

Abstract

In a number of passages Aristotle suggests that the Platonic theory of Forms is vulnerable to the problem of the 'Third Man'. In outline, the problem is that the Platonist is (allegedly) committed to infinitely many Forms of F, for any value of F for which there is a Form. For example, in addition to the many particular human beings and to the Form of Human, a Platonist is allegedly committed to a second Form of Human; and then to a third, and a fourth, a fifth, and so on. My aim in this talk is to clarify the nature of the problem as Aristotle understands it. Why does he think that the Platonist faces this problem?