

ARISTOTLE, FIRST BOOK OF NATURAL HEARING (PHYSICS), READING EIGHT

But as the natural philosophers speak, the ways are two. For those making one the underlying body, either one of the three or something other, denser than fire but more rare than air, generate other things by condensation and rarefaction, making many things. These are contraries, and in general excess and defect; just as Plato said the large and the small, except that he makes these matter and the form one while they make the underlying matter one and the contraries differences and forms.

But others separate out from the one the contraries existing within it, just as Anaximander says; and whoever says the one and the many are, as Empedocles and Anaxagoras - for these separate out other things from the mixture. They differ from each other in that the former makes a going around in a circle of these while the latter makes the separation once; and the one makes these unlimited, alike in parts and contraries, while the other, only those called the elements.