "never to speak of a triangle, etc. as *these* (things), as though they had being." This is to take ταῦτα as the secondary object of λέγειν (i. e. predicative to τὸ τρίγωνον

κτλ.), which is in accord with the erroneous construction of τοῦτο in 49 D 2, D 5, D 6 and ταῦτα in E 4 as predicative. Just as in ὡς ὂν ὁτιοῦν τοῦτο (49 D 1-2), however, τοῦτο is the subject of ὄν (see note 1 *supra*), so here ταῦτα is the subject of ὄντα, for ταῦτα ὡς ὄντα, being the forbidden reply to the question τί ποτ᾽ ἐστί, to which ὅτι χρυσός is the correct answer, must represent ταῦτα τρίγωνον ὅσα τε ἄλλα σχήματά ἐστι just as ὅτι χρυσός stands for τοῦτο χρυσός ἐστι. The displacement of ὡς in such phrases is not uncommon (cf. *Theaetetus* 188 A 3, *Sophist* 255 C 1, *Laws* 878 A 5) nor is the construction ὡς with accusative participle after λέγειν (cf. *Sophist* 263 B 9, *Laws* 643 D 8); *Laws* 641 C 8-D 1 exemplifies both at once, the accusative participle with ὡς after λέγειν and the hyperbaton of ὡς.

In taking ταῦτα as merely resumptive of τὸ τρίγωνον . . . ἐνεγίγνετο interpreters have failed to observe that the figures ὅσα ἐνεγίγνετο ⟨ἐν τῷ χρυσῷ⟩ correspond to the ἕκαστα αὐτῶν ἐγγιγνόμενα ⟨τῇ ὑποδοχῇ⟩ (49 E 8), each of which can be defined by the formula τὸ διὰ παντὸς τοιοῦτον, and that as those are not to be identified with their phenomenal manifestations, which cannot be clearly distinguished from one another (οὐδέποτε τῶν αὐτῶν ἑκάστων φανταζομένων [D 1]; see note 13 *supra*), so these are not to be identified with the golden figures (σχήματα ἐκ χρυσοῦ). These interpreters would make Plato here deny existence to τὸ τρίγωνον, etc., whereas what he says is simply that you must not point to the continually changing golden shapes and say " these are triangle, square, etc."

[18] From what has been said in note 17 *supra* it should be clear that the antecedent of ἃ γε . . . μεταπίπτει is not τὸ τρίγωνον ὅσα τε ἄλλα σχήματα but ταῦτα—or rather in a strict sense the golden shapes (i. e. the phenomena) to which the naïf answerer is likely to point and say " these are triangles, squares, etc." It is the fact that these are being remoulded even while he says " this is . . ." that makes it wrong to say of them " this is " anything but " gold." Cf. φεύγει γὰρ οὐχ ὑπομένον κτλ. (49 E 2) and note 5 *supra* on the subject of that sentence.

[19] ἀλλ᾽ ἐὰν ἄρα καὶ τὸ τοιοῦτον μετ᾽ ἀσφαλείας ἐθέλῃ δέχεσθαί τινος, ἀγαπᾶν (50 B 4-5). Martin goes wildly wrong here, translating: " mais si quelqu'un demandait à savoir d'une manière certaine comment se nomme une telle apparence (i. e. τὸ τοιοῦτον), il faudrait le lui dire." He seems to have taken ἐθέλῃ δέχεσθαι to mean " wants to know," " asks " and ἀγαπᾶν to mean " to comply with the request," " to content him," neither of which is a possible interpretation of the Greek. Archer-Hind, Fraccaroli, Bury, and Cornford took the subject of ἐθέλῃ to be τὸ τρίγωνον ὅσα τε ἄλλα σχήματα. So Cornford translates: " if they so much as consent to accept the description ' what is of such and such a quality ' with any certainty "; and the others translate to the same effect. The whole sentence from 50 A 7 to the end, however, is determined by the hypothesis that someone asks a question (δεικνύντος δή τινος . . . καὶ ἐρομένου τί ποτ᾽ ἐστί)

