Parmenides’ Hypotheses Concerning the One Itself

1. My labeling follows R. E. Allen in his translation and commentary. Thus there are four hypotheses, having in general two deductions each, respectively reaching generally opposite conclusions, except that the first hypothesis has three deductions.
   a. First hypothesis: if the one itself (a Form) is, what holds for it?
      i. First deduction: It is not many, and from this it follows ultimately that does not even have being, and is unknown and unnamed.
      ii. Second deduction: it exists, so it has being, and thus, it has parts and is many, and all its parts have many, ad infinitum, and it has all attributes opposite though they may be.
      iii. Third deduction: because in so many respects it both is and is not, these states must be allotted to distinct times, and so for each of these respects there must be an instant (exaiphnes) in which it neither is nor is not.
   b. Second hypothesis: if the one is, what holds for the many?
      i. First deduction: the others must have parts and thus be wholes and thus have unity and from this it follows that they have all the other attributes.
      ii. Second deduction: the one and the others are completely separate, and from this it follows that the others do not share in the one and thus share in none of the attributes.
   c. Third hypothesis: if the one is not, what holds for it?
      i. First deduction: in this deduction, non-being is interpreted as distinction from others, and so if the one is not, it must be knowable and distinct from others. Thus, ultimately, it also is, and has all the opposite attributes.
      ii. Second deduction: non-being here is interpreted as complete non-existence. The one in no way is and shares in nothing.
   d. Fourth hypothesis: if the one is not, what holds for the many?
      i. First deduction: in this deduction non-being is again interpreted as non-existence, and so since the one is not, the others can be related by otherness only to each other, not to the one—since the one is not, the others cannot share in it, and so all that can be said of them is that they have constantly changing and opposite appearances. The have all the attributes, but only in appearance.
      ii. Second deduction: in this deduction non-being is again interpreted as non-existence. Without the one, the others cannot even have appearances of any of the attributes.