and is framed as the recommendation of a reply to that questioner
(. . . ἀσφαλέστατον εἰπεῖν . . . τὸ δὲ . . . μηδέποτε λέγειν . . . ἀλλ'
. . . ἀγαπᾶν) ; and consequently the person who asks the question,
not the thing about which he asks, must be thought of as the one who
will accept or decline to accept this answer. So the clause must mean
" but to be content if the questioner is willing to accept (as a reply)
. . ."; and so far at any rate Rivaud, Robin, and apparently Apelt
translate the clause correctly. The reply itself is represented only
by τὸ τοιοῦτον, and it is difficult to be sure what these three trans-
lators took this to mean. Robin, having construed 50 B 3 to mean
" never to designate the triangle, etc. as ὄντα " translates this: " mais
si . . . l'interlocuteur . . . accepte qu'on lui nomme ce tel que
devient la chose." Apelt and Rivaud appear to have interpreted the
whole context to mean that you must not speak of the figures as
ὄντα but may speak of them as τὸ τοιοῦτον. Taylor too, despite his
implied construction of 50 B 3 (see note 17 supra), interprets the
present clause to mean " you could not safely go further than to call
the shape of the moment a τοιοῦτον, a ' phase ' in the history of the
piece of gold " (Commentary, p. 321). Archer-Hind, Fraccaroli,
Bury, and Cornford certainly take the meaning to be that the
triangle, etc., which should not be spoken of as existing (ὄντα),
may admit the predicate " such " (τὸ τοιοῦτον). All such interpreta-
tions make τοιοῦτον and ὄν alternatives, a notion that is suggested
by nothing in the passage that this sentence is meant to illustrate.
τὸ τοιοῦτον here is the abbreviated alternative to the forbidden state-
ment ταῦτα ὡς ὄντα. With it therefore must be understood ὡς ὄν
from the preceding ὡς ὄντα and τὸ τοιοῦτον must be related to this
ὄν just as ταῦτα is to ὄντα. So those who interpret the former phrase
to mean " never to speak of them (i. e. the triangle, etc.) as existing "
ought to take τὸ τοιοῦτον here not, as they do, to mean that you may
" speak of them as τοιοῦτον " but rather to mean that you may
" speak of τὸ τοιοῦτον (contrasted to the triangle, etc.) as existing."
Cornford's alternative suggestion for ταῦτα ὡς ὄντα, " never to speak
of a triangle, etc. as these (things), as though they had being," would
permit him to take τὸ τοιοῦτον as parallel to ταῦτα and to under-
stand it to mean " but to speak of the triangle, etc. as τοιοῦτον ";
but it would do so only if 1) ταῦτα were the secondary object of
λέγειν, 2) the subject of ἐθέλῃ δέχεσθαι were τὸ τρίγωνον κτλ., and 3)
τὸ τοιοῦτον were the proper expression of such a predicate object of
δέχεσθαι. None of these conditions is acceptable, however. In note
17 supra I have shown why ταῦτα must be the subject of ὄντα, not
the secondary object of λέγειν, and at the beginning of the present
note why the subject of ἐθέλῃ δέχεσθαι must be the questioner and
not the things about which he asks. τὸ τοιοῦτον, then, being the
statement which the questioner may be induced to accept and thus
replacing ταῦτα, must be the subject of that statement; and the only
verb that can reasonably be understood with it is ὄν (or ἐστί) from
the preceding ὄντα. This in effect yields as the total injunction

μηδέποτε λέγειν ταῦτα ὡς ὄντα ἀλλὰ τὸ τοιοῦτον ⟨ὡς ὄν⟩, meaning
" never to say these are ⟨the triangle and the other figures⟩ " but
to say " what is such and such ⟨is⟩," which is exactly parallel to
μὴ τοῦτο ἀλλὰ τὸ τοιοῦτον ἑκάστοτε προσαγορεύειν πῦρ κτλ. (49 D 5 ff.)
and to ταῦτα μὲν ἕκαστα μὴ λέγειν, τὸ δὲ τοιοῦτον . . . οὕτω καλεῖν
(49 E 4-6).

SUPPLEMENTARY REMARKS

What Plato says in *Timaeus* 49 C–50 B, in contrast to what
he is ordinarily quoted as saying, is :—

1) Phenomena cannot be distinctively denominated, because
no part of the phenomenal flux is distinguishable from any other.
Because you cannot, by saying " this is . . .," distinguish any
phase of the flux from any other, you cannot say of any " this is
fire " or " this is water," etc.

2) The distinctive names, naïvely and improperly applied to
phenomena, denominate in each case " the such and such, what-
ever the correct formula may be, that is always identical in each
and all of its occurrences."

3) If at any time anywhere one tries to distinguish any phase
of the phenomenal flux from any other by saying " this," one
always in fact points to the permanent, unchanging, and char-
acterless receptacle in which are constantly occurring transient
and indeterminable manifestations of the determinate character-
istics just mentioned.

In 50 B–51 B Plato tries further to clarify and illustrate
chiefly by use of analogies the nature of this medium or re-
ceptacle, which finally in 52 A 8 he calls " space " (χώρα).

What are identified by the formula τὸ τοιοῦτον ἀεὶ περιφερόμενον
ὅμοιον ἑκάστου πέρι καὶ συμπάντων or τὸ διὰ παντὸς τοιοῦτον or even
just τὸ τοιοῦτον are manifested by coming to be in the receptacle
from which again they disappear. Later these distinct and self-
identical characteristics that enter and leave the receptacle are
called μιμήματα τῶν ὄντων ἀεί (50 C 4-5) and τῶν ἀεὶ ὄντων ἀφομοιώ-
ματα (51 A 2), and in 52 C their nature is said to be that of an
image (εἰκών) of intelligible reality, to which it is ὁμώνυμον ὅμοιόν
τε (52 A 4-7). They are consequently not ideas [20] (which, more-

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[20] As Fraccaroli (*op. cit.*, p. 248, n. 1) seems to suggest and Eva
Sachs (*op. cit.*, pp. 191-2) definitely asserts.

over, are emphatically said not to enter into anything [52 A 2-3 and C 5–D 1]). They are occasionally called εἴδη, γένη, and μορφαί (50 C 1, 50 E 5, 51 A 3, 52 D 6), but these words in their context mean only " characters." It is misleading to call them " qualities," as many translators and commentators do, for they are not confined to qualities (the μιμήματα of fire, water, earth, air, etc. are on the same footing as those of everything else [cf. 51 B 5-6 and 51 A 5-6]) and the use of τὸ τοιοῦτον in 49 D–50 B has nothing whatever to do with the distinction between " quality " and " substance." [21] On the other hand, they are not the same as the transient phenomena either, for phenomena are the apparent alterations of the receptacle as a result of their continual entrance into it and exit from it (50 C 3-4). Phenomenal fire is the region of the receptacle that has at any moment been affected by fire, phenomenal water the region that has been affected by water, and so on according as the μιμήματα enter into the receptacle (51 B 4-6, cf. 52 D 4–E 1). The intensity and limits of the apparent affections of the receptacle are continually changing and so are indeterminable as fire, water, or anything else. Plato, having said that what fire is cannot be said to be " this " or " that " phase of the phenomenal flux but only to be the perpetually self-identical characteristic that is the determining factor of the indeterminable affection, neither says nor suggests, as he is so often said to do, either that the unidentifiable phases of phenomenal flux can be called τοιοῦτον,[22] " such as " the perpetually self-identical characteristic, or that this characteristic can be called τοιοῦτον, " such as " the unidentifiable phase of phenomenal flux. In the *Cratylus* (439 D 8-12) Socra-

[21] Cornford's use (*op. cit.*, p. 183) of τὸ ὁποιονοῦν τι κτλ. (50 A 2-4) to support the statement that they are " qualities " depends upon his misconstruction of that passage (see note 15 *supra*).

[22] E. g. Zeller, *Phil. Griech.*, II, 1, p. 724, n. 1: " 49 D f.: man dürfe keinen der bestimmten Stoffe (wie Feuer, Wasser u. s. f.) ein τόδε oder τοῦτο nennen, sondern nur ein τοιοῦτον . . ."; Robin, *La Physique dans la Philosophie de Platon*, p. 19; Cherniss, *Aristotle's Criticism of Plato*, I, p. 316, note 216 (which should be corrected in accordance with the present note); most of the translators and commentators discussed *supra*; and most recently G. E. L. Owen, *C. Q.*, XLVIII = N. S. III (1953), p. 85, n. 6 (" . . . the lame plea of the *Tm.* [49 D-E] that even if we cannot say *what* any mere γιγνόμενον is we can describe it as τὸ τοιοῦτον").

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tes says that of what is always in flux [23] you cannot say, in the first place, ὅτι ἐκεῖνό ἐστιν or, in the second, ὅτι τοιοῦτόν ⟨ἐστιν⟩, and *Timaeus* 49 D–50 B, when rightly read, neither says nor implies anything at variance with this statement.[24]

The self-identical characteristics are not identified, then, by reference to their transient phenomenal manifestations. They are μιμήματα τῶν ὄντων ἀεί; and it is therefore necessary that, having distinguished from the phenomenal flux the receptacle and the determinate characteristics that are manifested in it, Plato should at this point defend his assumption of the intelligible realities of which these characteristics are " copies " or " images." This he does succinctly in 51 B–E; [25] and in the conclusion of the whole section (52 A–C) he can now assert that it is with reference to the ideas that the determining characteristics of phenomena have meaning as it is by their entrance into space that they have existence (52 C). Of the phenomenal flux itself nothing more can be said than that it is the resultant of these entrances and exits in the receptacle.

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[23] He is not here talking of phenomenal flux but is putting for the sake of argument the case that αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν and αὐτὸ τὸ ἀγαθόν and such entities are in continual flux (439 C 7 ff.).

[24] Owen (*loc. cit.*), misinterpreting the passage of the *Timaeus* in the usual fashion, concludes that *Cratylus* 439 D and the similar statements in the *Theaetetus* (152 D, 182 C-D) are corrections or refutations of the theory of the *Timaeus* and urges this as one of his arguments for making the composition of the *Timaeus* antedate that of the *Theaetetus* and the *Cratylus*. There are no serious grounds for doubting that these two dialogues antedate the *Timaeus*, however, so that the passages in question are in fact supporting evidence to prove that the usual interpretation of *Timaeus* 49 D–50 B is erroneous; but because of Owen's thesis I have not used them for that purpose.

[25] This argument in fact sums up the results of the argument in the *Theaetetus* (cf. *A. J. P.*, LVII [1936], pp. 453 and 455; Ross, *Plato's Theory of Ideas*, p. 103).